



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

T 03459 335577  
defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

The Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

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3 August 2016

**The Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP**  
From the Secretary of State

Dear Fiona,

Thank you for your email of 20 July on behalf of a number of your constituents about the use of snares.

I appreciate your constituents' concerns about snares. Used according to best practice however, snares can be an effective and humane means of managing wildlife where other forms of control would not work or would be impractical.

In 2012 Defra published research on the extent of use and humaneness of snares in England and Wales. Following publication of the report, officials worked with stakeholders to explore options in light of the report's findings.

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation, the National Gamekeepers Organisation, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, the Moorlands Association and the Countryside Alliance have designed and written new best practice guidance that builds on the previous Defra code of practice by setting out principles for the legal and humane use of snares.

This code is designed and owned by the sector. By showing leadership in this area, they are promoting good practice with their members and changing behaviour. The code will be published shortly.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 contains protection for animals under the control of man to help prevent unnecessary suffering and would cover any animal held in a snare. Any suspected cases of illegal use should be reported to the Police.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Best wishes,

**Andrea Leadsom MP**  
**Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**