



27th July 2022

Dear Rt Hon. Rishi Sunak MP

Congratulations on your successful campaign to become one of the final two candidates in the Conservative Party leadership contest. We are writing to urge you to show your support for the government’s 2021 Action Plan for Animal Welfare, and your commitment to passing and strengthening more laws to protect animals from cruelty and suffering.

The Conservative Party’s 2019 manifesto states that ‘high standards of animal welfare are one of the hallmarks of a civilised society.’ We fully agree with this sentiment. We define ourselves as a ‘nation

of animal lovers', with almost three quarters of the public saying that they would like to see the government pass more laws to improve animal welfare.¹

The manifesto pledged to continue our 'long tradition of protecting animals' and last week we celebrated a major milestone in that history. On 22nd July 1822, Parliament passed the UK's first animal protection law, prohibiting certain cruel treatment of cattle and other animals. Two hundred years later we have much to be proud of, but there is so much more to do, both for animals here in the UK and for animals overseas.

Animals need a Prime Minister whose government will give them the legal protections they need and deserve, as sentient beings. Will you pledge such protections as part of your leadership campaign?

The government's 2021 Action Plan for Animal Welfare contains many important measures of which only four have been completed to date. Specifically, will you commit to:

1. **Prioritise time to allow the Kept Animals Bill** to pass in the current Parliamentary session, delivering on manifesto commitments to end live exports for fattening and slaughter; introduce new laws to tackle low welfare puppy imports and pet abduction; and restrict the keeping of primates as pets, amongst other measures.
2. **Progress legislation to protect the welfare of animals abroad**, including bans on imports of hunting trophies, fur and foie gras, and the advertising of low welfare tourism activities overseas, such as elephant rides.
3. **Strengthen existing legislation to:** introduce compulsory cat microchipping; phase out use of cages in farming; prevent inhumane trapping and killing of wildlife (e.g. banning snares and expediting an end to the badger cull); support the Life Sciences sector in an accelerated transition to a goal of ending animal experiments; and, crucially, strengthen and extend the current laws on hunting with dogs.

Animals matter, and our treatment of them matters to voters of all political persuasions. We would be very grateful to receive your views and we will be pleased to share candidates' responses with our supporters and the wider public and press.

Yours sincerely

Celebrities

Dr. Marc Abraham OBE

Tracy Edwards

Peter Egan

Kirsty Gallacher

Ricky Gervais

Dr. Amir Khan

Larry the cat (@Number10Cat)

Dame Twiggy Lawson

Dame Joanna Lumley

¹ <https://www.focalddata.com/blog/ngo-animal-welfare-standards-mrp>

Johnny Marr

Virginia McKenna OBE

Paul O'Grady MBE

Chris Packham

Sinitta

Will Travers OBE

Vanessa-Mae

Lucy Watson

Animal protection NGOs

Elisa Allen, Vice President, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

Sonul Badiani-Hammett, UK Country Director, FOUR PAWS UK

Claire Bass, executive director, Humane Society International/UK

Richard Benwell, Chief Executive, Wildlife & Countryside Link

Anne Brummer, CEO, Save Me Trust

Chris Butler-Stroud, CEO, Whale and Dolphin Conservation

Kirsteen Campbell, CEO, Scottish SPCA

Sarah Carr, CEO, Naturewatch Foundation

Ian Cawsey - Director of Advocacy and Campaigns, The Donkey Sanctuary

Jan Creamer, President, Animal Defenders International

Sarah Dixon & Nicola Skelley, Directors of The FOAL Group

Bob Elliot, Director, OneKind

Chris Fegan, Chief Executive, Catholic Concern for Animals

Barbara Gardner, Director Animal Interfaith Alliance

Sean Gifford, Managing Director, The Humane League UK

Iain Green, Director, Animal Aid

Peter Hambly, Executive Director, Badger Trust

Laura Hellwig, Managing Director, Viva!

Claire Howard, Executive Director, Crustacean Compassion

Dr Mark Jones, Head of Policy, Born Free

Virginie Kan, Acting UK Country Director, World Animal Protection

Dr Andrew Kelly, Director, Freedom for Animals

Andy Knott, Chief Executive, League Against Cruel Sports

Peter Laurie, Chief Executive, Battersea

Simon Marsh, Director, Wild Welfare

Duncan McNair, CEO Save the Asian Elephants

Dr. Nick Palmer, UK Director, Compassion in World Farming

Abigail Penny, Executive Director, Animal Equality UK

Lorraine Platt, Co-Founder Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation

Kerry Postlewhite, Director for Government and Regulatory Affairs, Cruelty Free International

Owen Sharp, Chief Executive, Dogs Trust

Chris Sherwood, CEO, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Dominic Sullivan, Interim Chief Executive, Cats Protection

Peter Tutt, Coordinator, The Shellfish Network

Chris Wainwright, Chief Executive, Brooke: Action for Working Horses and Donkeys

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