



## **Briefing for the Welsh elections 2021 on better safeguarding of animals from additional harms at point of slaughter in Wales**

**Campaign Aim:** to make CCTV recording mandatory in slaughterhouses in all areas where live animals are present, with unrestricted access to real time and stored footage for Official Vets (OVs), Food Standards Agency officials and independent experts.

### **Executive summary:**

Independently monitored CCTV protects animals from illegal cruelty or negligence in slaughterhouses. Animal Aid's undercover filming in UK slaughterhouses has found widespread brutality and law-breaking including at Farmers Fresh slaughterhouse in Wales.

CCTV can also assist with training and can protect workers from false allegations. CCTV is already mandatory in England and will be in Scotland from July 2021.

A 2018 YouGov poll in Wales found that 79% of people supported the idea, as do the BVA, RSPCA Cymru and the Food Standards Agency.

### **Why CCTV**

- OV's at slaughterhouses cannot physically be everywhere at the same time, and Animal Aid's evidence suggests that workers often wait until they know they are not being watched before breaking the law. <sup>1</sup>
- There is not always space to install a viewing platform at the stun/ kill point and it may not always be possible for an OV to view the full process safely. Footage can be referenced historically.
- Independently monitored CCTV protects animals and also assists in the training and re-training of staff and protects staff from bullying and false allegations.

### **Background**

- Mandatory CCTV has been a legal requirement in English slaughterhouses since May 2018 and will be a legal requirement in Scotland from 1st July 2021. Wales and Northern Ireland have yet to follow suit.
- The Food Standards Agency has acknowledged that CCTV has been instrumental in identifying non-compliances and supporting welfare enforcement in English slaughterhouses. <sup>2</sup>  
A YouGov opinion poll conducted on behalf of Animal Aid in 2018 has shown that the majority (79%) of the Welsh public supported mandatory CCTV with independent monitoring. <sup>3</sup>
- The British Veterinary Association, RSPCA Cymru, The Humane Slaughter Association, Compassion in World Farming and the Food Standards Agency all welcome the use of mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses, as part of a package of protective measures including in-person monitoring: <sup>3-8</sup>
- There has been an extremely poor uptake of the Welsh Government's £1.1 million voluntary grant funding scheme, launched in March 2018, which included the upgrade or installation of CCTV monitoring systems. Just four grants have been awarded and just £2,689 has been paid out, according to FOI data as returned on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021. <sup>9</sup>

- The most recent publicly available statistics, published in 2016, showed that only eight of 23 operational slaughterhouses in Wales had any form of CCTV; these included the three largest sites in Wales.<sup>10</sup>
- Animal Aid investigators have filmed inside a number of UK slaughterhouses. In 2019 we investigated Farmers Fresh slaughterhouse in Wrexham. Our covert cameras brought to light shocking evidence of widespread incompetence, brutality and law-breaking. We had grave concerns about the stunning process; animals may have gone to the knife fully conscious. A number of workers were implicated. The slaughterhouse had CCTV installed but without rules pertaining to its placement, use and operation, it wasn't an effective safeguarding tool. For example, the camera in the stun/ kill area was effectively blocked by a worker's head. Without our intervention, this terrible situation could have continued for some time, unchecked:<sup>11</sup>

### Arguments against mandatory CCTV

- Some argue that CCTV could be an invasion of worker privacy, but staff in many hotels, bars, high street shops and offices are covered by CCTV. The cameras would not be present in changing areas or rest rooms.
- Others argue against it due to cost. The cost of installing cameras is 'relatively modest' (George Eustice, Adjournment Debate, 3rd February 2015) and should not be a barrier.
- An independent report by Professor Ian Rotherham of Sheffield Hallam University (published August 2016 –<http://bit.ly/RotherhamReport>) found that costs for installation of appropriate CCTV systems for monitoring would be between £700 and £2,500 depending on the size of the facility.

### References

1. <https://www.animalaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Britains-Failing-Slaughterhouses-v6.pdf>
2. <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-20-09-14-animal-welfare.pdf>
3. <https://www.slaughterhousecctv.org.uk/public-support/> \*\*Taken from the Wales Omnibus Survey (OM 550) by YouGov.Plc between 16th and 23rd September. The survey was carried out online and there were 1000 adult respondents. The figures are rounded to the nearest percentage point. Respondents gave their answers after being shown the following statement: 'The use of CCTV cameras in slaughterhouses in Wales is not currently compulsory. Some argue that CCTV should not be compulsory, as they fear that the presence of CCTV could present an invasion of worker privacy. Others argue that CCTV would help protect animals from cruelty inside slaughterhouses, as it means that procedures can be independently monitored, allowing action to be taken against those that do not follow regulations. To what extent would you support or oppose making CCTV with independent monitoring of footage compulsory for all slaughterhouses in Wales?'
4. <https://www.bva.co.uk/take-action/our-policies/cctv-in-slaughterhouses/>
5. <https://news.rspca.org.uk/2018/03/26/rspca-cymru-welcome-measures-to-install-cctv-in-slaughterhouses/>
6. <https://www.hsa.org.uk/news-events/news/post/51-cctv-to-be-introduced-in-all-slaughterhouses-in-england-in-2018>
7. <https://www.ciwf.org.uk/news/2017/08/mandatory-cctv-in-englands-abattoirs>
8. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/658739/cctv-slaughterhouse-consult-sum-resp.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658739/cctv-slaughterhouse-consult-sum-resp.pdf)
9. <https://gov.wales/ps11m-grant-aid-scheme-small-and-medium-size-slaughterhouses>
10. <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-01/161216atn10924doc1.pdf>
11. <https://www.animalaid.org.uk/breaking-our-covert-cameras-capture-appalling-scenes-of-slaughterhouse-incompetence-and-chaos-at-farmers-fresh-wales/>