

Briefing note from the League Against Cruel Sports for the Petitions Committee of the Sixth Senedd, on Petition P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages, September 2021

The League Against Cruel Sports welcomes the opportunity to update the newly constituted Petitions Committee on the issues which prompted our Petition calling for a ban on the use of game bird cages, and on developments since it was last discussed by the previous Petitions Committee in March 2021.

In terms of developments since the Petition was submitted, there are four main things to note.

- The Welsh Government's Programme for Government for the Sixth Senedd includes plans to 'Restrict the use of cages for farmed animals.' ([Welsh Government - Programme for Government](#) p.16) We have no further detail as yet on plans and timeframes for the restrictions but the League believes that any measures announced should include 'game' birds bred for 'sport' shooting within their scope.
- The Welsh Government's Review of the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes, which began in 2019 and which had not concluded before the Covid pandemic began, remains unfinished. The League was among the stakeholders consulted on the review.
- The [Game Birds \(Cage Breeding\) Bill](#), introduced to the House of Lords by Lord Randall of Uxbridge, would ban the use of raised laying or battery cages to keep pheasants and partridges for egg production in England and Wales. It would also set minimum space requirements for enclosures used for those birds kept for egg laying, whether during or after the laying period. Breaking the law would be punishable by a fine, imprisonment or both. It was drawn in 17th place in the ballot for Private Members Bills in the House of Lords and received its First Reading on 10 June 2021. Its provisions would come into force 12 months after being passed. Lord Randall was special advisor on the environment to Theresa May MP when she was Prime Minister.
- A cage breeding ban is being backed by the 'Act Now For Animals' coalition of 50 animal charities. In May 2021 they submitted a green paper to (and aimed at) the UK's Defra. Full details can be found here and we feel are useful to consideration of the issue in Wales too:
<https://view.pagetiger.com/actnowforanimals/1>

We await more information from Welsh Government on all the first three points, including on how they may influence and interact with each other, and how they affect their response to our petition.