



20 April 2021

The Right Honourable Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1 A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of the 1, 065, 247 million signatories to our Fur Free Britain petition, we write to ask you to establish a ban on the sale of animal fur in the UK.

Such action would not only help end the suffering of millions of animals globally, but would also be a very visible commitment by your government to your much-applauded ambition for the UK to become a world leader in animal welfare.

For decades the vast majority of the British public has been opposed to the unnecessary suffering caused by raising and killing animals for frivolous fur fashion. Our 2020 YouGov opinion poll reveals that in fact, 93% of Brits do not wear real animal fur. The British high-street is predominantly fur-free and many of the UK's best-known retailers, including Selfridges, Marks and Spencer and John Lewis, and iconic British designers, including Stella McCartney, Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen, have proudly committed to fur-free policies.

Nearly two decades ago, the UK became the first country in the world to ban fur farming, on the basis that it could not be done humanely. Since then, almost 20 countries have followed the UK lead and enacted fur farming bans and restrictions. But since our farming ban took effect, HMRC shows imports of over £800million of animal fur from countries including Finland, Italy and China. We estimate that equates to some two million animals each year. We are effectively outsourcing the same cruelty we banned here.

The UK now has the opportunity to blaze another trail by becoming the first country to ban trade in fur, extending existing bans on the sale of cat, dog and seal fur, to cover all animals. In the US California has already taken this step, and Bills have been introduced in six other States. Prior to the recent election, Israel's Environment Minister was poised to sign a fur ban into law.

The last year has shown that the global fur trade presents a threat to human health as well as animal welfare. Outbreaks of COVID-19 on over 420 mink



farms in 12 countries have led to over 20 million animals being culled, and the World Health Organisation this month cited fur farmed species as the potential origin of the pandemic. While the UK cannot control farming practices in other countries, one of the most tangible actions we can take is to stop providing markets for these products. A UK fur sales ban would send a strong message that we won't bankroll abusive and dangerous animal industries overseas.

A fur ban would also command strong cross-party support, as illustrated by the 140 signatures on Tracey Crouch's EDM 267, calling for a ban on real fur imports. YouGov polling from March 2020 showed 72% overall public support for a ban on the import and sale of animal fur, and in the same poll 79% of Conservative voters chose 'unethical', 'cruel', 'outdated' and 'out of touch' as the words they would most closely associate with a fashion brand that sells real animal fur,¹ clearly illustrating that the cruelty of the fur trade is not aligned with 'brand Britain'.

Fur farming was banned in this country almost twenty years ago, we showed great leadership on animal welfare then and now we have the opportunity to act as a global leader in moral standards again, by closing our border to the cruel, outdated, unnecessary and dangerous fur trade. I urge you, Prime Minister, to take decisive action now and finally make Britain fur-free!

Thank you for acting on the wishes of millions of British people, and creating a #FurFreeBritain.

Yours sincerely

Dr Brian May, Save Me Trust

Claire Bass, Executive Director Humane Society International UK
Elisa Allen, Director, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
Brian da Cal, Director, FOUR PAWS UK
Connor Jackson, UK Director, Open Cages
Chris Sherwood, Chief Executive, RSPCA

Viva!

¹ YouGov poll, March 2020: the words people most closely associate with a fashion brand that sells animal fur are 'unethical' (27%), 'cruel' (24%), 'outdated' (15%) and 'out of touch' (13%); only 6% associated fur retail with 'luxury', 1% with 'modern', and 0% for both 'sustainable' and 'on trend'.

https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/5r7ryfdp97/HSI_FurRegulation_200305_w.pdf



The Jane Goodall Institute
Animal Aid
Care 2

Catherine Reda, creator Ban the sale of animal fur in the UK e-petition

Supported by 1, 065, 247 million signatories of our #FurFreeBritain and Ban the sale of animal fur petitions.