

THE HUMANE LEAGUE   
UNITED KINGDOM



# 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

[thehumaneleague.org.uk](https://thehumaneleague.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number 1177926

# From our Leadership

## *Friends,*

As I write this report, we've been living and working through a pandemic for over a year. While it was a year of isolation, worry, and despair, it was a year in which good things happened, too. And this is thanks to you.

Because of you, animals weren't forgotten throughout a human tragedy, and irreversible welfare improvements for millions of chickens have been established. And so it is thanks to you that we have once again come a significant step closer to our mission to end the abuse of animals raised for food.

I invite you to reflect on THL UK's meaningful achievements of the last year with me, which range from fast-food giant Burger King committing to the Better Chicken Commitment, to international chocolatier Lindt saying 'no' to cages for good, to Nestlé following through on their commitment to cage-free eggs.

As we are entering our fourth year as an organisation, nearly 100 companies in the UK have eliminated cages from their supply chains, and over 80 businesses pledged to higher chicken welfare standards - and rising. It goes to show that we are part of a global force which has grown so strong that even a year of crisis can't hold us back. That's not to say it hasn't been tough. We haven't been able to connect with each other in person through protests or animal action meetups. When the first lockdown happened we could no longer do much of our work and had to furlough most of our staff for two and a half months as a consequence. But through it all, we continued to advocate for animals here and around the world.

Despite the unique set of challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis, we were instrumental in securing 38 new commitments this year from major companies to phase out the cruellest treatment of chickens on factory farms. We have had to be more nimble in our tactics than ever before, and it paid off. Companies like Nando's, Greggs and Côte publicly committed to ending the use of fast-growing chicken breeds, and more meaningful welfare standards.

We even secured our first sign up from a pet food company, Beco, indicating that a new era of corporate responsibility and compassion has begun. Change is happening, and we are driving it. This is also reflected in our lobbying work for fishes, whom we're giving a voice through advocacy. It has been wonderful to see so many interested participants from all over the world joining our first ever virtual Aquatic Animal Welfare Conference, making this awareness-raising event a real success for our underwater friends.

But our work doesn't end here. As animal abuse persists every day on factory farms we must continue the fight. If anything, the COVID-19 outbreak has proven that the risk of disease from abuse of animals is real, and we must change the way animals are mistreated now more than ever. We are beyond grateful for your loyalty throughout this past year and extremely excited for everything we can, and will, continue to achieve together.

## *For the animals,*

Vicky Bond







*together, we are*  
**ENDING**  
**THE ABUSE OF**  
**ANIMALS**  
*raised for food*

# STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

*The Humane League's work is grounded in our strategic principles. They are our guiding force and outline our approach to achieving our mission.*

## 1 CREATE BIG SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH MEANINGFUL, INCREMENTAL STEPS.

- We work to make the greatest difference by focusing on achievable goals that impact the greatest number of animals.
- We embrace change and evolve our tactics and short-term strategy to maximise our impact.
- Our interventions are based on sound science. We invest in measuring our progress and act on relevant research. Our policy decisions are guided by expert insight.

## 2 BUILD A GLOBAL COALITION THAT IS BIGGER THAN OURSELVES.

- Animal abuse is a crisis that must be addressed globally. We work within coalitions to multiply our power. And we serve as a member of a united, worldwide team.
- We share resources and aspire to be generous, always putting the greater good first.
- We are committed to learning from others, listening, and being open to feedback.

## 3 DEVELOP A MOVEMENT THAT'S STRONGER EACH YEAR.

- Within our organisation and our coalitions, we take a people-centric approach. We strive for a sustainable, operationally efficient, and culturally strong organisation.
- We are committed to good governance, equity and inclusion, and responsible leadership.
- We invest in expanding the support of our cause and developing skills within the movement to gain long-term capacity and momentum.





# WINS

## *around the world*

*The abuse of animals raised for food is a global crisis.*

Throughout the world, and in partnership with Open Wing Alliance members in more than 60 countries, we're driving transformative progress for animals.

During 2020/2021, THL UK secured 38 commitments to end the worst forms of abuse on factory farms including:

**12 COMMITMENTS**  
WITH A GLOBAL IMPACT

**24**

COMMITMENTS  
IN THE UNITED  
KINGDOM

**2**

COMMITMENTS  
SPANNING  
EUROPE



---

# THL UK's PROGRESS FOR ANIMALS

*Without a doubt, we had to adapt quickly to the global circumstances.*

So we shifted our corporate outreach and campaigns focus from restaurants to meal kit companies which, being a winner of the COVID-19 pandemic, is a fast-growing sector. This way, we managed to get 19 of the top 26 meal kit companies to commit to the BCC in the UK.

In total, we achieved 12 cage-free commitments and 26 broiler chicken commitments, which is 50% of last year's commitments - a huge success given the disruptive global events of the year. Fast food giant Burger King's commitment was a milestone for chickens following last year's KFC win. Many commitments result from positive dialogue between companies and our Corporate Relations Department, but when companies fail to show progress, our Campaigns Department steps in: strategic, hard-hitting public awareness campaigns are our effective tool to highlight this lack of progress. This year, these campaigns enabled us to secure commitments from widely distributed companies like Pizza Express, Lindt, and one of the nation's favourite food franchises, Nando's.



# THE COMMITMENTS

## 12 CAGE-FREE COMMITMENTS

### *3 global cage-free commitments*

- Lindt
- Melia Hotels
- RBI

### *9 fulfilled cage-free commitments*

- Unilever
- Whitbread
- 2 Sisters Food Group
- Casino
- Coop CH
- Kraft Heinz
- Valora
- Nestlé
- Pizza GoGo

## 26 BROILER COMMITMENTS

### *2 EU broiler commitments*

- Nando's
- Beco Pets

### *24 UK broiler commitments*

- Pizza Express
- Love Yourself
- Strada
- Coppa Club
- Greggs
- Pasta Evangelists
- Nosh Detox
- Fit Kitchen
- KBK
- Detox Kitchen
- Tony Macaroni
- Balance Meals
- Gousto
- Jane Plan
- Feast Box
- Balance Box
- Fresh Fitness Food
- Côte
- Franco Manca
- Munch Fit
- Tops Pizza
- Pho Café
- Chiquito
- Burger King





# CASE STUDY

# SUPERMARKETS SELL

# SUFFERING



*In March, we launched the first phase of our biggest campaign of the year, alongside the RSPCA, Open Cages and Animal Equality: **Supermarkets Sell Suffering**. It targets 8 of the biggest UK retailers and asks them to commit to the Better Chicken Commitment, including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons, Lidl, Aldi, Coop and Iceland.*

These are big names - which is why we secured support for our campaign from another big name: Chris Packham, Naturalist and TV Presenter. Chris launched a petition that has already gathered over 150,000 signatures as of March 2021, and appeared on Sky News to point out the cruel treatment of chickens in supermarkets' supply chains. The campaign will continue throughout the year until all supermarkets have pledged to stop this abuse.







## *update:* FISHES

We have been actively working on the welfare of fishes and launched our first lobbying campaign, calling upon the Scottish and English Ministries to incorporate stunning parameters for farmed fishes into legislation. They acknowledged that fishes are not protected at the time of killing in UK law to the same degree as land farmed animals. However, they were otherwise non-committal, making generic statements about an intention to prioritise animal welfare. While Defra's response was extremely vague,

Scotland agreed stunning should be required, but think that stunning is happening through voluntary means and that this is enough, though they have no figures to monitor this or know how many fishes are even under certification. We replied emphasising the need to go beyond voluntary means, highlighting clear evidence from slaughter investigations showing fishes being killed without stunning. There is a clear lack of disregard for the welfare of fishes at slaughter by the Government and it cannot continue. Fishes deserve the same protections at slaughter as land animals raised for food. We will continue to work with the governments on moving forward with clear steps to ensure the right additions are made to legislation.

---

### **Good to know: Why are we calling Fish 'Fishes'?**

Fishes are the most exploited species of vertebrate animals, and they are also severely misunderstood. Referring to them in their plural form as 'fish' lumps them together like 'insentient rows of corn,' in the words of author, Jonathan Balcombe. But fishes are individuals with personalities, relationships and the capacity to feel. We want to set an example with the language we use, as well as fighting to improve the rights of fishes farmed for food.



# *the power of* **COMMUNICATION**

*We've been working relentlessly throughout a difficult time* to speak out for farm animals and growing THL UK's network of activists, donors, and online followers. Effective communications are essential for building and sustaining a strong movement for animals; the impact of the work we do is maximised through exposure in the press, social media, and our email channels.

## **63** *media mentions*

were achieved in this period including articles in mainstream media such as the Daily Mail, The Independent, The Guardian, The Times, The Mirror, and The Star - reaching millions.

## **8,400** *actions taken*

via the Fast Action Network

## **1115** *new supporters*

welcomed on email

## **8** *social media lives*

giving insight into our work and engaging our supporters including a Q&A on fishes, activism & burnout, veganism & eating disorders, and an interview with undercover investigator Gem de Sil.

We also secured the support of Lisa Gawthorne, vegan athlete and award-winning entrepreneur.

## **25,946** *unique pageviews*

of our website article content

*In addition to these achievements*, with everything going on in the world, we recognised the need to develop a Crisis Comms strategy to increase our resilience and crisis-preparedness. This comms strategy led us to setting up a core crisis team who carry out practice drills twice a year.





# SPOTLIGHT

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

*As a predominantly white, non-disabled and young organisation, we have been working hard* over the past year and a half to examine our unconscious biases, and developed concrete actions to help us do better at upholding our values and building a more inclusive organisation.

The beginning of our journey towards a more inclusive & diverse THL UK...

**1.** In late 2019, we partnered with Encompass, an organisation aimed at 'making the farmed animal protection movement more effective by fostering racial diversity, equity, and inclusion so that everyone can bring 100 percent of their brilliance to work for animals.' We have learnt a lot from this process and are developing actions as a result.



**2.** We've prioritised learning and growth by running monthly DEI sessions for the whole team with topics ranging from race, ableism, ageism, to sexism, which we then discuss as a group with some prompts (those impacted by any of the topics can opt to sit out of that specific session). We've launched a new DEI channel for volunteers on Slack, which we use to communicate with them, developing community knowledge on matters of diversity and inclusion; in particular, anti-racism.

**3.** The Leadership team are fundamentally accountable for DEI in the organisation. Our Managing Director has organised regular meetings with other leadership members from other animal protection organisations to work as a broader movement on improving inclusion.

**4.** Our internal Equity & Inclusion committee has been in place for some years; we have a UK member of staff on this committee.

**5.** We've improved our hiring practices. For example, we have vastly increased the places we're promoting our

job adverts. For each new role, we've begun hosting webinars for interested candidates to ask questions, with the aim of reducing the barriers to applying. All skills tests are marked without any identifying details of the candidate, and our first interview is over the phone.

**6.** Our new strategy for communications will reflect our DEI values: amplifying voices of individuals from the global majority and marginalised communities, using inclusive language, and ensuring our visuals authentically represent our diverse community.

**7.** Ultimately we will incorporate DEI across our strategies and tactics, as well as within our volunteer networks and strategic partnerships.

**8.** We have also joined the Charities Against Hate coalition, a collective of more than 40 UK charities working together to review and make recommendations on ethical social media, marketing and communications policies.



# GROWING

## *our movement of activists*

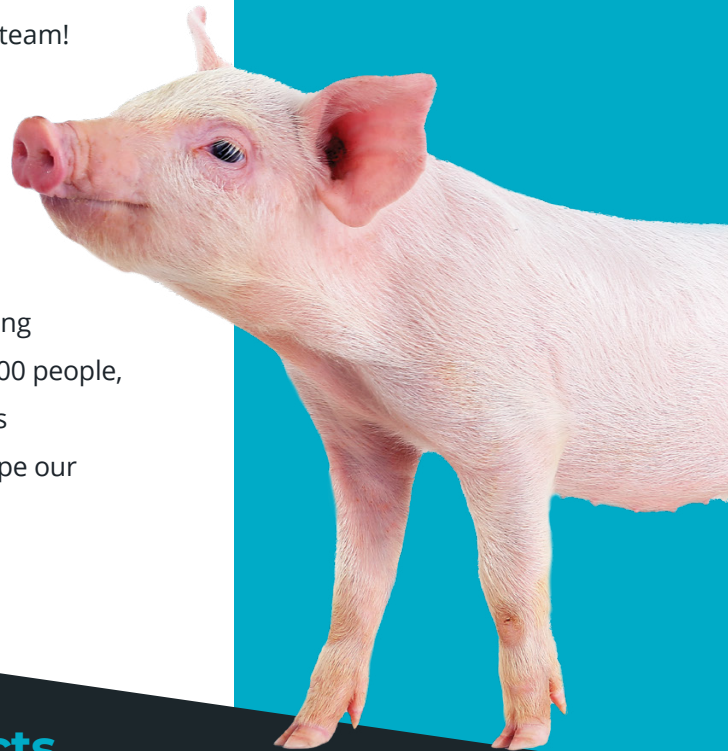
***We would not be able to win any of our campaigns without the hard work of our network of committed volunteers.*** Knowing the immense value of each and every THL UK volunteer, a big focus for our Campaigns department this year has been effective training and 1-1 mentoring. We delivered our very first Comms 101 training, with 8 volunteers receiving training from our Comms team to better advocate for animals. To express our gratitude, we held our first International Volunteer Appreciation day in collaboration with our colleagues across the US and Mexico, creating [this video](#) and holding a two hour long virtual event including a virtual visit to an animal sanctuary in California. And, throughout this period, 45 new volunteers joined our team!

What's more, our mission-aligned volunteers...

- Supported staff with specialist projects
- Organised 13 local Animal Action Meet-up events (pre-COVID) and 5 virtual meet-up events
- Drove our plant-based revolution campaign, sharing recipes, videos and more, which reached over 3,000 people, encouraging them to leave animals off their plates
- Delivered a focus group project which helped shape our new 'Lead Volunteer' roles

3,613

**HOURS GIVEN**  
by volunteers



## Deep Dive: Volunteer Projects

What have our volunteers been working on?

Some key projects this year included...

- Submitting complaints to the Advertising Standards Agency about the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's misleading advert, 'We eat balanced'
- Work on fishes - lobbying MPs, and helping us identify key stakeholders
- Cage-free accountability - reaching out to companies yet to follow through on their commitment and supporting our Corporate Relations team in reopening dialogue
- Supporting the generation of subtitles on our YouTube videos for accessibility
- Assisting our Campaigns team with key research





# FUNDRAISING *on fire*

**2020 was the year of the Impact Squad.** Through the 2.6 Challenge, and our very own fundraising campaigns Move for the Animals and Christmas Countdown, volunteers, supporters, and staff raised over £11K in donations.

Challenges ranged from creating beautiful artwork, to nature cleans, to marathons and 12 hour cycling tours!

Fundraising is an essential form of activism that helps us sustain our advocacy for animals. Together, we have created a strong momentum for peer-to-peer fundraising, and we can't wait to use it to set up more campaigns and events!



Jack ran a half marathon in a chicken costume, raising over £800: "I've had a fantastic experience fundraising with THL UK. They made the process incredibly easy and even gave me useful tips on how to raise as much money as possible. I would definitely encourage anyone interested in raising funds to improve the lives of farmed animals to do so for THL UK."



Adam raised more than £700 by cycling from Oxford all the way to London



Sunny's beautiful painting raised over £500 for animals



# OUR SUPPORTER CHARTER

*At THL UK, we are committed to making the most effective use of every single penny we receive in gifts. In recognition of this, we were once again awarded Top Charity status by [Animal Charity Evaluators](#) in 2020.*

As a charitable organisation, we are entirely reliant on donations and believe that we have a responsibility to ensure they are used where they have the greatest impact. We are committed to sound research to ensure effectiveness. By operating a remote organisation and aiming to keep costs as low as possible, we reduce our overheads and allow our staff to live in the area that is best for them. This also widens our pool of applicants and we benchmark salaries against other animal protection organisations in the UK so we can attract and retain great staff. We are so grateful to those kind individuals who chose to support us through a regular or one-off donation. Your kindness enables better protections for animals every day.





# Our Three-Year-Priorities 2021-2024

## ***Looking forward***

Generous supporters like you make our achievements for animals possible. We launched as a charity in 2018, and our impact for animals has been growing ever since. And yet, our resources pale in comparison to the scale of factory farming.

## ***Room for funding***

With additional funding, THL UK will scale our most effective programs, explore emerging tactics, and strengthen operational support to build up our team. With your support, over the next three years we will:

### ***Change the world for chickens and fishes***

- By the end of March 2024, the broiler campaign is on a clear path to success in the UK and with major EU companies.
- By the end of March 2024, at least 75% of UK egg production is cage-free and at least 61% of the maximum laying hen spaces in the EU are cage-free.
- By the end of March 2024, the vast majority of the global food industry is committed to going cage-free, and companies are reporting progress against their goals.
- By the end of March 2024, British governments have committed to a time frame for phasing out cages for laying hens.
- By the end of March 2024, English and Scottish governments have committed to incorporating stunning parameters for farmed fishes into legislation.

### ***Build power through shared value***

- By the end of March 2024, we have strategically expanded and improved retention of active supporters and allies, as measured by an increase in high-value repeat engagements.

### ***Be a great place to work***

- By the end of March 2024, we are a highly engaged and equitable organisation—made up of high performers aligned on and contributing to key priorities, as measured by feedback from managers and staff through performance review.

***Did you know?*** We are recognised by the Netherlands' tax system to be tax deductible on donations from Dutch citizens. We are looking forward to continuing to build our international support and laying down strong foundations for the future.



# CORE VALUES

*At the heart of our mission and strategic principles are our core values.* They guide how we work to end the abuse of animals raised for food every single day.

## TOGETHER WE ARE:



### **EFFECTIVE**

We strategically focus our energy, resources, and talent toward impactful actions that will reduce, and ultimately end, the abuse of animals for food.



### **RELENTLESS**

We are an indomitable force—with an unwavering commitment to our mission and endless determination to succeed.



### **NIMBLE**

We quickly and efficiently embrace whatever change is needed to be most effective in achieving our mission.



### **INNOVATIVE**

We constantly seek opportunities to improve, creating forward-thinking strategies and solutions to grow as a team and a movement.



### **INCLUSIVE**

We welcome, respect, and empower others, appreciating the value that every individual brings to our organisation and our movement.



### **COLLABORATIVE**

We are a league of team players who lift each other up, share our knowledge, resources, and passion with others, and find strength in building an impactful and positive movement for all.





THE HUMANE LEAGUE   
UNITED KINGDOM

CALL [0800 014 8081](tel:08000148081)

EMAIL [info@thehumaneleague.org.uk](mailto:info@thehumaneleague.org.uk)

Find out about how leaving a gift in your will can help make possible a better future for animals. Visit [thehumaneleague.org.uk/legacies](https://thehumaneleague.org.uk/legacies).