

CONTROL OF HORSES ACT 2015

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

3. The Act is about horses which are unlawfully present on land, whether they have strayed there or been placed there deliberately. It amends the Animals Act 1971 (“the 1971 Act”) so as to enable local authorities to deal with horses which are present unlawfully in public places, and also to enable freeholders and occupiers to deal with horses which are present unlawfully on their land.
4. The Act introduces a new procedure regarding the detention and disposal of such horses. Specifically, it allows horses to be disposed of 96 hours after detention, rather than fourteen days as previously, and for disposal to include destruction or any other way (which could include giving it to a charity). Previously, detained horses had to be sold at a market or an auction, despite many having little or no value.
5. Fly-grazing is the placing of horses on another person’s land to use their grazing, without their consent. Despite legal requirements for all horses to be identified by a horse passport and a microchip it has become a significant problem in some parts of England and there were calls for the law to be changed to make it easier for local authorities in relation to public places and freeholders and occupiers of land to deal with the problem.