

Next steps

After the close of this call for evidence, Defra will publish the summary of the evidence received. The findings from the call for evidence will inform any future decisions related to policy on gamebirds. All feedback will be anonymised in the summary of responses and the final report.

Call for Evidence Questions – About you

These questions allow us to understand who is responding to this call for evidence and carry out data analysis. Please note that answers to some questions are required – in those cases, this will be clearly stated. If you do not answer all questions marked ‘required’ your responses to this call for evidence will not be considered.

How we use your personal data is set out in the consultation and call for evidence exercise privacy notice which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-consultations-and-call-for-evidence-exercises-privacy-notice>

Question 1: Would you like your response to this call for evidence to be confidential in the event of an access to information request (see confidentiality and data protection above)?

(Required)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you answered ‘Yes’ please give your reason(s)

Question 2: Provide your full name

If you are representing an organisation or group, you will be asked its name later (see Question 5)

(Required)

Question 3: Provide your email address or, alternatively, your full postal address

If you do not have an email address, please provide a full postal address including postcode

(Required)

Question 4: In what capacity are you completing this call for evidence?

(Required)

- ☐ as an individual
- ☐ as a landowner or land manager
- ☐ as a farmer
- ☐ as part of the gamebird production sector (e.g. gamebird breeder, hatchery worker or rearer)
- ☐ as part of the gamebird shooting sector (e.g. shoot operator, gamekeeper, or participant in shooting activities)
- ☐ as a business (including those operating in the rural economy)
- ☐ as a representative of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or other non-profit organisation
- ☐ as a representative of a local community
- ☐ as a representative of an interest group or trade association
- ☐ as an academic or researcher within an established research body or institution
- ☐ as a representative of a public body (e.g. local authority, National Park Authority, statutory agency)
- ☐ as an elected representative
- ☐ as an animal welfare organisation
- ☐ as a veterinarian
- ☐ other

If other, please specify

Question 5: If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of that organisation?

(Required)

Question 6: Where are you, or the organisation you are representing, located?

This call for evidence relates to activities in England only

(Required)

- ☐ England
- ☐ Other

If other, please specify

Section A: Call for Evidence on Gamebird Release and Shooting in England

Question 7: Would you like to answer questions regarding gamebird release and shooting, or would you like to skip to the questions regarding gamebird welfare during rearing and breeding?

- ☐ Answer questions on gamebird release and shooting
- ☐ Skip to questions about gamebird welfare during rearing and breeding **[Section B]**

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Biodiversity

The questions in this section ask for evidence on the potential impacts of gamebird release and shooting on biodiversity. This includes both positive and negative effects on species, habitats and wider ecosystems, as well as the role that management practices and standards of practice may play in influencing outcomes. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 8: What evidence is there of positive and/or negative impacts from:

- a. grouse shooting;
- b. pheasant/partridge release and shooting;
- c. mallard release and shooting on biodiversity.
- d. and related activities.

Question 9: What evidence is there of impacts on species included in national species indicators or Red List species? For Red List, please see Appendix 4, [Outcome Indicator Framework](#) for current species statuses. For [National Species Indicators](#).

Question 10: What evidence is there that practices aligned with recognised regulatory requirements, industry codes or guidance increase the likelihood of positive outcomes and reduce the risk of negative outcomes for biodiversity?

Question 11: What evidence exists on the factors that influence whether practices aligned with recognised regulatory requirements, industry codes or guidance are adopted and maintained?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Protected sites and habitats

The questions in this section ask for evidence on the relationship between gamebird activities and impacts on protected sites and habitats, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and other designated areas. We are interested in understanding the nature and scale of any impacts, and whether standards of practice may influence these. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 12: What evidence exists of links between gamebird activities and damage to protected sites or habitats, or positive impacts on biodiversity within protected sites?

Question 13: What evidence exists on whether, and how, high standards of practice reduce risks to protected sites and habitats?

Question 14: What evidence is there that gamebird release or shooting affects the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or the wildlife, habitats or geological features for which they are protected?

Question 15: What evidence is there that particular factors influence compliance with high standards of practice in relation to protected sites and habitats?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Biosecurity and disease

The questions in this section ask for evidence on biosecurity risks associated with gamebird release and shooting, including the potential spread of disease such as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), Salmonella and Mycoplasma. We are also interested in how risks may vary and whether mitigation measures or standards of practice are effective. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 16: What evidence exists of links between grouse shooting, pheasant/partridge release and shooting, and mallard shooting and the spread of disease, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and other infectious diseases?

Question 17: How do risks of occurrence, severity and impact vary by species, scale or management approach?

Question 18: What evidence exists on whether, and how, high standards of practice reduce disease risks?

Question 19: What factors influence compliance with high standards of practice?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Bird of prey crime

The questions in this section ask for evidence on any links between gamebird activities and crimes against birds of prey. This includes evidence on the nature and extent of any association, and whether standards of practice may reduce risks. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 20: What evidence exists of links between gamebird activities and bird of prey crime?

Question 21: What evidence exists on whether, and how, high standards of practice reduce these risks?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Animal welfare post-release

The questions in this section ask for evidence on animal welfare considerations associated with gamebird release and shooting. This includes management practices following release, and the conduct of shooting activities. We are interested in understanding the nature and extent of any welfare concerns, as well as whether compliance with relevant regulatory requirements, statutory or industry codes of practice, guidance, assurance schemes, or other recognised good practice may influence outcomes. This is intended to refer to relevant standards and guidance applying to activities during and following release, rather than the Code of practice for the welfare of gamebirds reared for sporting purposes, which applies to birds up to and including the period when they are confined to release pens. You are free to

choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 22: What evidence exists regarding the nature, frequency and causes of welfare concerns during and following release?

Question 23: What evidence exists on whether, and how, compliance with relevant regulatory requirements, statutory or industry codes of practice, guidance, assurance schemes, or other recognised good practice improves welfare outcomes during and following release?

Question 24: What factors influence compliance with relevant regulatory requirements, statutory or industry codes of practice, guidance, assurance schemes, or other recognised good practice during and following release?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Use of natural resources

The questions in this section ask for evidence on the use of natural resources associated with gamebird shooting. This includes the number of birds shot, their use within the food chain, and any potential issues relating to waste or disposal. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 25: What evidence exists on the number of birds shot and how many enter the food chain?

Question 26: What evidence exists on the impact of birds that enter the food chain?

Question 27: What evidence exists on waste or disposal issues associated with shot birds?

Section A: Call for Evidence Questions – Other impacts

The questions in this section ask for evidence on other potential positive or negative impacts of gamebird release and shooting that are not covered elsewhere. This may include environmental, animal health, regulatory, public health, or social considerations. You are also invited to provide evidence on any additional impacts not listed in this call for evidence. You are free to choose whether to answer each question except where it is clearly stated that an answer is required.

Question 28: What evidence exists of links between gamebird activities and:

- a. use of lead shot;
- b. misuse of medicated products;
- c. antimicrobial resistance;
- d. misuse of pesticides;
- e. other environmental or social impacts.

Respondents should address only those topics for which they have evidence

Question 29: Are there any additional positive or negative impacts, not covered above, for example recreational benefits?

(Please note that Defra is separately commissioning an independent assessment of the economic value of the gamebird sector, which is outside the scope of this call for evidence)

Question 30: Would you like to answer questions about gamebird welfare during breeding or rearing?

- ☐ Yes **[continue to Section B]**
- ☐ No **[skip to end]**

Section B: Call for evidence on the welfare of gamebirds bred or reared for sporting purposes in England

The [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#) creates various offences for causing unnecessary suffering to an animal. A person responsible for an animal also commits an offence if he or she fails to take reasonable steps to ensure the needs of the animal are met. A person who breeds and rears gamebirds under controlled conditions for the purpose of release for sport shooting, together with birds retained or caught up for breeding purposes, would be responsible for meeting their needs under this legislation.

England has a statutory [Code of practice for the welfare of gamebirds reared for sporting purposes](#), which provides keepers with guidance on how to meet the welfare needs of their gamebirds, and was made under powers conferred by the [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#). The Code refers to all birds bred and reared under controlled conditions for the purpose of release for sport shooting, together with birds retained or caught up for breeding purposes. This applies to birds up to, and including, the period when they are confined to the release pens. Once the birds are released into the wild and are free-living they fall outside the scope of the Code.

Gamebirds reared for sporting purposes are not included in the scope of [The Welfare of Farmed Animals \(England\) Regulations 2007](#). This means that gamebirds bred and reared for sporting purposes are not subject to the same legislative requirements on welfare as farmed poultry.

This call for evidence invites information and views on the housing, husbandry and welfare of gamebirds being bred and reared (farmed), to strengthen the evidence base for each species. The aim is to improve understanding of current practices and to inform any future policy in this area. The species of interest are common pheasants, red-legged partridges and mallards. For the purposes of this call, the term “rearing” refers to the period from hatching, up until the birds are transferred to release pens, but excluding the point of transfer itself.

Whilst the bulk of the questions are aimed at those actively involved in the breeding and rearing (farming) of gamebirds, we would also welcome general responses to these technical questions from those sector bodies and poultry veterinarians that hold wide sector knowledge. We would request that such respondents holding detailed data on the sector submit this information via email.

Question 31: Do you breed or rear (farm) any of the following gamebird species: common pheasants, red-legged partridges, or mallards?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 101a]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions – Management and Welfare of Gamebirds: Pheasants

Question 32: Do you breed pheasants?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 43]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions – Managing pheasants for breeding

Question 33a: What is the source for your pheasant breeding stock?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Wild-caught
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred and reared
- ☐ Retained breeding stock (pheasants kept back from previous seasons)
- ☐ Other – please specify

Question 33b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 33c: Please specify the number of pheasants obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 33d: Please specify the cost per bird, where relevant:

Question 34a: How many housing units do you manage for breeder pheasants?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number against each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

'Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor)' - indoor housing with netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Mobile laying pen (outdoor)' – a netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Fixed laying pen' – a large fenced un-netted outdoor enclosure, sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 34b: If 'other housing type' selected, please describe this:

Question 35: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used for breeder pheasants?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 36: How many breeder pheasants are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 37: What male-to-female ratio is used when stocking breeder pheasants?

Please provide a ratio of male birds to female birds against each relevant housing type.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 38: During which months are breeder pheasants housed?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type:

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Continuous, year-round	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
January	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
February	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
March	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

April	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
May	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
June	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
July	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
August	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
September	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
October	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
November	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
December	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 39a: What enrichment is provided for breeder pheasants?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Bespoke enclosed nestbox	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Manipulable materials (e.g. bales of wood-shavings or straw)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Poultry grit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Perches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dust bath	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g., branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pecking block	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scatter feeding (grain)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provision of live food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 39b: Please describe any ‘other’ enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single housing unit**:

Question 40: Are any of the following used in the management of breeder pheasants?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Wing clipping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brailing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use of saddles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spectacles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Beak bits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Beak trimming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 41: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for breeder pheasants over a breeding season?

Please provide information for each relevant housing type.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 42: What impact would each of the following changes have: (a) on pheasant welfare, and (b) on business economics?

If possible, please estimate the 'additional cost per bird':

Transitioning away from RLU housing or cage systems:

Limiting the use of bits:

Limiting the use of spectacles:

A requirement for minimum perching provision:

Question 43: Do you rear pheasants from eggs or poults for use in sporting purposes?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 52]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions – Managing pheasants during rear

Question 44a: What is the source for your pheasant hatching eggs or poults?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Poults from specialist breeder (within the UK)
- ☐ Poults from specialist breeder (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred
- ☐ Other - please specify

Question 44b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 44c: Please specify the number of: (a) eggs and (b) poults obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 44d: Please specify the cost of each unit (egg or poult), where relevant:

Question 45a: What is the intended destination for the pheasants you rear?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Transported internally to self-managed release pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for release into externally managed release-pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for breeding
- ☐ Used in own breeding programme

Question 45b: If more than one option is selected, please specify the proportion associated with each:

Question 45c: If pheasants are sold, please specify the price per bird:

Question 46a: How many housing units do you manage for the purpose of rearing pheasants?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number for each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

‘Combined housing system’ - a mobile brooder house extended over time via the addition of a covered night shelter and netted outdoor ‘long run’, sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 46b: If ‘other housing type’ selected, please describe this:

Question 47: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used to rear pheasants?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Combined housing system:

Other housing type:

Question 48: How many pheasants are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If you manage more than one size of unit, please provide details for each.

Combined housing system:

Other housing type:

Question 49a: What enrichment is provided during pheasant rearing?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Combined housing system	Other housing type
Dark brooders	☐	☐
Manipulable materials (e.g. bales of wood-shavings or straw)	☐	☐
Poultry grit	☐	☐
Dust bath	☐	☐
Perches	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g., branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐
Pecking block	☐	☐
Scatter feeding (e.g. grain)	☐	☐
Provision of live food	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐

Question 49b: Please describe any 'other' enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single** housing unit:

Question 50: Are any of the following used in the management of pheasants during rear?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Combined housing system	Other housing type
Brailing	☐	☐
Spectacles	☐	☐
Beak bits	☐	☐
Beak trimming	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐

Question 51: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for captive-bred pheasants?

(a) during the first 7 days post-hatch:

(b) by the end of rear (pre-transfer to release pens):

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions – Management and Welfare of Gamebirds: Partridges

Question 52: Do you breed partridges?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 63]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions – Managing partridges for breeding

Question 53a: What is the source for your partridge breeding stock?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Wild-caught
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred and reared
- ☐ Retained breeding stock (partridges kept back from previous seasons)
- ☐ Other - please specify

Question 53b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 53c: Please specify the number of partridges obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 53d: Please specify the cost per bird, where relevant:

Question 54a: How many housing units do you manage for breeder partridges?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number for each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

'Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor)' - indoor housing with netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Mobile laying pen (outdoor)' - a netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Fixed laying pen' - a large fenced un-netted outdoor enclosure, sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 54b: If 'other housing type' selected, please describe this:

Question 55: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used for breeder partridges?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 56: How many breeder partridges are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 57: What male-to-female ratio is used when stocking breeder partridges?

Please provide a ratio of male birds to female birds for each relevant housing type.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 58: During which months are breeder partridges housed?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Continuous, year-round	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
January	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
February	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
March	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
April	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
May	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
June	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
July	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
August	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
September	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
October	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
November	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
December	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 59a: What enrichment is provided for breeder partridges?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Bespoke enclosed nestbox	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Manipulable materials (e.g. bales of wood-shavings or straw)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Poultry grit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dust bath	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g., branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pecking block	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scatter feeding (e.g. grain)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Provision of live food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 59b: Please describe any ‘other’ enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single housing unit**:

Question 60: Are any of the following used in the management of breeding partridges?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	RLU or cage	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Wing clipping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brailing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use of saddles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spectacles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Beak bits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Beak trimming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 61: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for breeder partridges over a breeding season?

Please provide information for each relevant housing type.

Raised laying unit (RLU) or single tier cage:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 62: What impact would each of the following changes have: (a) on partridge welfare, and (b) on business economics?

If possible, please estimate the additional 'cost per bird'.

Transitioning away from RLU or cage systems:

Limiting the use of bits:

Limiting the use of spectacles:

Question 63: Do you rear partridges from eggs or poults for use in sporting purposes?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 72]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - Managing partridges during rear

Question 64a: What is the source for your hatching partridge eggs or poults?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Poults from specialist breeder (within the UK)
- ☐ Poults from specialist breeder (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred

☐ Other - please specify

Question 64b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 64c: Please specify the number of: (a) eggs and (b) poults obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 64d: Please specify the cost of each unit (egg or poult), where relevant:

Question 65a: What is the intended destination for the partridges you rear?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Transported internally to self-managed release pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for release into externally managed release-pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for breeding
- ☐ Used in own breeding programme

Question 65b: If more than one option is selected, please specify the proportion associated with each:

Question 65c: If partridges are sold, please specify the price per bird:

Question 66a: How many housing units do you manage for the purpose of rearing partridges?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number against each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

'Combined housing system' – a mobile brooder house, extended over time via the addition of a covered night shelter and netted outdoor 'long run', sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 66b: If 'other housing type' selected, please describe this:

Question 67: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used to rear partridges?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Combined housing system:

Other housing type:

Question 68: How many partridges are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If you manage more than one size of unit, please provide details for each.

Combined housing system:

Other housing type:

Question 69a: What enrichment is provided during partridge rearing?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Combined housing system	Other housing type
Dark brooders	☐	☐
Manipulable materials (e.g. bales of wood-shavings or straw)	☐	☐
Poultry grit	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g. branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐
Pecking block	☐	☐

Scatter feeding (e.g. grain)	☐	☐
Provision of live food	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐

Question 69b: Please describe any 'other' enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single housing unit**:

Question 70: Are any of the following used in the management of partridges during rear?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Combined housing system	Other housing type
Brailing	☐	☐
Spectacles	☐	☐
Beak bits	☐	☐
Beak trimming	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐

Question 71: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for captive-bred partridges?

(a) During the first 7 days post-hatch:

(b) by the end of rear (pre-transfer to the release pens):

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - Management and Welfare of Gamebirds: Mallard Ducks

Question 72: Do you breed mallard ducks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 81]*
- ☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - Managing mallard ducks for breeding

Question 73a: What is the source for your mallard breeding stock?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Wild-caught
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Specialist breeder or hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred and reared
- ☐ Retained breeding stock (mallards kept back from previous seasons)
- ☐ Other – please specify

Question 73b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 73c: Please specify the number of mallards obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 73d: Please specify the cost per bird, where relevant:

Question 74a: How many housing units do you manage for breeder mallards?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number against each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

Indoor barn:

'Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor)' - indoor housing or nesting huts with a netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Mobile laying pen (outdoor)'- netted outdoor run, sited on grass or soil:

'Fixed laying pen' - large fenced un-netted outdoor enclosure, sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 74b: If 'other housing type' selected, please describe this:

Question 75: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used for breeder mallards?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each:

Indoor barn:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 76: How many breeder mallards are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each.

Indoor barn:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 77: What male-to-female ratio is used when stocking breeder mallards?

Please provide a ratio of male birds to female birds for each relevant housing type.

Indoor barn:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 78: During which months are breeder mallards housed?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Indoor barn	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Continuous, year-round	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
January	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
February	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
March	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
April	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
May	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
June	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
July	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
August	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
September	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
October	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
November	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
December	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 79a: What enrichment is provided for breeder mallards?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Indoor barn	Semi-outdoor mobile laying pen	Outdoor mobile laying pen	Fixed laying pen	Other housing type
Bespoke enclosed nestbox	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trough	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artificial water source large enough to swim in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural pond	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g. branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scatter feeding (e.g. grain)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 79b: Please describe any 'other' enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single housing unit**:

Question 80: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for breeder mallards over a breeding cycle?

Please provide information for each relevant housing type.

Indoor barn:

Mobile laying pen (semi-outdoor):

Mobile laying pen (outdoor):

Fixed laying pen:

Other housing type:

Question 81: Do you rear mallard ducks from eggs or ducklings for use in sporting purposes?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No *[Please skip to Question 89]*

☐ Not personally, but I do hold sector knowledge (evidence) on this subject

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - Managing mallard ducks during rear

Question 82a: What is the source for your mallard hatching eggs or ducklings?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (within the UK)
- ☐ Eggs from specialist hatchery (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Ducklings from specialist breeder (within the UK)
- ☐ Ducklings from specialist breeder (imported from outside the UK)
- ☐ Self-bred
- ☐ Other - please specify

Question 82b: If sourced from outside of the UK, please specify the country of origin:

Question 82c: Please specify the number of: (a) eggs and (b) ducklings obtained from each source, annually. If this varies, please provide information relevant to the last 12 months:

Question 82d: Please specify the cost of each unit (egg or duckling), where relevant:

Question 83a: What is the intended destination for the mallards you rear?

Please select all relevant options:

- ☐ Transported to self-managed release pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for release into externally managed release-pens
- ☐ Sold to third party for breeding
- ☐ Used in own breeding programme

Question 83b: If more than one option is selected, please specify the proportion associated with each:

Question 83c: If mallards are sold, please specify the price per bird:

Question 84a: How many housing units do you manage for the purpose of rearing mallards?

A housing unit is an individual enclosure used to house a group of two or more birds. Please insert a number for each relevant housing type. By "mobile" housing, we are referring to temporary housing without a fixed foundation. We would also welcome images of the accommodation, if available, which can be emailed to Gamebirds@defra.gov.uk.

‘Combined housing system (mobile)’ – a mobile brooder house extended over time with (or without) covered night shelter and netted outdoor ‘long run’, sited on grass or soil:

‘Combined housing system (fixed)’ - a fixed/static brooder house extended over time with (or without) covered night shelter and outdoor enclosure, sited on grass or soil:

Other housing type:

Question 84b: If ‘other housing type’ selected, please describe this:

Question 85: What is the approximate size of a housing unit used to rear mallards?

Please specify indoor and outdoor components separately, where relevant, and if more than one size of unit is managed, please provide details for each:

Combined housing system (mobile):

Combined housing system (fixed):

Other housing type:

Question 86: How many mallards are managed within a **single housing unit**?

Please provide a number for each relevant housing type. If you manage more than one size of unit, please provide details for each.

Combined housing system (mobile):

Combined housing system (fixed):

Other housing type:

Question 87a: What enrichment is provided during mallard rearing?

Please select all that apply, specific to the relevant housing type(s):

	Combined housing system (mobile)	Combined housing system (fixed)	Other housing type
Dark brooders	☐	☐	☐
Trough	☐	☐	☐
Artificial water source (large enough to swim in)	☐	☐	☐
Natural pond	☐	☐	☐
Artificial shelter	☐	☐	☐
Natural shelter (e.g. branches, brush, long grass)	☐	☐	☐
Scatter feeding (e.g. grain)	☐	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐

Question 87b: Please describe any 'other' enrichment provided, and summarise the quantity of overall enrichment provision (**all items**) within a **single housing unit**:

Question 88: What is a typical total percentage mortality rate for captive-bred mallards?

(a) During the first 7 days post-hatch:

(b) By end of rear (pre-transfer to the release pens):

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - General husbandry questions for gamebird keepers

Question 89: Do you have a bespoke 'Health and Welfare Plan' for the birds under your management?

- ☐ Yes, self-written
- ☐ Yes, written with the assistance of a veterinary surgeon (not regularly reviewed)
- ☐ Yes, written with the assistance of a veterinary surgeon (and reviewed annually)
- ☐ No

Question 90: What welfare outcomes data do you regularly record?

Please select all that apply:

- ☐ Mortality
- ☐ Number of culls (and reason)
- ☐ Respiratory disease (incidence and prevalence)
- ☐ Parasites: Worms (incidence and prevalence)
- ☐ Parasites: ectoparasites (incidence and prevalence)
- ☐ Enteric disease, e.g. coccidiosis (incidence and prevalence)
- ☐ Lameness or mobility issues
- ☐ Injuries/wounds
- ☐ Weight gain and growth rates
- ☐ No welfare outcomes data is collected

Question 91a: In your experience, what is the main cause of mortality in breeder birds?

Please select all relevant options:

	Pheasants	Partridges	Mallards
Disease – viral	☐	☐	☐
Disease - bacterial	☐	☐	☐
Disease – fungal	☐	☐	☐
Disease – parasitic	☐	☐	☐
Predation	☐	☐	☐
Egg binding	☐	☐	☐
Injurious pecking	☐	☐	☐
Extreme weather	☐	☐	☐

Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐	☐

Question 91b: If you selected 'other', please specify the cause and the relevant species:

Question 92a: In your experience, what is the main cause of mortality during rear (pre-transfer to the release pen)?

Please select all relevant options:

	Pheasants	Partridges	Mallards
Disease – viral	☐	☐	☐
Disease - bacterial	☐	☐	☐
Disease – fungal	☐	☐	☐
Disease – parasitic	☐	☐	☐
Predation	☐	☐	☐
Congenital defects	☐	☐	☐
Injurious pecking	☐	☐	☐
Smothering	☐	☐	☐
Weather (Exposure)	☐	☐	☐
Other, please specify below	☐	☐	☐
None of the above	☐	☐	☐

Question 92b: If you selected 'other', please specify the cause and the relevant species:

Question 93: What methods are used to humanely dispatch (kill) sick or injured gamebirds?

For each method, please specify species and whether the method is used: (a) during the rearing phase, (b) following release, or (c) after shooting (if a bird is injured).

Question 94: What methods are used to catch and handle birds from captive housing prior to transport?

Please select all relevant options:

	Pheasants	Partridges	Mallards
Upright	☐	☐	☐

Two-leg	☐	☐	☐
One-leg	☐	☐	☐
Wing	☐	☐	☐
Herding	☐	☐	☐
Nets	☐	☐	☐

Question 95: When gamebirds are transported, what is the average journey length (time and distance)?

Please specify species, life stage(s) and transport purpose(s) for each example provided:

Question 96a: With relevance to your own or your companies' activities, are climate-controlled vehicles utilised for the transport of gamebirds?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Question 96b: If you selected 'yes', please specify the species, life stage(s) and transport purpose(s) for which climate-controlled vehicles are used:

Question 97a: What are the most common causes of mortality or injury during transport?

Please select all that are relevant:

- ☐ Heat stress (hyperthermia)
- ☐ Cold stress (hypothermia)
- ☐ Smothering
- ☐ Fractures due to rough handling (wings or legs)
- ☐ Trappings
- ☐ Fatigue (linked to journey length and delays)
- ☐ Deprivation (food and water withdrawal linked to journey length and delays)
- ☐ Other – please specify

Question 97b: For each cause of mortality or injury selected, please specify the relevant species and life stage(s) at time of transport:

Question 98a: Are you aware of any specific risks, linked to the transport of gamebirds, that differ from those associated with commercial poultry transport?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Question 98b: If you selected 'yes', please provide further information and specify the relevant species and life stage(s) at time of transport for each example given:

Question 99: Please provide information on any formal or informal training that you have undertaken on gamebird management and husbandry, and specify whether this training included specific consideration of animal welfare:

Question 100a: How old is your gamebird housing?

Please select all relevant options:

	<5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	>20 years
Pheasant: cage housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pheasant: non-cage housing for breeding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pheasant: non-cage housing for rearing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partridge: cage housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partridge: non-cage housing for breeding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partridge: non-cage housing for rearing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mallard: for breeding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mallard: for rearing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 100b: Do you have any plans to replace or refurbish this housing within the next 5 years?

	Yes	No	Maybe
Pheasant: cage housing	☐	☐	☐
Pheasant: non-cage housing for breeding	☐	☐	☐
Pheasant: non-cage housing for rearing	☐	☐	☐

Partridge: cage housing	☐	☐	☐
Partridge: non-cage housing for breeding	☐	☐	☐
Partridge: non-cage housing for breeding	☐	☐	☐
Mallard for breeding	☐	☐	☐
Mallard for rearing	☐	☐	☐

Question 100c. If you answered 'yes', please indicate the reason(s) for wanting to replace or refurbish the housing:

- ☐ Due to the overall age and condition of the housing structure
- ☐ Reasons of biosecurity: improving the integrity of the indoor accommodation
- ☐ Reasons of biosecurity: reducing wild bird contact within the outdoor accommodation
- ☐ Changing the type of housing system
- ☐ Increasing the size of the accommodation
- ☐ None of the above

Section B: Call for Evidence Questions - General Questions relating to the welfare of gamebirds during breeding and rearing

Question 101a. Do you agree with the following statement?

"Current requirements, as set out in the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and statutory gamebird code of practice, are sufficient to protect the welfare needs of gamebirds."

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Question 101b. Please provide evidence to support your view:

Question 102a: Current legislation for farm animals sets out detailed minimum standards, including provisions on housing, space allowances and air quality. Should similar statutory requirements be developed for farmed gamebirds (i.e., those bred, reared or maintained in captivity)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Question 102b: Please provide evidence to support your view:

Question 103a: Do you agree with the following statement?

“It is possible for pheasants housed within caged or raised laying units to express normal behaviours.”

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Question 103b: Please provide evidence to support your view:

Question 104a: Do you agree with the following statement?

“It is possible for partridges housed within caged or raised laying units to express normal behaviours.”

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Question 104b: Please provide evidence to support your view:

Question 105a: Do you agree with the use of bits and spectacles to reduce the risk of egg eating, injurious pecking and mortality in pheasants and partridges?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

☐ Don't know

Question 105b: Please provide evidence to support your view:

Question 106: Please provide any other comments or evidence you may have on the welfare of gamebirds during breeding and rearing:

End of Online Survey

Dear Consultee

Thank you for taking your time to participate in this online survey.

After the close of this call for evidence, Defra will publish the summary of the evidence received. The findings from the call for evidence will inform any future decisions related to policy on gamebirds. All feedback will be anonymised in the summary of responses and the final report.