

About Animal Aid

Animal Aid is one of the largest pressure groups in the UK that campaigns against all forms of animal cruelty.

Animal Aid's origins

The story of Animal Aid began in 1977, when schoolteacher Jean Pink read a book by philosopher Peter Singer called 'Animal Liberation'. This book exposed what was happening to animals in laboratories and factory farms. Jean couldn't get the images of animal suffering out of her head and she decided she had to do something about it.

She produced leaflets and petitions at home, and recruited a small group of supporters to hand them out to the public. The number of supporters grew, and Jean decided to give up teaching so that she could devote all her time to her campaigning work. She rented an office in Tonbridge and established Animal Aid as a pressure group. Animal Aid has grown today into one of the world's longest established animal rights groups with many thousands of supporters.



Demonstration against animal experiments in 1980. Jean Pink (bottom left) is holding an Animal Aid placard.

Aims and objectives

Animal Aid concentrates on campaigning against animal abuse in the UK. The society's key aims are:

1. To increase public awareness of the abuse of animals.
2. To seek changes in the law so that animals are better protected from cruelty and exploitation.
3. To promote a lifestyle which does not involve the abuse of animals.



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Target groups

The key target groups for Animal Aid's campaigns are:

- the general public
- politicians such as MPs, MEPs and government ministers
- the media, including TV, radio and newspapers.

It is through the media, our website and special publications that we communicate our message to the public, who we hope will change their lifestyle and also lobby politicians to introduce laws to bring about change. As consumers, members of the public can also influence companies by, for example, buying cruelty-free products.

Campaign methods

Animal Aid's main campaign methods include:

- distributing films, leaflets, posters, factsheets, postcards and reports
- carrying out undercover investigations to expose animal cruelty
- online campaigning including social media
- lobbying politicians and businesses
- organising demonstrations and publicity events
- providing teaching resources free of charge to schools.

Animal Aid's campaigning policy is strictly peaceful.

Funding

Animal Aid is funded by its members and supporters through donations, legacies and sponsored events. We receive no government funding.

Type of organisation

Animal Aid is a 'not-for-profit' limited company run by a voluntary Council of Management. Although its work is completely charitable, the Society chooses not to be a charity. This is because being a charity can restrict the work you do if it involves campaigning for changes in the law.

Campaigning for change

Animal Aid mainly campaigns against animal experiments, animal farming, shooting birds for sport, horse racing and wildlife culls. We also encourage people to go vegan as part of a cruelty-free lifestyle.

Animal experiments

Animal Aid campaigns for the abolition of all animal experiments. We argue that the use of animals in research is not only cruel, but is also unnecessary. There are lots of humane methods that could be used instead, such as human tissue, computer models and microdosing.

Animal Aid produces leaflets and reports to increase public awareness of the abuse of animals in vivisection laboratories. Our Victims of Charity campaign, for example, exposes the animal experiments funded by medical research charities and calls on people to protest to the chief executives of the charities concerned.

We also urge people to buy only non-animal tested household cleaning products and ethically produced cosmetics and toiletries, and to support only those health charities that fund humane, non-animal research.

Animal farming

Animal Aid works to expose the hidden cruelty that goes on inside Britain's farms and slaughterhouses. We carry out undercover investigations to draw attention to the plight of animals reared for food.

Animal Aid calls upon the public to lobby politicians to introduce laws to improve the lives of farmed animals. We also encourage people to reject the products of animal farms and slaughterhouses and to go vegan.

Shooting of animals for sport

Animal Aid campaigns against the shooting of pheasants and other birds for sport. Our investigators expose the shooting industry's use of battery cages for breeding birds. We also oppose the culling of wild animals such as badgers, deer, squirrels and foxes.



Case study: Slaughterhouse exposé

Since 2009, Animal Aid has filmed secretly inside fourteen British slaughterhouses. We found evidence of lawbreaking in thirteen of them.

Our films reveal animals being kicked and stamped on as well as being improperly stunned and going to the knife while still conscious.

In 2010 Essex slaughterhouse A&G Barber Ltd. closed down when its customers saw, through our secretly filmed footage, how bad conditions were.

Evidence we gathered in 2012 at Cheales Meats slaughterhouse resulted in two slaughterhouse workers being jailed for cruelty to animals. They were filmed stubbing cigarettes out on the faces of pigs and beating the animals.

We publicised this footage and called on members of the public to lobby their MP to take action. Finally, in 2018, after nine years of campaigning, the government introduced legislation to make independently monitored CCTV cameras compulsory in all UK slaughterhouses.



Animal Aid supporters demonstrating against the Grand National horse race.

Horse racing

More than 400 horses are raced to death every year in Britain – more than eight horses per week. Many more are killed because they are no longer useful to their owners. We aim to expose the hidden cruelty involved in the sport. By publicising the plight of race horses we aim to persuade the public not to support the public not to support racing by betting on it.



What you can do:

- Find out more about Animal Aid campaigns and see a list of our achievements on our website: www.animalaid.org.uk.
- Ask your teacher to invite a speaker from Animal Aid to give a talk to your class on animal rights.