



Impact

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Editorial

In the run up to Labour's landslide election victory in 1997, the Party produced a leaflet containing a comprehensive list of animal welfare policy pledges.

'New Life For Animals' promised, amongst many other things, 'a free vote on banning hunting with hounds, an end to fur farming, better treatment of animals reared for food' and 'the highest possible welfare in the laboratory – and cruelty-free testing of cosmetics'.

The leaflet declared: 'We share our planet with a wide range of creatures. Labour believes it is our responsibility to treat them humanely' and in a statement, co-signed by Tony Blair, it said: 'Labour has consistently shown itself as the only party to trust on issues of animal welfare.....While the Conservatives have blocked measures to improve animal welfare and the Liberal Democrats say one thing and do another, the Labour Party has fought for animal welfare at every available opportunity. Labour is the only party with carefully researched policies and the political will to carry them out.'

While it is not possible to quantify what contribution this leaflet and the set of policies contributed to Labour's success in 1997, it was very clear that they were very popular with voters and attracted



positive media attention at the time.

Animal welfare was important enough to voters that, by the election in 2001, polling companies began to monitor it as an issue of relevance to voters. In May 2001, a MORI poll recorded that 11% of voters thought that animal welfare was 'Very important in helping you decide which party to vote for' – the same percentage as for 'Defence' as a concern.

But all politicians are aware of this, frequently saying that they receive huge amounts of correspondence on the subject and modern polling data demonstrates the overwhelming public support for animal welfare issues.

We need to learn from the lessons of 1997 and beyond. It would give Labour an electoral boost if it was to adopt a

robust set of policies addressing animal welfare issues.

To this end, LAWS is hoping to persuade the Party to launch an up to date version of 'New Life For Animals' and is working on a set of suggestions that would be popular with voters, help promote animal welfare in a number of sectors and, importantly, not cost any money!

The latter is important as it is clear that whoever wins the next election, they will face significant economic challenges.

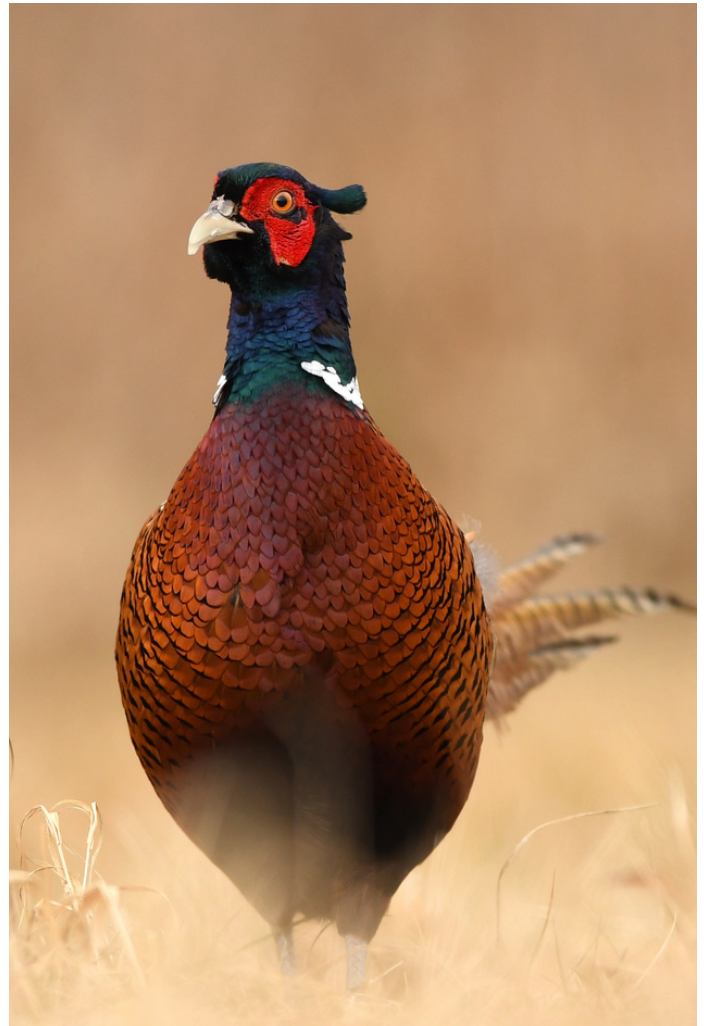
Rachel Reeves made it clear in a recent interview when she said: 'I say to my colleagues all the time, don't come to me with plans to spend more money'.

This leaves plenty of scope for enshrining the principles expressed in 1997 including the belief that we have a responsibility to treat animals humanely.

Examples of no-cost, effective and positive policies could include, closing the loopholes in the ban on hunting with hounds, banning the sale of fur, banning snares (see page 3) and ensuring that animal welfare (and British farmers) are not compromised by new post-Brexit trade deals.

LAWS will be launching its draft manifesto 'A Better Life For Animals' at this year's Party Conference in Liverpool and we look forward to the opportunity of discussing this important issue with the Party.

Mark Glover, Chair of LAWS



Snare: action is overdue



As of 17 August this year it has been illegal to set any type of snare in Wales thanks to a new law brought in by the Labour-led government. Offences under the act carry a potential six-month jail sentence or an unlimited fine.

Snare are indiscriminate and cruel. Research carried out by Defra revealed that hares, badgers, deer, otters and even pet dogs and cats are often caught.

A YouGov poll in 2021 showed 78% of the Welsh public wanted snares to be banned.

The Welsh ban survived last minute attempts by Conservative members of the Senedd to bring in amendments that would have undermined its purpose by, for instance, allowing the 'licensed use of humane cable restraints'.

'Humane cable restraints' is yet another example of the doublespeak frequently used by the pro animal abuse lobby in their attempts to pull the wool over the eyes of legislatures.

Earlier on this year, on 9 January, a debate about snares that took place in the House of Commons petitions committee provided the opportunity for Labour's spokesperson to outline the party's position. Ruth Jones MP (a Shadow Defra minister) said: 'We on the Labour Benches believe that the UK Government should follow the example of the Welsh Labour Government in bringing forward legislation to ban the use of snares. If they do so, they will have our support; if they will not, they should get out of the way, and we will add it to our to-do list when Labour forms the next Government.'

This pledge from Labour is not new. Later in her speech, Ruth added '.....in 2016, my hon. Friend the Member for York Central (Rachel Maskell) committed that Labour would ban snares.'

Bans on snares are long overdue. The British Veterinary Association's view is very clear. It says: 'Snare significantly compromise the welfare of caught animals, in some cases over a considerable length of time.....The speed at which welfare begins to be impacted

is rapid (seconds from the moment of restraint) and suffering can be prolonged even in instances where legal requirements to check at least every 24 hours are adhered to. Further, accompanying instructions for snares frequently fail to explain the need to kill the caught animals or how to do this humanely. Snares can also be indiscriminate and may result in the capture and suffering of non-target species.'

It calls for: 'The UK Governments to introduce an outright ban on the use and sale of snares to both the general public and trained operators.'

The consultation is open until 3 October 2023. You can take part at: <https://consult.gov.scot/environment-forestry/wildlife-management-in-scotland-2023/>

By contrast, on 12 May 2021 the Tory Government published its 'Action Plan

for Animal Welfare' which said that it would 'Launch a call for evidence on the use of snares. Some people consider that snares are an inhumane and unnecessary means of trapping wild animals, while others maintain they are an essential tool in controlling foxes and rabbits. The Government considers it timely to open this call for evidence to make sure it has the very latest understanding on this issue.'

So timely in fact that more than two years later the 'call for evidence' has still not materialized, instead it has joined the other Tory animal welfare promises in the very long (and overcrowded) grass.

It has become abundantly clear that a Labour government provides the only hope of bringing an end to this extremely cruel and barbaric practice.

Mark Glover



Animal welfare is not a fringe issue

Whilst sadly, the welfare of animals might not currently be at the top of the agenda for any of the main political parties in their general election planning, they're missing a trick. Higher standards of welfare, respect and compassion are not only important for the sake of animals, there are few other issues that unite the whole electorate in such overwhelming numbers.

People hold all sorts of relationships with animals - as citizens, pet owners, consumers, role models and when we are out and about in nature. The RSPCA's annual Animal Kindness Index shows that 69% percent of Brits say they love animals, 90% say that animal welfare is an important issue that should be addressed and eight out of ten of us have acted to help animals in the last year.

In Bury North, for example, where the Conservative majority is just 105 votes, over 50% of people own a pet, and in Bury South, with a 402 majority, over 19% have donated to an animal charity. In Stoke-on-Trent Central, there is a pet ownership rate of 66% and over a fifth of adults have donated to an animal charity [YouGov]. And there are constituencies like this up and down the United Kingdom.

The cost of living crisis is taking its toll on animals too, with 81% of us saying it's more expensive to look after their pets and an 11% increase in the number of animals abandoned compared to 2022 [RSPCA Animal Kindness Index]. There were over 40,000 clicks on the RSPCA's 'giving up a pet' webpage in the first five months of 2023, a 72% increase from the same period last year.

At the same time, we have seen important pieces of legislation dropped, notably the Kept Animals Bill, a key piece of the Government's Animal Welfare Plan, which would have banned the live export of farmed animals and tackled puppy smuggling and pet theft; a consultation on animal welfare food labelling appears to have gone the way of import bans on fur and foie gras, and now a longstanding commitment to end the use of cruel and unnecessary shock collars is rumoured to be under threat despite Savanta polling showing that 93% of UK adults agree that there should be an urgent ban.

Animal welfare is not a fringe issue, it is an issue of central importance to all of us. Neither is it a zero sum game. People of all ages and all backgrounds

want to see animals treated with compassion and respect. To do so is in everyone's interests. It is difficult for our nation of animal lovers to watch as Switzerland bans the use of farrowing crates and boiling crustaceans alive, the European Union agrees a roadmap to phase-out the use of animals in chemicals testing and California bans battery cages and the import of products relying on the use of battery cages when these are charges that the UK should be leading.

The RSPCA is asking all parties to include in their programmes for government, amongst other things, a food strategy that drives up animal welfare standards, drives down poor methods of production and addresses climate and

human health concerns; a faster transition to animal-free science and research; updated and consolidated legislation to protect our threatened wildlife; the safeguarding of animal welfare standards in trade agreements and an end to breeding dogs and other animals for looks over health and wellbeing.

In all of these aspects of animal welfare and more, this country should be at the forefront - developing and implementing the highest standards, meeting the needs of animals and listening to the public's desire for a new and better relationship with them too.

Kerry Postlewhite



What should a Labour trade policy say about animal welfare?

One of the criticisms of how the Government addresses animal welfare is their willingness to sign trade agreements which undermine the position of higher-welfare farmers in Britain. What should Labour do?

What is a free trade agreement?

By default, Britain trades with other countries with restrictions, typically a tariff on imports. A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with another country sets out terms for trading more favourably, often with no tariff at all on the vast majority of goods or services. In each sector, this may favour either country, but overall the benefits are supposed to outweigh the costs for both countries.

Since leaving the EU (which negotiated trade agreements for all members), Britain has signed FTAs with Australia, New Zealand and the CPTPP group of countries on the Pacific rim and is working on others (Canada, India, and eventually the USA).



What is wrong with the Conservative trade agreements?

A fundamental flaw of the agreements is the betrayal of British agriculture. Anxious to show that post-Brexit Britain would be able to sign numerous favourable trade deals, the Government has pressed ahead with FTAs even where the results were damaging to agriculture. The Government's own impact assessments say that the Australian and New Zealand FTAs will cost the British agrifood sector nearly £500 million. In particular, Australia's exporters, by cutting corners on animal welfare, will be able to undercut British farmers who operate to higher standards.

The reason this matters for animal welfare is that the intensive means of production in countries being given tariff-free access could actually be illegal in Britain. For example, Australia allows transport of cattle to slaughter to take a horrific 48 hours (the UK limit is 14 hours before a break), while sheep are often "mulesed" (removing skin around the tail) without anaesthetic, a cruel procedure that is forbidden in Britain. Dispensing with animal welfare rules can save money, so the FTAs enable exporters to undercut British farmers, who not unreasonably say that it isn't fair to

require them to meet higher standards and then allow competitors to steal their markets. Organisations like Compassion in World Farming press farmers globally to adopt less intensive systems which give the animals happier lives. But if British farmers take up these more progressive farming practices at the same time that the Government is allowing cheap and nasty imports from countries with lower standards, it simply “exports” bad standards, in the same way as if we allowed imports of goods made using child labour.

What should Labour do?

Trade negotiators work from a brief of what the Government considers negotiable and what it sees at “red lines” that cannot be crossed without ending the prospect of agreement. A range of organisations from the National Farmers’ Union (NFU) to NGOs like Compassion and the World Wildlife Fund have urged that the Government set out core standards of animal welfare which importers must meet in order to be eligible for tariff-free access as part of a trade deal. These should at least be the minimum required of British farmers, but ideally should include requirements that we are still working towards in Britain, such as cage-free methods of production.

In this way, trade supports improving standards, instead of undermining

existing ones. It should be a natural assumption for importers that goods being brought to Britain should be high-quality and improve the range of goods available to consumers.

This will fit naturally with other measures also announced by Labour. At the NFU conference this year, Keir Starmer promised Labour would reform public sector procurement by ensuring that 50% of all food purchased is produced locally and sustainably [1].

The National Policy Forum draft being debated at this year’s Conference commits Labour to the “highest standards” of animal welfare. Translating that into trade policy will mean real change – not just for animals in Britain, but across the world.

Nick Palmer



[1] <https://www.foodservicefootprint.com/starmer-sets-out-labours-food-stance/>



A Fur Free UK?

A debate on banning the import and sale of fur was held in Westminster Hall in June, with parliamentarians across the political divide voicing their support for a fur free UK. The event was particularly significant as the Shadow minister for animal welfare, Alex Sobel MP, used his speech as official spokesperson for the opposition to confirm that Labour would ban fur imports.



Alex said: 'Two decades have now passed since fur farming was banned in the UK. I'm proud to confirm once again that a Labour government would take the necessary action on the importation of fur into Britain. We are committed to this... A Labour Britain will be a compassionate, fur free Britain.'

Respect for Animals strongly welcomes Labour's commitment to ban fur. The current Conservative government had previously indicated it would support such a ban, but has since ditched the policy despite huge public support.



How would you feel?

**Trapped in a metal cage
No room to move**

Today, billions of farm animals worldwide are suffering because of intensive factory farming.

**A gift from you today can help stop this cruelty.
To find out more, please visit: ciwf.org.uk/trapped**

"Ending factory farming will not only mean better lives for farm animals, it will help save wildlife from extinction, improve our health and leave a planet fit for future generations."

Philip Lymbery, CEO, Compassion in World Farming International



Compassion in World Farming International is a registered charity in England and Wales, registered charity number 1095050, and a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales, number 4150804. DROCK_UK0522

To help change billions of lives, donate today at ciwf.org.uk/trapped

Labour Conference 2023

LAWS will have a stand at this year's Labour Party Conference in Liverpool (alongside Respect for Animals).

If you are attending then please come by and say hello.

We are at Stand 118 in the main exhibition hall.

These photos are from previous conferences and events that LAWS has attended over the past year.



Rachel Reeves MP, Shadow Chancellor



Jim McMahon MP,
Shadow Environment Secretary



Alex Davies-Jones MP, Shadow Minister for
Digital, Culture, Media & Sport



Alex Sobel MP,
Shadow Environment Minister
(with responsibility for animal welfare)

And don't forget..

LAWS' World Famous Conference Karaoke!



8pm until 1am

Monday 9 October 2023

Selfton Room,

Adelphi Hotel,

Ranelagh St, L3 5UL

There were over 2.7 million uses of animals in British laboratories last year

This number includes cats, dogs, rabbits, and monkeys; yet according to polling, 65% of Great Britain wants to see a binding plan to phase out all experiments that use animals in the UK.

It's time for the government to listen to the public.
We need a genuine plan to phase out all
experiments that use animals.

Find out more about our work, and what
you can do to support an end to the use of
animals in laboratories.

crueltyfreeinternational.org/takeaction



 **Cruelty Free**
INTERNATIONAL

A Critical Crossroads for Animal Testing and Cosmetics in the UK

The UK stands at a crossroads in its approach to animal testing. Down one path lies progress, and compassion. Down the other; animal suffering and status quo. Recent developments have revealed government priorities, highlighting the need for continued pressure to deliver humane and forward-looking choices.

Earlier this year, a Judicial Review initiated by Cruelty Free International revealed that the government had secretly abandoned the UK's ban on animal testing for cosmetics in 2019. The High Court judge made clear that the government was free to reinstate the ban.

In response, the Home Secretary announced a partial reinstatement of the ban. However, this new measure only prohibits tests on ingredients exclusively used in cosmetics, estimated to cover only 20% of ingredients, less than the previous ban. Public sentiment is clear, as evidenced by a 2021 YouGov poll indicating that 85% of UK citizens find cosmetics testing on animals unacceptable. The government must respond to this call and fully reinstate the ban.

While Keir Starmer's recent commitment to the cosmetics ban is encouraging, we are lacking specifics

and a firm pledge to completely reinstate the 1998 ban in full.

Such a commitment would restore the level of protection initiated by the then Labour government, which prohibited animal testing for ingredients used predominantly as well as exclusively in cosmetics.

We cannot accept a further lowering of the baseline on animal testing. YouGov polling reveals that 65% of Great Britain supports a binding plan to phase out animal testing. Despite this, the UK remains Europe's primary user of animal experiments, with over 2.7 million instances in British laboratories last year. The scale is often invisible to the public.

A determined commitment, backed by legal and policy mechanisms, is required to bring about an end to animal testing. Without it, progress will continue to be glacial.

Beyond its ethical implications, animal testing is often flawed science. Despite decades of animal research, many debilitating and life-threatening diseases, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and many cancers lack effective treatments. Moreover, the pharmaceutical industry faces a silent crisis. 92% of drugs fail in clinical trials despite passing extensive pre-clinical

tests (including animal tests) which suggested that they were safe and effective. Non-animal alternatives offer a promising shift. A growing range of non-animal methods are proving more effective, potentially saving lives and resources. Successive governments have been too passive in harnessing these alternatives. A 2021 report by the APPG for Human Relevant Science identifies regulatory, cultural, and funding barriers obstructing non-animal methods.

A government committed to animal welfare and modern innovation must seize this moment. A comprehensive approach is essential, encompassing funding, rigorous regulatory review, and the immediate elimination of tests that are either purely driven by curiosity or have reliable animal-free alternatives. A dedicated government minister should spearhead the transition, fostering cross-departmental cooperation.



These recent revelations serve as a cautionary tale. Ignoring public opinion and disregarding the potential of non-animal methods flies in the face of good government. It undermines ethical progress and scientific advancement.

As the UK grapples with its prominent role in animal experiments, any future government must champion change, innovation, and a future that values animals as well as scientific progress. Through a steadfast commitment to a comprehensive ban on animal testing for cosmetics and the elevation of non-animal methods, the UK can emerge as a global leader in modern, cruelty-free science. If the Labour Party wants to form the next government, it would do well to take up that leadership by offering a clear, ambitious plan to create a truly cruelty-free world.

Dylan Underhill



Final Word:

Tories betray animals (again)

As if we did not already know, the Tories don't like animals. They may say that they love their pets and they certainly like bits of animals such as foie gras, but when it comes to protecting animal welfare on a larger scale their actions speak volumes.

As we approach a key moment in the electoral cycle, there is an opportunity for Labour to show there is clear blue water between it and the Tory government when it comes to animal welfare and put forward a comprehensive, exciting plan for animals under a future Labour administration.

One thing is clear: **this government cannot be trusted to deliver for animals.**

As Alex Sobel, shadow minister with responsibility for animal welfare, said in the Commons this year after Mark Spencer announced DEFRA's ditching of the Kept Animals Bill:

"It represents a profound setback for animal welfare in the UK. It confirms once again that the Government is too weak to deliver their own legislation. This time it's innocent animals who will suffer the consequences."

A large number of MPs, including numerous Tories voiced their dismay when the Government abandoned the long promised Kept Animals Bill and

this summer Zac Goldsmith resigned as a minister, launching a stinging tirade on Rishi Sunak's government which contained particular reference to the broken promises on animal welfare, including the lack of progress on its much vaunted Animal Welfare Action Plan:

"Before you (the PM) took office, you assured party members, via me, that you would continue implementing the action plan, including the kept animals bill and measures like ending the live export of animals for slaughter, banning keeping primates as pets, preventing the import of shark fins and hunting trophies from vulnerable species."

"But I have been horrified as, bit by bit, we have abandoned these commitments – domestically and on the world stage. The kept animals bill has been ditched, despite your promises. Our efforts on a wide range of environmental issues have simply ground to a standstill."

Such blue-on-blue attacks offer opportunities for Labour as we approach a general election.

Animal welfare is a core Labour issue, is popular with voters in rural and urban target seats, and should form a lasting legacy of the next Labour government.

Animals need LAWS.. and LAWS needs you

Working on the new animal welfare manifesto and preparing for Conference costs a great deal of money.

In the coming months, further work on the manifesto and preparing for the next general election is going to be our priority but we need funds to be effective.

We are launching our general election fighting fund, any amount you are able to contribute will help us to be the best voice possible for animals. Thank you.

If you can support us,
please send donations to:

LAWS, 30 Station Road, NG4 3AX

To arrange an alternative method,
please email:

labouranimalwelfaresociety@gmail.com



Website: labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk

Email: labouranimalwelfaresociety@gmail.com

Address: LAWS, 30 Station Road, NG4 3AX

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