



# Impact

JOURNAL OF THE LABOUR ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

AUTUMN 2025



## ACTION FOR ANIMALS

**How Labour can deliver on the promise of 'the biggest boost to animal welfare in a generation'**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Is animal welfare still on Labour's agenda?
- LAWS policy actions + updates from Parliament with Irene Campbell MP
- NGO articles from Compassion In World Farming, Cruelty Free International, League Against Cruel Sports and more...



## HAS ANIMAL WELFARE FALLEN OFF LABOUR'S AGENDA?



*Mark Glover, Chair of LAWS*

Recent opinion poll data confirms what we have known for a very long time, that animal welfare is an important issue for voters. It is often repeated that we are a nation of animal lovers but recent governments have not reflected this important trait.

A significant poll of more than 10 thousand people carried out in 2022 by Focalddata showed that 72% of us in the UK agree with the statement:

"I would like to see the UK Government pass more laws designed to improve animal welfare and protect animals from cruelty."

And this majority was reflected in EVERY constituency in the country.

A 2023 poll showed that 17% think animal welfare is an 'urgent priority' for political or policy process. This is a figure that could help determine the outcome of elections in marginal constituencies.

During the election campaign last year, and shortly before being appointed Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steve Reed MP said:



"Labour will introduce the biggest boost in animal welfare in a generation".

But now, after more than a year in office, there is precious little sign of this biggest boost and, we are told, Steve Reed himself did not have any meetings with animal welfare groups during his time in post.

Labour's long promised Animal Welfare Strategy is now overdue and opportunities to support real animal welfare measures risk being missed. Ruth Jones' Private Members' Bill to ban the import and sale of fur is in the balance amidst uncertainty over government support, for example.

14 years of Tory neglect of animal welfare needs to be addressed and only Labour can do so. The Party has a proud history of supporting animal welfare and has made real and meaningful changes in the past.

The 1997 'New Life For Animals' set of policies were groundbreaking and hugely popular. Banning hunting with dogs and fur farming are just two of the measures the Labour Government introduced.

But Labour's 2024 election manifesto contained just 53 words on this important and popular issue.

LAWS fully understands the government's commitment to addressing the economic mess we inherited from the Tories, but it is possible to do more than one thing at a time and animal welfare policies need not cost any money and, in some cases, will save money.

They also tell a positive story and one that voters like.

As you will see in this issue of Impact there is so much that needs to be done – not least of which would be to close the loopholes in the hunting act and to prevent the import of products, such as fur, the production of which is deemed so cruel it is banned here.

There are simple measures that can improve the lives of literally millions of animals and it is time to start on Steve Reed's quest – just as Tony Blair's government did.

Steve Reed has now been replaced by Emma Reynolds and we have a chance to begin a dialogue with her. Please write to Emma Reynolds asking her to honour Steve Reed's pledge to give animal welfare the 'biggest boost'.

The reality is that this boost is urgently needed and bold, popular policies can help with Labour's electoral prospects.

What's not to like?





## Making a difference for animal welfare in Parliament

*Irene Campbell MP*

It is a privilege to be writing an article for Labour Animal Welfare Society, having first joined in the early 2000s when Wally Burley was the Chair, and it is great to see the wonderful work that LAWS continues today. As the Labour MP for North Ayrshire and Arran it is such a privilege to be able to take forward animal welfare issues in Parliament. I have been vegan since the early 1990s and animal welfare is an area of huge importance to me.

Our Labour Manifesto made some great commitments toward improving animal welfare, including partnering with scientists, industry, and civil society to work towards the phasing out of animal testing. As the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Phasing Out Animal Experiments in Medical Research, I met with Lord Vallance, the Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation, to discuss the importance of timelines for the road map to phasing out, as well as hosting a debate on this important issue in the Chamber. It is crucial that we ensure that when a roadmap is released, it contains a solid timeline, following examples from Europe and the USA.

One issue that I have been proud to champion recently, is "Hatch and Dispatch", which I collaborate on with The Vegetarian Society. Every year 45 million male chicks will be culled, mostly by gassing, as they will not grow large enough to be used in meat production. In-ovo technology, which allows the sex of a chick to be determined before they are born, is already mandatory in France and Germany.



We cannot allow the UK to fall behind the rest of the world in animal welfare, or on established and humane technology.

I have also been working with Humane World for Animals, on banning farrowing crates. These crates are so small the sows cannot even turn around, and have very reduced movement, unable to interact with her piglets. I held the event an event in Westminster to highlight this issue to other MPs, particularly by showcasing life-size animatronic mother pig in a real farrowing crate, allowing people to visualise how cramped and uncomfortable these cages are. On behalf of the Petitions Committee, I led a recent debate on banning the use of cages and crates for farmed animals.

I believe there is a good appetite in this Parliament for progress, within the Labour party, but also across parties, and it has been great to work with Members all across the Chamber on many animal welfare issues. I am looking forward to the publication of the Animal Welfare Strategy this autumn, and continuing to build on some of the great work that has already been done.



## Labelling for a Better Future

*Vicky Cox, LAWS*

When the Labour government introduced mandatory labelling for shell eggs in 2004, it sparked one of the greatest animal welfare success stories of recent times. Within just ten years, sales of cage-free eggs nearly doubled (increasing from 31.6% to 55.7%). Today, cage-free eggs are now the majority (82%) of the market. Few examples exist, in any retail sector, where the highest welfare, most-sustainable, or most ethical product has become the mainstream option. The evidence strongly suggests that this success is attributable in a large part to the egg labelling rules introduced by the previous Labour administration.

That legacy must not be forgotten. The Labour government has promised to deliver the “biggest boost to animal welfare in a generation.” One of the simplest and most effective ways to do so is by introducing mandatory method-of-production labelling.

Public support is overwhelming. In DEFRA’s 2024 consultation on fairer food labelling, 99% of individuals and 69% of organisations backed the introduction of method-of-production labels. One of the main reasons for this public call is the confusion caused by current labelling laws which prevent consumers from making informed decisions about the animal welfare status of their purchases and fail to combat misleading labelling. Existing voluntary schemes such as Red Tractor and RSPCA Assured score poorly on recognition, and crucially do nothing to distinguish between imports produced to standards that would

be illegal here at home. DEFRA’s own analysis concluded that consumers are not able to compare welfare standards under the current patchwork of labels.

This confusion has consequences. DEFRA itself has noted that weak labelling reduces consumer willingness to pay for higher welfare products. This means that farmers who work to deliver better conditions for animals are being undercut by products made using cruel, outdated systems. The result is an uneven playing field which is bad for animals, bad for farmers, and bad for consumers who want to make ethical choices but are denied the tools to do so.

The solution is simple. DEFRA has already proposed a well-developed “A–E” labelling system for eggs, chicken and pork. Such a scheme would not only empower consumers, but deliver tangible benefits for British farmers. DEFRA estimates that mandatory welfare labelling would increase farm profits by over £40 million a year and provide a net benefit to society worth £139.9 million over a decade. Most importantly, it would improve the lives of millions of animals (110 million chickens, 700,000 laying hens and 510,000 pigs).

It is time for Labour to finish what it started in 2004. We hope to see mandatory method-of-production labelling included in the upcoming Animal Welfare Strategy to improve the lives of millions of animals, strengthen consumer information, boost profits for farmers, and benefit the economy.



## Ending the Cage Age: It's Time for a Humane Transition Away from Confining Millions of Animals

*Danielle Duffield, LAWS*

Many Britons would be shocked to learn that – despite our nation claiming to have some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world – every year approximately 8 million layer hens spend their lives in cages and around 200,000 mother pigs in the UK are confined in farrowing crates, which prevent them from exhibiting normal patterns of behaviour.[1]

These confinement systems cause immense suffering to animals. The cages used for hens (known as “enriched” cages) severely restrict many key natural behaviours of layer hens and allow for little more space per hen than an A4 sheet of paper.[2] Mother pigs (sows) kept in farrowing crates are similarly restricted: they are unable to walk, turn around, express natural rooting or nest-building behaviours, or interact normally with their piglets.[3] As the author Ruth Harrison famously put it, animals kept in small confinement systems simply cannot “live before they die”.[4]



The public wants to see an end to the use of these cages. Polling from July 2022 found that 94% of the British public consider it unacceptable for chickens to be kept in enriched cages and 96% said it was unacceptable to keep pigs in farrowing crates.[5] With Scotland having consulted last year on ending the use of cages for hens, and Wales having expressed a similar intended direction of travel, now is the right time for a UK-wide phase out of cages. Support should be provided to our farmers in their transition to higher-welfare systems through the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway.

Given the extreme suffering that these confinement systems cause to animals, and the enormous number of animals involved, phasing out their use is one of the most impactful things that the new Labour government could do to improve animal welfare. With the UK currently lagging behind many European nations which have already legislated against cages,[6] a ban would also help to restore the UK's status as a world leader in animal welfare. As a nation of animal lovers, that would be a legacy of which a Labour government would be proud.

[1]. Compassion in World Farming “[UK Government Respond to Our End the Cage Age Petition](#)” (20 February 2025).

[2]. Compassion in World Farming “[Position note: Enriched cages do not meet the welfare needs of laying hens](#)”.

[3]. Compassion in World Farming “[End the Cage Age Sows Investigation 2022](#)”.

[4]. Ruth Harrison, *Animal Machines* (1964).

[5]. Bryant Research “[Acceptability of Common Farming Practices](#)” (18 August 2022).

[6]. European Commission “[Directive 609/1986](#)”.



## How the Animal Welfare Strategy can deliver improved farmed animal welfare

*James West, Compassion in World Farming*



Compassion in World Farming welcomes the work undertaken by Defra in 'phase one' of the Labour Government, and to Daniel Zeichner MP for his work on the food strategy and 25-year farming roadmap. We welcome Minister Eagle to her post and hope that 'phase two' will see her and Baroness Hayman of Ullock rapidly roll out the Animal Welfare Strategy. Significant thought has gone into this work, which will allow the Government to deliver the long-awaited 'biggest boost for animal welfare in a generation'.

With one billion animals farmed in the UK every year, it is essential that farmed animal welfare forms a key part of the forthcoming strategies – of course in the animal welfare strategy but, to ensure policy coherence, also within the 25-year farming roadmap and food strategy.

Compassion wants Government to deliver on three key areas:

- Raising the baseline

A priority must be secondary legislation that ends confinement of farmed animals. It has long been accepted that action is needed to End the Cage Age – particularly phasing out cages for laying hens and farrowing crates for mother pigs. Around 7 million animals are confined every year. But with all the major UK supermarkets having committed to, or already no longer selling eggs from caged hens, it is time to finally end the use of these cruel systems.

- Supporting farmers in that transition

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway, whilst welcome, has yet to deliver the significant changes needed around housing of animals. A priority must be rolling out a pig housing welfare scheme to support farmers with the cost of moving to free farrowing or outdoor farrowing.

Farmers need confidence that they are not going to be undercut by imports whilst raising standards domestically. The government should introduce a set of core standards that must be met for a product to be permitted for import. The Government's trade strategy identified battery cage eggs and sow stall pork as areas of 'concern' and, as a minimum, imports of these products must now be prohibited.

- Helping consumers to play their part

Polling shows that consumers want to support higher welfare farming by making purchases that align with their ethical values. But currently they can only do so when purchasing eggs, as these are labelled to show how they were produced. For other products, consumers are almost entirely in the dark. A recent Government consultation showed overwhelming support for introducing mandatory methods of production labels to other species, and that such a scheme would, the impact assessment identified, give an annual benefit to farmers of £46m and a net benefit to society of £140m over 10 years. This should now be introduced.

The Government's huge buying power in terms of meals in public canteens could be better targeted towards higher welfare products, thereby giving further confidence to higher welfare farmers that their produce will have a market.

We look forward to seeing phase two of this Government, and eagerly anticipate these long-called for improvements in farmed animal welfare.

## Deliver the promise to phase-out animal testing

*Dylan Underhill, Cruelty Free International*



This time last year, Animal Welfare Minister, Sue Hayman confirmed at a LAWS fringe event that she would be working with counterparts in the Home Office and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology to advance a strategy aimed at delivering progress against the government's manifesto commitment to "work towards the phase-out of animal testing". At the time, we welcomed this headline commitment as a potential catalyst for genuine progress toward a cruelty-free future where animals are treated with dignity and respected as individuals, not as tools for experimentation.

So, where are we now after a year of Labour government, and how far has that promise come? Following Baroness Hayman's intervention at Conference 2024, Science Minister Patrick Vallance outlined the government's intentions regarding the phase-out of animal testing. Earlier this year, he confirmed that a cross-government team was developing a strategy to accelerate the use of alternatives to animal testing. This strategy, expected to be published later this year under the title *Replacing Animals in Science: A strategy to support the development, validation and uptake of alternative methods*, remains unpublished at the time of writing in mid-September, but its release is imminent.

Ministers were initially slow to engage directly with animal protection and welfare organisations, despite our readiness to offer practical and constructive proposals for an ambitious phase-out. However, we have since been assured that all of our submissions have been received and taken into account. Joint meetings have now taken place between animal NGOs, Lord Vallance, Lord Hanson (who leads on this matter for the Home Office), and officials from the Office for Life Sciences.

We appreciate the government's eventual willingness to engage, in a spirit of openness and shared hope for an end to animal testing, but the success of any strategy will ultimately depend on its substance and delivery.

As we await the strategy's publication, we are clear that certain elements must be present if it is to be credible. The government must show strong leadership by articulating a long-term vision for the full replacement of animal testing, and by actively coordinating stakeholders to drive progress. The strategy must go beyond the existing commitment to reduction and refinement and set out concrete objectives, milestones, and measurable targets that embed replacement as the ultimate goal.

It must also commit to actively phasing out animal use, not simply phasing in non-animal alternatives. Critical though new technology is, it will not be sufficient to end animal testing alone. Early steps must be outlined to eliminate scientifically redundant tests, as well as the most harmful and wasteful practices, whilst simultaneously promoting non-animal technologies. Collaboration will be key. Regulators, industry, academia, and civil society must be brought together to encourage the transparent exchange of information in order to drive innovation and challenge outdated practices. Regulatory frameworks must be updated to prioritise non-animal methods and ensure coherence across sectors. Crucially, the government must invest in change, providing long-term funding for infrastructure, training, and the creation of an Animal-Free Science Innovation Hub to accelerate the transition.

As we and other animal protection organisations, alongside our millions of combined supporters and members, await the strategy's release, we will be watching closely. Labour politicians, in particular, will be hoping to see a strong indication of a delivery focused strategy with real potential to produce results against a clear manifesto commitment. The government must now demonstrate that it is serious about delivering a future without animal testing. Anything less will be a missed opportunity - for science, for people, and for animals.



## Scotland leads the way on farmed fish welfare – what's next for England?

Georgie Hancock, The Humane League



At the Humane League UK, we are standing up for farmed fish, the forgotten victims of factory farming. We are calling for the UK governments to implement species-specific legislation for farmed fish at the time of their killing, including mandatory stunning requirements.

Earlier this year, the Scottish Government took a landmark step by releasing new guidance on the slaughter of farmed salmon. This is the first time a UK nation has recognised, in practical terms, that fish welfare at the time of killing cannot be ignored. We now expect to see Scotland translate this guidance into legislation, and for the UK Government to close the legislative gap for farmed fish in England. This represents a crucial moment to push for meaningful legal protections for farmed fish.

Every year, an estimated 77 million fish are farmed in the UK – making them the second most farmed group of animals after chickens. That's the equivalent of 100 fish killed every minute. Yet, despite clear recognition of their sentience, fish still lack the same legal protections at slaughter that terrestrial farmed animals receive. Existing voluntary schemes such as RSPCA Assured provide some safeguards, but these standards are not legally enforceable. True progress can only come from legislation.



Providing species-specific slaughter legislation for trout is not just about welfare – it also supports market growth. Clear, enforceable standards create consistency across producers, boosting consumer and retailer confidence in British trout. As demand for higher-welfare products rises both domestically and internationally, legislation would help the UK industry maintain competitiveness. In short, stronger standards mean stronger trust – and stronger trust drives long-term growth.

The Humane League UK is urging the UK Government to seize this opportunity. In its upcoming Animal Welfare Strategy, we want to see species-specific slaughter requirements for fishes as a top priority. This would not only improve the lives of tens of millions of sentient animals but would also send a strong message that fish welfare matters.

We also hope the Strategy delivers on other pressing priorities: an end to cages for laying hens, and mandatory method of production labelling for meat and dairy – a change that would empower consumers and drive improvements in broiler chicken welfare.

For Labour, these reforms represent a real chance to deliver the “greatest boost to animal welfare in a generation.” The momentum is here. Now we need to turn guidance into law, and voluntary promises into lasting protections.

## There is no time to lose to end cruel 'sports'

*Emma Slawinski, Chief Executive,  
League Against Cruel Sports*



Stepping into any new leadership role is daunting. When it is your first CEO role, at an organisation with a 100 year history, which has been part of fabric of your life for as long as you can remember, it is even more so. I have been delighted on joining the League Against Cruel Sports to find a team of staff and volunteers who are absolutely dedicated to ending the persecution of animals for 'sport'.

It beggars belief that this is still an issue in the twenty-first century, and more than 20 years since the passing of the Hunting Act. But those who gain pleasure from watching animals be harmed, whether it is hunting with dogs, shooting, dog fighting, or greyhound racing will go to great lengths to keep their so called 'sports' alive.

Hunting mammals with dogs is a case in point, which the government rightly prioritised as a manifesto pledge for animals. Whether foxes, stags, otter or mink are the victim, the Hunting Act should have ended these practices, in line with the overwhelming public opinion. But loopholes in the legislation, subterfuge and an outright disregard for the law have led to the persecution of animals continuing to be widespread. In the 2024-2025 fox hunting season, 397 incidences of foxes being chased were recorded by the League Against Cruel Sports.

That's why it's so important for the government to reform the Hunting Act, to tighten up the law, to consign these acts of cruelty to the history books, where they belong. The commitment to consult on banning trail hunting later this year is a positive start. It's essential that timelines do not drift, but also crucially that any change in the law looks at the Hunting Act as a whole, to ensure we don't have to correct further loopholes or blatant by-passing of the law in the future.

Of course, the animal being hunted is only part of the picture. These practices, far from being traditional countryside pursuits, have grown into huge industries. The shooting industry releases some 61million 'gamebirds' each year. These are non-native birds, bred in barren cages. Their release plays havoc with local habitats and wildlife. The grouse being shot elsewhere are at least native birds, but to produce unnaturally high numbers of them for 'sport', snares and traps take out swathes of other animals, heather and peat are burned, and mass outdoor indiscriminate medication is used to help them survive the unnaturally high population density.

As you'll gather from the above, whilst the leadership of the League Against Cruel Sports has changed, the mission hasn't. Ending cruel 'sports' remains the heart and soul of the organisation. Our new strategic plan – due to go live in Autumn 2025 – also points to growth areas; looking to tackle disturbing new trends like online animal abuse and expanding our work linking ending cruel sports to other public goods. But we will not take our eye from the ball, 2025 represents a pivotal moment in ridding our countryside of cruelty for 'fun', and working alongside government, we are confident that together, we will see the day when our wild animals are cherished and respected.



## Finishing the Job: let's make Britain fur free

*Richard Bissett, Respect for Animals*



**FIGHTING THE INTERNATIONAL FUR TRADE**

Respect for Animals is campaigning to close the UK's loophole on fur imports and sales. Fur farming has been banned here since 2003 under a Labour government: if it is too cruel to produce, it is too cruel to sell. That is exactly what Ruth Jones MP's Fur Imports and Sales Bill would deliver, and we urge MPs and members to support it through every stage.

Under the last Labour government, the UK was a global leader on fur, but now risks being left behind. The European Food Safety Authority's recent scientific opinion concludes that the welfare needs of mink, foxes, raccoon dogs and chinchillas are not met in the cage systems used on fur farms. Across Europe, this is strengthening calls to end fur production and the trade in farmed fur.

As it negotiates the details of the Common Veterinary Agreement with the EU, it is vital

the government takes into account the need to reserve the right to ban immoral products such as fur.

At home, Defra's call for evidence on the fur market a few years ago attracted strong engagement and should inform policy alongside the UK Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare. The UK Animal Welfare Committee is examining the issues around fur and, given EFSA's findings, a similar outcome is expected. The government will soon have ample evidence and no excuse not to act.

Of course, public opinion is consistent and clear. Polling shows strong support for banning the import and sale of new fur in Britain. People do not want animals to suffer for the whims of fashion.

Respect for Animals is working closely with Ruth Jones MP, LAWS patron, and our campaign partners to make the case that a compassionate, animal-loving Britain means ending the trade in fur and aligning UK law with science and public values. With strong public backing and a credible bill before Parliament, this is the moment to finish the job and make the UK truly fur free.



## The EU reset must not undermine Britain's commitment to animal welfare

*Tashi Thomas, API*



The Government is negotiating a veterinary agreement with the EU that could tie Britain's hands on animal welfare. Under the proposed deal, the UK would have to accept any animal products that meet EU standards – even if they come from farming systems we've banned as too cruel.

While we banned fur farming in 2000, several EU countries continue the practice, supplying around 30% of UK fur imports. We've effectively prohibited foie gras production since 2007, yet France and Hungary continue force-feeding. The agreement would prevent Britain from blocking these imports based on welfare concerns.

Legal analysis commissioned by Animal Policy International shows the deal creates a "quasi-internal market" where Britain must accept imports from any country whose products meet EU standards. This includes third countries with even lower welfare protections.

Take the EU-Mercosur trade deal, expected to be ratified soon. This will increase beef and poultry imports from South American countries where cattle are kept in crowded outdoor pens and chickens are crammed into sheds with less space than UK rules allow. Once this meat is processed in any EU country, it can enter Britain freely under the



veterinary agreement, regardless of how the animals were raised.

British farmers who've invested in higher welfare systems would face direct competition from these lower-cost imports, with no way for consumers to distinguish between them.

### What the Government promised

Labour's manifesto committed to not allowing British farmers to be undercut by low welfare imports. The trade strategy explicitly states the UK will protect "sensitive farming sectors" from unfair competition.

The current negotiating approach abandons these commitments. Switzerland, facing identical EU proposals, secured animal welfare exemptions in their recent agreement. They can restrict imports from cruel systems, require welfare labelling, and maintain higher standards while still benefiting from reduced trade barriers.

Negotiations are ongoing. The Government can still demand the same protections Switzerland achieved, or accept that British farmers must compete against production systems the British public have decided were too cruel for use here. The Swiss precedent proves animal welfare protections are achievable – if the political will exists to secure them.



## Back in power: a year of LAWS action



LAWS held its AGM this summer and we would like to thank all the previous members who have previously served on the Executive Committee. We welcome those who were elected to new positions and continue to appreciate the hard work of those who carry on in their roles.

Over the past year, we have been pushing for the manifesto commitments on animal issues as well as for further improvements in animal welfare. We have held two parliamentary drop-in sessions that have been very well-attended by Labour MPs, as well by the Animal Welfare Minister Baroness Hayman. We have continued to organise one-to-one meetings with numerous new Labour MPs at Parliament to brief them on key animal welfare issues. Our work as a Socialist Society also continues alongside our affiliated colleagues in the party.

In recent months, we have also had numerous meetings in relation to the government's Animal Welfare Strategy, including with Special Advisers at No. 10, Baroness Hayman, DEFRA SpAds, members of Parliament's EFRA Committee, MPs and peers. We are expecting the Animal Welfare Strategy to be published by the end of the year.

LAWS is also working closely with Ruth Jones MP, a Patron of LAWS and longstanding animal welfare advocate, on her Private Member's Bill to ban the import and sale of fur products.

We continue to work with and provide support to like-minded animal welfare organisations, including through securing the support of MPs and peers on key policy reforms. For example, we continue to engage supportive MPs and peers in support of a call to the UK and Scottish governments to implement species-specific legislation for farmed fish at the time of their killing, including mandatory stunning requirements.

We are also lending our voice in support of the Ban Hatch and Dispatch campaign, which aims to end a cruel practice within the egg industry of culling male chicks, and supporting efforts to phase out animal testing as soon as possible.

In addition, we continue to work with supportive MPs and peers to seek to secure policy commitments to improving farmed animal welfare standards, including through phasing out the use of cages for hens and crates for pigs, and through the introduction of mandatory animal welfare method-of-production labelling.

Finally, we are holding two events at Conference this year, one in the SERA tent – Sunday 28 Sept at 16:30 – and a drinks reception on our stand at E10 in the Exhibition Hall – Monday 29 Sept at 18:00.

The famous LAWS karaoke will take place as ever at the Adelphi Hotel on the Monday evening from 20:30 onwards.



## FROM THE ARCHIVE:

### LAWS' Conference Magazine from October 1997

In the autumn of 1997, as the Party gathered in Brighton for its first Conference in power, LAWS published a 'Post Election Special' conference magazine.

In 1997, Labour in power brought real hope for animals, with pledges to ban fur farming, end cosmetic testing, and review cruel practices like live exports. Today, with a Labour government that promised the biggest boost for animal welfare in a generation, we remember that history.

Of particular interest is a double page article by Environment Minister Elliot Morley MP detailing all the work the government had done on animal welfare in its first 100 days in office.

Those first 100 days showed that animal welfare was no longer an afterthought in government under the Tories, but was part of the national political conversation.

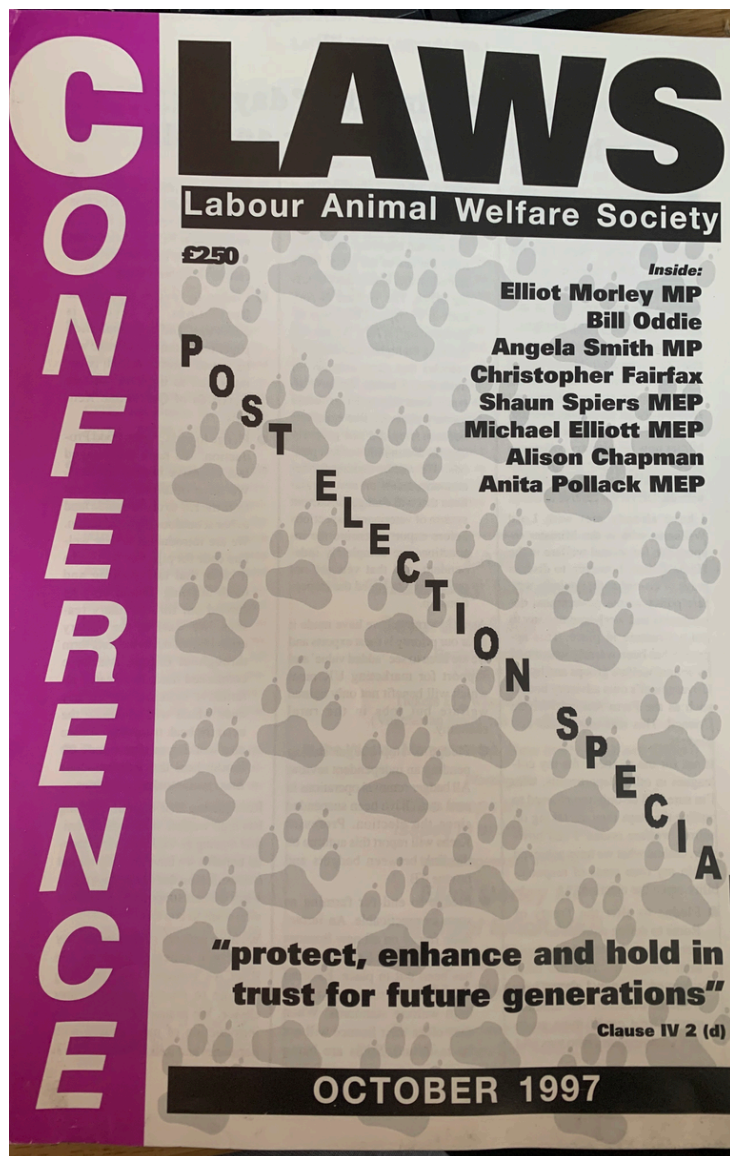
Although there was no dedicated minister for animal welfare, a determination had emerged to coordinate responsibilities across departments, in order to ensure policies took full effect.

One of the headline priorities already being prepared was to ban fur farming in Britain, a cruel and outdated practice that had been resisted by previous Tory governments.

Alongside this, the government was tackling puppy farming with stronger licensing and inspections, and already working to end cosmetic testing of ingredients on animals. Just as significantly, action was already being taken to strengthen enforcement, ensuring protections were not left unenforced but backed by real powers of inspection. New standards on slaughter were also being prepared.

Leadership on the international stage was highlighted, including opposing commercial whaling at the CITES conferences, beating opposition from Japan and Norway, while making major progress towards seeing animals acknowledged as sentient beings in an amended Treaty of Rome.

There were also moves to review live animal exports, prevent badger culling in favour of testing and vaccine research, and confirmation that Parliament would be given a free vote on fox hunting with hounds.



## Download now: LAWS briefings and reports

A number of reports are accessible on the LAWS website, including our report on shooting, our animal welfare polling report and our manifesto for animals, 'A Better Life For Animals'.

LAWS has also produced policy briefings on key issues, which have been handed to MPs and are available to download on the LAWS website.

These briefings cover five key policy asks to improve animal welfare, the proposed fur sales and import ban, and one focused on the welfare of farmed animals. These briefings have been useful to a number of MPs, and have been quoted during parliamentary debates.

To download these, go to:  
[labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk/briefings](http://labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk/briefings)



### 1. Mandatory Animal Welfare Labelling

Introduce an "A-E" method-of-production welfare label for eggs, chicken and pork. This labelling regime would help consumers to make more informed decisions about the animal welfare status of their purchases whilst combating existing misleading labelling. It would allow farmers to more easily be compensated for their higher welfare production. And it would support domestic farmers by helping consumers to identify imports produced to animal welfare standards which would be illegal if produced in the UK.

- 97% of respondents to a 2021 Defra Call for Evidence on labelling supported the idea of mandatory animal welfare labelling.  
- DEFRA's impact assessment found that the labelling scheme would provide a net benefit to society of approximately £340 million over 10 years.

How: Implement the well-developed proposals from Defra's May 2024 consultation by introducing secondary legislation under the Food Safety Act 1990, and providing a 12-18 month transition period for industry to update their labels.

### 2. End the Cage Age

End the Cage Age for layer hens and pigs. Each year, approximately 8 million layer hens in the UK spend their lives in cages with little more than the space of an A4 piece of paper each, and around 200,000 mother pigs in the UK are confined in farrowing crates unable to turn around. These systems prevent animals from expressing normal patterns of behaviour and significantly compromise their welfare.

- Scotland recently consulted on banning cages for hens and the Welsh Labour Manifesto commits to continuing the Welsh Labour government's work on caged farmed primates.  
- A number of European nations have already banned these cages, leaving Britain falling behind.

- Polling from July 2022 by [British Title](https://www.britishtitle.com) found that 94% of the British public consider it unacceptable for chickens to be kept in cages with 750 sq cm of space (i.e. to use enriched cages), and 76% said it was unacceptable to keep pigs in cages which prevent them from turning around for several weeks.  
- DEFRA recently launched a £22 million laying hen housing grant scheme to support the costs of farmers in England who wish to transition to higher welfare housing.

How: following a consultation, lay secondary legislation to implement a five-year transition period for moving to cage- and crate-free housing by amending The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007.

### 3. Ban Low Welfare Imports

Ban the importation of products produced using production methods that are illegal in the UK for products: free range, eggs produced using battery cages, and pork produced using sow stalls.

- Farming bodies, including the NFU, strongly support a ban on low welfare imports, to stop British farmers being undercut.  
- The public agrees: a [British Title](https://www.britishtitle.com) survey from 2022 showed that 84% of people support putting restrictions or bans on lower-welfare imports that do not meet UK production standards.  
- The most up-to-date legal opinions by trade lawyers confirm that these import bans are consistent with both the World Trade Organisation's rules and the UK's Free Trade Agreements. Other jurisdictions such as India and Israel, have already banned imports of fur and/or foie gras. These bans would be consistent with the UK's existing legal requirement for all meat imported into the UK to meet our humane slaughter laws.

How: introduce an animal welfare bill to ban the imports of these products and include an enabling power which allows other practices to be added in the future via secondary legislation.



LAWS Patron, Ruth Jones MP

## MP Quick-fire Questions

**Name:** Ruth Jones

### What is your favourite animal?

Domestic – cat (mackerel tabby or tortoiseshell). Wild – elephant (probably African rather than Indian).

### What was your first companion animal called?

A tortoiseshell cat called Winkie.

### What about current pets?

Sadly my twin tabbies died a couple of years ago and it wouldn't really be fair to keep a pet when I am away so much.

### What is your favourite Labour achievement for animals?

The Hunting Act (yes it does need tightening, but it was a start).

### Who is your Labour hero?

Clement Attlee.

### What is your LAWS Conference karaoke song of choice?

I will survive – Gloria Gaynor.

### What would you be if you weren't an MP?

Retired and gardening!!

### Finally, what is your favourite thing about Wales?

Too many things to single out just one, but the people first, then the countryside and of course the food and drink.



# Your membership matters

LAWS is the only animal welfare organisation affiliated to Labour, meaning we can play a critical role promoting animal protection under this Labour government.

To do this, we need you once more.

If you haven't already joined us it's £20 a year (and £10 for concessions).

If you are already a member, then please rejoin this October and spread the word and encourage your family, friends, MP, councillors and other party colleagues to join as well.

The more members we have, the stronger our voice for animals will be.

**After all, animals need LAWS!**

Scan to join



Website: [www.labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk](http://www.labouranimalwelfaresociety.org.uk)

Email: [labouranimalwelfaresociety@gmail.com](mailto:labouranimalwelfaresociety@gmail.com)

Facebook: [@labouranimalwelfaresociety](https://www.facebook.com/labouranimalwelfaresociety)

X/Twitter: [@LabourAnimals](https://twitter.com/LabourAnimals)

