REPLACEMENT NEWS

Spring 2022 - Issue 133

World Animal Free Research Day 27 May

ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK

Inside:

Pioneering research
The Furry Five
British Science Week
Animal Sentience Bill

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A Spring in our step

As I write this introduction to our Spring edition of Rep News, I find myself with a divided heart. One half is mourning the loss in late April of our beloved cat, Holly. Old age finally caught up with her. She was 20 and the precious years we spent with her will live forever in our memory.

The other half of my heart beats with the excitement that Spring signals – the budding of new leaf as life comes full circle once more, the countryside humming with activity, the sun lit and warm days putting a smile on our faces and all the opportunities and activities we have in the months ahead.

May 27th is our flagship World Animal Free Research Day - a date that is as poignant as it was on this day 52 years ago when our brilliant charity was born. Among many events, our amazing Patron Dame Joanna Lumley will be giving a keynote speech at a special reception in Parliament on May 23, urging the government to appoint a Minister for Human Relevant Science to champion the process of modernising medical research.

You can also in these pages learn more about the success of our mini-hearts project at the University of Nottingham led by Professor Chris Denning (page 8), and how Professor Graeme Houston and researcher Helen Donald-Simpson at the University of Dundee are testing the latest medical devices to treat heart and circulatory conditions (page 6). Dr Asme Boussahel at the University of Bristol and in partnership with the Daphne Jackson Trust, is creating a revolutionary new tool to replace animal testing for assessing how drugs are absorbed through the skin (page 14).

It is thanks to you that these trailblazing scientists are working hard on the frontline of modern medical research to not only advance human health but crucially, prove just how outdated the use of animals truly is.

How we created the successful Furry Five campaign is explained on page 16, and on page 10 you can read about our event in Parliament during British Science Week.

I am sure you will agree when I say we at Animal Free Research UK are as busy as the nest-building birds as we take the next steps towards our collective mission to end animal experiments; last year was busy and the upcoming 12 months busier still.

All this activity is as ever all thanks to your unswerving support and generosity. Without you, the research that will secure a kinder science would not be taking place, and the animals who need us would lose their voice.

So on behalf of the scientists you help fund and all the animals you are fighting for, I offer heartfelt thanks. With you by our side, the months ahead are full of promise, hope and success.

With grateful thanks,

CARLA OWEN
Chief Executive

Latest News

Turn on, tune in and listen to the all new Animal Free Labcast

We're launching a brand-new podcast - The Animal Free Labcast

The podcast will delve into the lives and work of eminent animal free scientists, MPs and celebrities – plus esteemed members of our own team.

The first in the series will feature among other guests Professor Amanda Ellison, Professor Chris Denning and our very own Science Director, Dr Jarrod Bailey.

Listeners will be given a ringside seat in a highly informative, friendly and entertaining talk about animal free research, the human relevant science taking place in labs, as well as the laws and what else needs to change to make for a kinder science.

The first episode of The Animal Free Labcast will be broadcast the week commencing May 23rd to celebrate our flagship World Animal Free Research Day on My 27.

Parliamentary Reception

On May 23, Animal Free Research UK will be holding a parliamentary reception - 'United for a Kinder Science - advancing human relevant innovation' - where we will be unveiling our new policy document 'Eight Steps to accelerate human relevant innovation' which sets out the polices we believe need to be implemented in order to facilitate meaningful change.

On the day we will be joined by cross party parliamentarians, TV presenter Kirsty Gallacher, and our Patron, Dame Joanna Lumley.

During the event, Joanna will address MPs in the House of Commons calling on the Government for a formal inquiry into how the UK conducts medical research, and also urge the Government to appoint a Minister to lead the UK's transition to human relevant science.

"This lack of progress in addressing many diseases is because of the outdated research methods still practiced in UK laboratories – those which have left patients and their families frustrated, and without hope for effective treatments." -

A win for animals

In April there was cause for celebration when the UK Parliament formally recognised that animals have emotions and feelings.

The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill passed its final hurdle in the House of Lords on the 7th April. Once the Bill receives Royal Assent, the new law will be known as the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022.

Animal Free Research UK is a member of the Better Deal for Animals, an alliance of the UK's leading animal protection organisations, which has been campaigning for reinstating the recognition of animal sentience in UK law. Animal sentience is recognised in EU law but was the only piece of legislation not transposed into UK law following Brexit.

"As a nation of animal lovers, the public knows animals have feelings and should be treated with compassion and respect. This once again being recognised in UK law is cause for us all to celebrate" said Carla, our CEO.

Leading the celebrations, our patron Dame Joanna Lumley, said: "Anyone lucky enough to share their life with an animal knows what rich emotional lives they can lead, and how much our actions can affect their wellbeing, for better or worse. I am delighted that this new law will mean that sentient animals will be treated with greater respect and care."

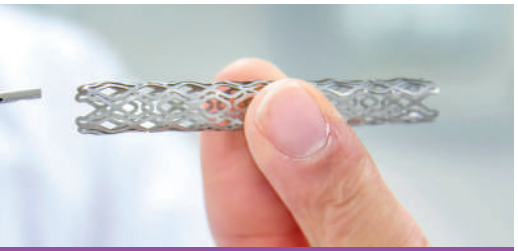
The move comes exactly 200 years since the UK's first animal welfare law was passed and will see the formation of an Animal Sentience Committee which will scrutinise whether government policy has taken animals' welfare needs into account. The Minister with responsibility for that policy area then has a duty to give Parliament a written response within three months.

This is an important milestone in ensuring animals have strong legal protection. The new Animal Sentience Committee will be able to shine an expert spotlight on opportunities for public policy to improve the lives of animals and create a kinder society.

The embalming project you help fund is already saving lives

With life-threatening cardiovascular conditions such as heart attacks and strokes affecting more and more families in the UK, medical devices such as stents offer a less invasive alternative to stressful, complex surgery.

However, testing new medical devices often involves experiments on animals including pigs, dogs, rabbits and sheep. To test one type of stent, it is common for 20-30 animals to be used and these experiments are repeated for each stent size and implantation site.



A heart stent

Thanks to donations from compassionate people like you, Animal Free Research UK has been funding Professor Graeme Huston and Helen Donald-Simpson at the University of Dundee to test the latest medical devices to treat heart and circulatory conditions. And to achieve that they have successfully implemented a special embalming technique on donated human cadavers.

Their pioneering Thiel embalming method is helping to teach doctors potentially life-saving surgical interventions without the need to practice on animals and instead undergo human relevant training.

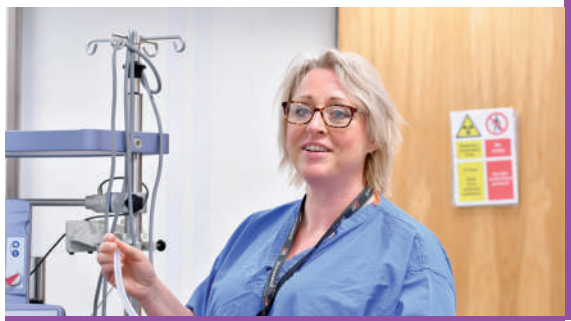
Heart, stroke, kidney and liver patients are among those who will benefit directly from this project.

So just what is Thiel embalming?

Thiel embalming is a soft-fix embalming method developed by anatomist Walter Thiel in the 1990s, who wanted an alternative to using traditional formaldehyde to preserve the human body. The Thiel embalming method allows for the preservation of the softness of tissue as well as the colour and texture. It also has a unique property of retaining joint mobility and heart and blood vessels.

Using Thiel embalming means the team can test medical devices such as stents on the human body and get human relevant results comparable to the living body which will help in the development of better treatments for patients suffering with cardiovascular diseases.

There's an acute shortage in the UK and Europe for trained doctors who can deliver highly skilled treatments for heart disease and stroke, such as thrombectomy, which involves the removal of blood clots caused by the stroke. This shortage is having a devasting effect on the quality of life for patients in need of medical procedures. Being able to use the Thiel embalming technique is vital to expanding the training programme to boost the number of doctors able to perform potentially life-saving surgical procedures.

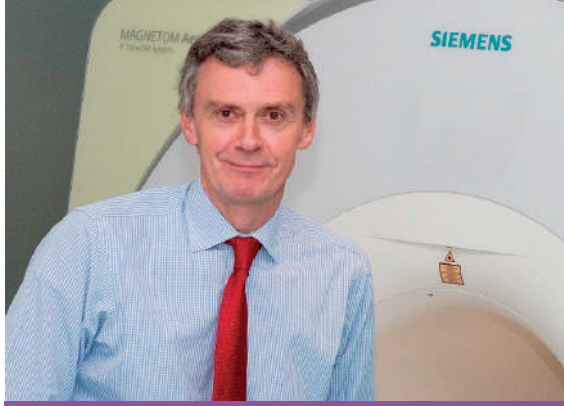


Helen Donald-Simpson

"We need our doctors to be highly skilled, confident and absolutely excellent in what they do, and we need to know that our medical devices are safe for human patients. We simply cannot carry out this training and testing effectively nor ethically by experimenting on animals."

Not only will this technique benefit humans, it will also save countless animals.

With a 5-year strategic award grant funding from Animal Free Research UK this project has already saved the lives of both animals and people. The centre has trained doctors who are now delivering treatments to their patients.



Prof Graeme Houston

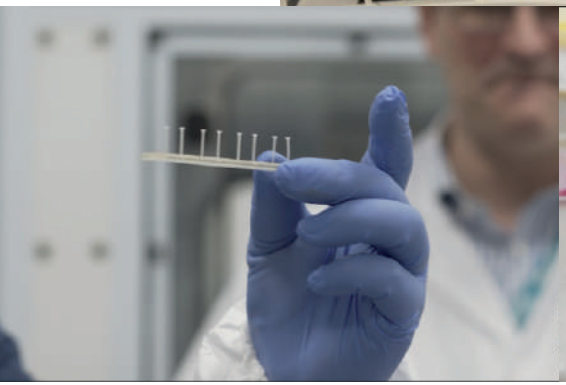
"This is an important investment, as it will benefit heart, stroke, liver and kidney patients, as well as animals that will no longer suffer for the education and training of doctors. This centre offers trainings for techniques that are already proven, while new medical devices and techniques are being tested before they can be used to treat patients."

There are ambitious plans to develop this resource as a global "Centre for Excellence", championing the widespread adoption of this approach as the gold standard and ultimately delivering the goal of providing superior scientific alternatives to end the use of animals.

The success of the program you have helped fund is evidenced by the exponential growth in the demand for the training, attracting multimillion-pounds in capital investment and vital engagement with world leading talent.

It is these animal free techniques successfully used in the fight against human diseases that are paving the way for the new modern approach to research we all want – a kinder science.

Animal free research is a win for science, a win for patients and a win for animals



Pioneering research is well under way at the University of Nottingham. The Mini-Hearts project, led by Professor Chris Denning, is showcasing cutting edge human stem-cell technology to combat cardiac fibrosis – a major cause of heart failure in the UK affecting 900,000 people annually.

Despite decades of testing drugs on animals, there are no effective treatments or cures for cardiac fibrosis. And shockingly, it is predicted that over 1.1 million animals in the UK alone will have been used in the quest to find treatments and cures for cardiac fibrosis by 2030.

Just because different species share characteristics, such as being a 'mammal', does not mean the genetics and physiology are the same.

For example, the heart of a mouse works at 500 beats per minute relative to 60-80 beats per minute for humans. This means the mechanisms to regulate heart activity are very different. Testing whether drugs can heal a broken mouse heart is therefore a flawed approach and not a single drug shown to rescue heart failure in mice has translated into human clinical use.

But Chris and his team's remarkable research is pushing boundaries to not only improve human health but also save the lives of millions of animals.

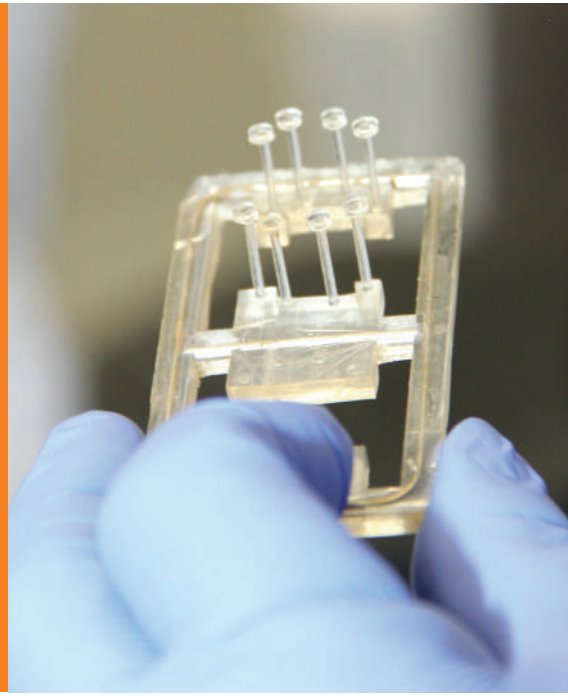
We were lucky enough to visit Chris and his team to witness in person the ground-breaking research happening because of your generosity and support.

Want to know how a mini-heart is created in the lab? Chris has explained this for us below:

Step 1: Into a cell culture well, insert a set of mini 'fingers', shown in the photo. These are made out of flexible material or 'polymer' similar to that used for contact lenses.

Step 2: Heart cells made from stem cells are then added to this well and goes into a very cool oven at 37 degrees centigrade - the same as normal body temperature - creating the basis of the mini heart.

Step 3: Over the next 2 weeks, a combination of oxygen, carbon dioxide, nutrients and warmth to maintain body temperature mean that the mini hearts start to beat and are then ready to be used to research and understand human heart disease.



This small piece of laboratory revolution can lead the way in saving millions of animals from being used in heart research. Projects like these are the real hope to save humans and animals - and prove our scientists are true pioneers in animal free research.

"I would like to say an enormous thank you to the amazing Animal Free Research UK supporters. It is through your donations and your support that we are able to make our cutting edge technology some of the best in the world.

You're also allowing us to fund early career researchers who are the next generation to take this technology into the future."

MP Henry Smith hosts Animal Free Research UK to showcase British Science Week

Crawley MP Henry Smith hosted Animal Free Research UK in Parliament on the 16 March to help showcase how cutting-edge medical technology is transforming the search for cures and treatments for human diseases.

The event at Portcullis House in Westminster saw in attendance Animal Free Research UK-funded scientist Dr Adrian Biddle and early career researcher Alice Scemama from Queen Mary University London, who demonstrated to MPs from across the political parties how New Approach Methodologies – known as NAMs – like organ-on-a-chip are greatly improving new drug discovery processes.

During the event we secured strong engagement from a cross-party group of MPs. Nine members had their photos taken showing their support for animal-free, human relevant science. Several MPs sent out positive tweets after the event. MP Martyn Day's support for the event was also featured in the Edinburgh Evening News.

While we believe there is a strong ethical case for replacing animals with human relevant techniques, we feel it is vital to highlight that this approach also represents better science. Using cutting-edge techniques, such as those funded by Animal Free Research UK, gives a much better chance of to progress for patients. We were keen to highlight this to MPs and felt that British Science Week was the perfect opportunity to showcase the merits of a more modern approach to medical research.

In reflecting on the event, Henry Smith MP said: "Drug development is notoriously slow and expensive – it can take up to 10 years and cost more than £1 billion to bring a new compound from the lab to market. A major cause of this inefficiency is the traditional reliance on testing drugs in animals before they are tested in humans.

Animals often do not accurately reflect human physiology, meaning that drugs which appear to be safe and effective in animals frequently turn out to be harmful or ineffective in humans. This mismatch in biology causes many ineffective or toxic drugs to advance through clinical trials at great expense, while potentially effective compounds never make it to market."

"As I and my Parliamentary colleagues learnt to today, there are better ways – to model human biology and diseases, and these give the accurate data needed to accelerate the development of new drugs and personalised medicine."

He added: "Dr Biddle and his colleague also demonstrated how the UK is well placed to become a global science superpower and with the right investment and government support, can lead the work in this vital, innovative and ethical work."

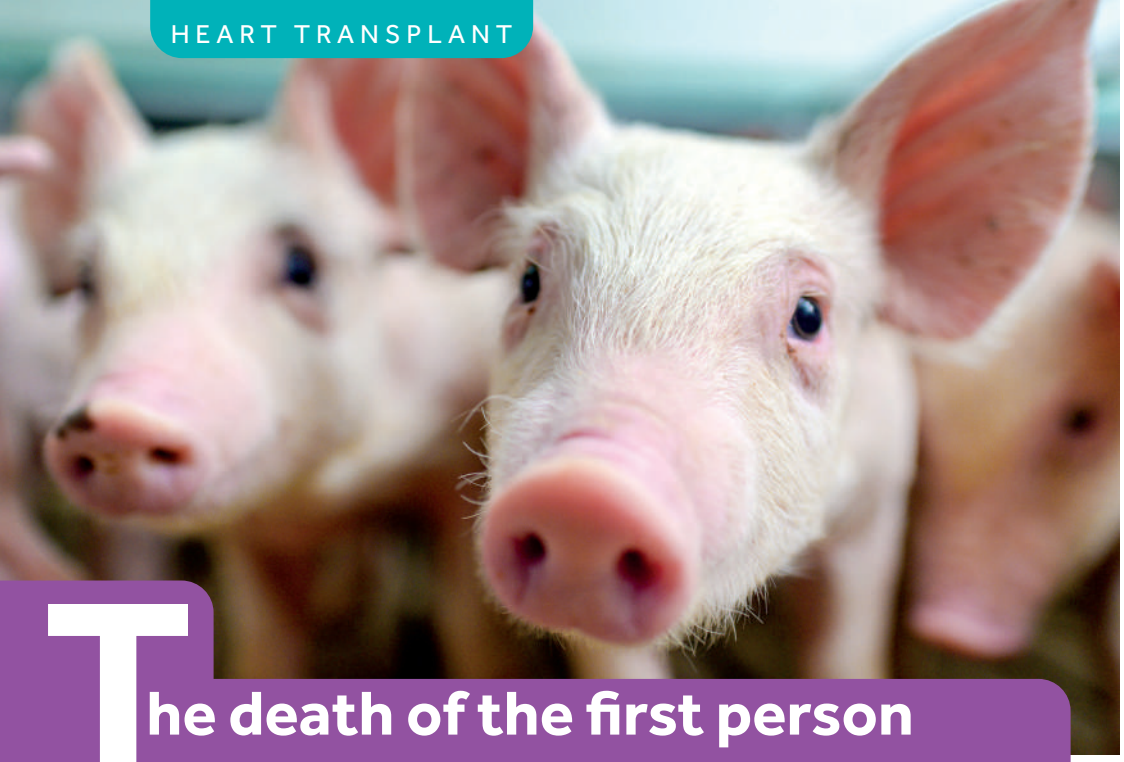
Our CEO Carla said: "MPs have today seen first-hand how modern medical research methods are transforming our quest for better medicines and health – and why Britain has good reason to be proud of being a centre of excellence for science.

They also learned how genetics and physiology between humans and animals greatly differ, and why we must not be left behind by relying on outdated animal experiments if we are to secure our international reputation as a science superpower.

Britain must embrace the high-tech alternatives to animal testing. Government must provide supportive infrastructure, funding, education and training, and regulations that enable human relevant research. Because accelerating human relevant life sciences is good for human health, good for animals and good for the UK economy."

The British Science Week event is one aspect of growing momentum and support for a kinder and more human relevant approach to science. 60 MPs have now signed an Early Day Motion which calls on the Government to lead the way in human relevant innovation and highlights our call for a new function to lead the transition to animal free research. Over the coming weeks we will be stepping up our calls for a Minister for Human Relevant Science, and for other actions that we feel would help to accelerate this vital transition.

By Isobel Hutchinson, Public Affairs Director



The death of the first person to receive a pig heart transplant was not in vain

The death of the first person to receive a pig heart transplant is not in vain – it has strengthened the case for ending once and for all the use of animals in medical research.

There was much optimism and excitement in January this year when patient David Bennet, who was suffering from terminal heart disease, became the first "successful" recipient of a pig heart transplant.

The procedure – known as xenotransplantation – was heralded in headlines around the world as the success story of the century, with many including patients and their relatives, hoping it marked a new beginning for health care.

Many in the medical science community speculated that the "success" was related to the advanced, multiple genetic modifications made to the pig heart which was believed to make it more compatible with the human body, so helping prevent rejection by the patient's immune system.

Given the problematic history of xenotransplantation research, we at Animal Free Research UK feared at the time the excitement following the surgical procedure was premature.

And it was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Mr Bennet – just two months after the operation.

What we do know is transgenic organs and powerful immunosuppressive approaches are still not good enough to prevent the rejection of xenotransplants, ultimately leading to the death of the organ recipient.

The human immune system is uniquely designed and regulated to reject anything sensed by it as "foreign" and thus a danger.

It stands to reason then, that an organ from another species would not be tolerated while functioning to an acceptable degree, more so in a patient weakened by a terminal illness. Some have long argued even attempting such a radical, challenging procedure was futile as it was doomed to fail, and Mr Bennett's demise is the latest in 50 years of failure of animal-based xenotransplantation.

Decade after decade, these failed experiments – because that is what they are – are recast as victories because a small improvement was recorded, amid claims that it is only a matter of time before xenotransplantation become successful and the norm.

Mr Bennett's death will be likely recorded as such, though in reality it adds to the volume of evidence suggesting that such medical procedures will always end in failure.

Surely then, it is time for those that advocate further research and practice of xenotransplantation should accept the evidence – and instead turn to new and available promising modern medical approaches.

Cutting edge science like the 3D printing of human organs are transforming the way we approach research and understanding. Added to this are revised organ donation schemes which have more positive impacts.

Examples of promising human-based research providing better data and outdated animal use, include a myocardial ischemia on-a-chip, which by exposing human-like 3D heart tissue to oxygen-limited environments, recapitulates when a blood clot or embolus blocks or slows blood flow in a cerebral artery.

This new approach method is fast tackling understanding the development cardiovascular disease in order to be better able to prevent and treat it.

With an increasing number of researchers using diverse and complementary human-relevant approaches, medical research is evolving rapidly, rendering xenotransplantation redundant, and continuing such outdated methods will do more harm to our species and sadly result in more deaths.

Mr Bennett's passing has not been vain. It has strengthened the case for ending once and for all the use of animals in medical research.

By Dr Lilas Courtot
Science Manager

In these uncertain times, the minds of brilliant women are needed now more than ever

Though it might be hard right now to imagine a world shaped by compassion and equality, it's vital we never lose sight of the enduring spirit of humanity that exists amid the foreboding headlines of heartlessness and division. So on International Women's Day on the 8th March, we remembered the many extraordinary women helping to make the world a better place.

One such woman is Dr Asme Boussahel of the University of Bristol. She is creating a revolutionary new tool to replace animal testing for assessing how drugs are absorbed through the skin. The research by this remarkable scientist has the potential to save countless animals who are currently used in tests including dogs, monkeys, minipigs, mice and rats.

As Asme explains: "Animal testing is used extensively in the drug development process. I am working towards changing that by developing a tool to test how drugs that are injected into the subcutaneous skin move within the human body."

Some drugs like insulin are best delivered to the body by injection into the subcutaneous tissue, which is the layer of fat that sits below the top skin layers. Patients can self-administer subcutaneous injections, reducing discomfort and cost. Drugs injected subcutaneously are absorbed into the bloodstream, so determining the amount and rate they are absorbed in humans is important because it enables researchers to calculate safe and effective doses.

Currently, several species of animals are tested on prior to submitting a new drug to regulators for approval. As well as the ethical issues, animals are not good predictors of human bioavailability from the subcutaneous tissue, says Asme.

She adds: "Because of the anatomical and physiological differences, it is very hard to predict human responses from animal data, making animal tests ineffective and very costly. My project aims to develop a solution for this significant gap, replacing animal testing to make the drug development process more effective and less costly."

What makes Asme's life-saving research even more remarkable is that her talent might have gone to waste because like many women, she has family commitments which threatened to end her career.

But thanks to Animal Free Research UK, Asme has been helped by the Daphne Jackson Fellowship, a scheme which helps people return to a research career after a break for a family, health or caring reason.

"The funding from Animal Free Research UK is a lifeline that has enabled me to jump back into academia after a break due to family caring responsibilities," says Asme.

She adds: "It is very difficult for women to have a successful career in research – and it's even harder for women with caring responsibilities.

"Many of my close friends are excellent scientists but had to leave research because of their need for more stable jobs with better progression for women. Animal Free Research UK and the Daphne Jackson Trust are breaking that trend by funding women to go back and do excellent science after a career break, providing them with support and giving them the flexibility to do their research as well as support their family. I have found this extremely motivating and inspiring."

Dr Asme Boussahel

Developing effective treatments faster and without animals is urgent as well as complex. It's not a problem we can solve overnight however desperately we might want to. Instead, it's going to take collective will, the brightest minds and diversity of thought.

And many of these brilliant minds are possessed by women who too often have to make an agonising choice between a successful career or caring for loved ones.

As Asme points out: "I think there is an amazing scientific workforce out there made up of women and carers who are unable to benefit the world because a scientific career and raising a family do not go easily together. We need to provide more support and flexibility like the Daphne Jackson Fellowship for these women to be able to do both."

The unfair bias against women is well documented. Breaking it is not so easy – but for the good of people and animals, break it we must. Because the world needs the brilliant minds of women now more than ever.

Storytelling, animation, and the art of making change happen

"Story telling around an open fire evokes something primordial in each of us. It's not just the words and the images in our imagination that they conjure but also the ambient setting - the flickering flames that seem to punctuate a pivotal point in the story's arc as the storyteller takes us on a journey.

The theatre created between the light and the shadows led humans to discover the art of animation, and through it our horizons immediately opened; what was thought impossible to take beyond the mind's eye becomes real, almost tangible and more credible.

The impact of animation as creative expression and mass communication technique has been well documented. Its use to advocate for social change has increased exponentially over the past half century – more so since the advent of the world wide web and social media platforms that were made to accommodate and share moving images as well as text.

When it comes to social justice causes, under which category the "end the use of animals in laboratories" falls, we wanted to test and learn how animation could greatly enhance the reach and engagement of our audiences.

Some of the key advantages of communicating with animation are:

1 Tell the hard truth by bypassing some of the initial biases, taboos, and awkwardness: when discussing tough topics, we are in a more receptive mode, partly because we seek to be entertained whilst engaging with the topic.

2 Greater appeal to a wider audience: as it suits the demand on social media platforms for more audio/visual content, animation makes for a perfect campaign and awareness medium, and allows for a "blended" audience to be reached, regardless of gender, race, socio-economics and so on.

3 Reaching the "right" people: this is the aspect I am most excited about! Animation has less "filters" in terms of whom and how old are the people you wish to engage with. We often talk about new generation of supporters and animation as a medium offers more flexibility and adaptability to appeal across the ages.

4 Producing animations is often cheaper than producing a film where many more resources are needed for production, with less flexibility in terms of the channels and platforms to broadcast from.

The success of Furry Five, beyond the stats of how many people followed, shared, commented, liked, and how much we may have raised to fund our important projects was the ability to create characters and animate them - adding depth, revealing to the audience what we have in common with animals in real world laboratories and beyond.

All told, we were able to establish with our audience a true sense of empathy for the animals – and developed an ability to take on their perspective and experience their emotions as sentient beings.

And when people like you respond via our creative calls to support our cause, we as well as the animals we seek to receive your compassion and this animates and strengthens our determination to end animal experiments once and for all."

By Mimmo Di Giacomo
Development Director

FABULOUS FUNDRAISERS

Isobel's marathon for a kinder science

Our very own Isobel (Public Affairs Director) completed the Brighton Marathon In April. And she absolutley smashed her fundraising target, raising over £1,000!

"Thank you so much to everyone for all your amazing support! I finished it in just under four hours. Knowing I had such generous sponsorship for a brilliant cause definitely made it possible to keep going through the tougher miles."

Congratulations Isobel - we are all so proud of you!

Deborah's challenge for change

Here is the wonderful Deborah who ran the Weston Super Half Marathon fundraising for Animal Free Research UK.

"What brought Animal Free Research UK to my attention was the Covid vaccine. At present, there is no option to have a vaccine that hasn't been tested on animals, but hopefully by supporting this wonderful charity, I can help to change things for the better and make animal testing a thing of the past.

I am a member of Vegan Runners and have always wanted to run a half marathon, so combining the challenge of running the Weston-Super-Mare half marathon with fundraising for Animal Free Research UK seemed the obvious thing to do!"

Thank you so much for choosing to fundraise for Animal Free Research UK. We cannot continue the work that we do without the support and dedication from people like you!

Stella's 100 miles for a Kinder Science

The wonderful Stella will be taking on the 100 mile challenge of Ride London 2022 at the end of the month.

"Ride London has given me the unique opportunity to combine my passion for cycling with enjoying the beautiful county of Essex, raising money for charity, and advancing ethical research practices.

My partner and I have had our lives enriched by adopting a number of rodents from the RSPCA and other rescue centres around London, some of them coming from unfortunate environments. Most recently, our hamster daughter, Angela, of almost two years passed on after a life full of love and safety in our peaceful home. It is partially in her memory that I am raising money for Animal Free Research UK.

I am honoured and excited to be taking part this year and fundraising for Animal Free Research UK - a cause close to my heart. Additionally, as a employee of Epping Forest District Council, this is a fantastic way to explore the amazing district that I serve using traffic-free roads!"

Good luck Stella - we know you're going to do great!

RIDE LONDON ESSEX 100

CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE

Your challenge, your way

Fancy something different? Do a challenge of your choice...whatever it may be, you choose your challenge.

Whatever your age or ability, you can take part. The main thing is to get active, have fun and fundraise. There is no fundraising target, we just ask that you raise as much as you can! And you can always count on us for any help you may need to reach and exceed your targets.

So take action now for animals by joining our Challenge for Change programme!

Register today - www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/challengeforchange

Bude community unites for a kinder science

"Bude community really got into the spirit of the inaugural World Animal Free Research Day in 2021 and this year aims to be even better.

Several businesses across Bude and some local runners are donning Animal Free Research UK t-shirts on 27th May to help raise awareness. It really is lovely to see a sea of turquoise promoting the message that animal free research really is kinder and better science.

Morrisons in Bude are again hosting us for the whole week. This is a great partnership and through discussion it was clear that we wanted to involve the younger members of our community.

With the launch of the **Furry Five** it opens up the opportunity for developing accessible educational resources to show that with the use of human relevant research, there is a brighter future for animals in laboratories. We decided to go with this theme and are running a **colouring competition**.

Morrisons management will judge the competition and there are individual prizes for first place and runner up in each category. Those achieving first place in their age category will also benefit their school. Morrisons are generously donating a 'Hamper of Gardening Goodies' to three lucky schools so a large group of children can benefit. Judging by the enthusiastic response from local schools so far, this looks to be a hit and hopefully we can make it an annual activity.

We are delighted that **Camel Creek Family Theme Park** are keen to join in also and so on Saturday 28th May we will be setting up stall there. It feels so lovely to plan face to face events again – watch out for more photos!"

Steph Jones-Giles,
Bude Community Ambassador

There are many other ways you can help raise funds for us – and many won't cost you a penny!

Shop for a Kinder Science

Welcome to the Animal Free Research UK shop!

We have a range of fabulous items perfect as gifts for friends and family or as a treat for yourself.

And what's even better is that every purchase will support our vision for a kinder, compassionate science to build a brighter future for humans and for the animals.

Visit our shop - **shop.animalfreeresearchuk.org**

Make your birthday even more meaningful and set up a Facebook birthday fundraiser asking friends to donate as an alternative gift.

giftaid it

Add GiftAid to make your donations go even further! If you are a UK taxpayer, we will receive an extra 25p for every £1 donated!

amazon smile

Select us as your charity of choice and then Amazon will donate every time you shop! Head over to smile.amazon.co.uk

During the pandemic many of us felt the need to write a will - we felt more vulnerable. But there are many other reasons people decide to leave a gift in their will to charity. Here, Linda talks about why she decided to support in this way.

Close to my heart

Hi, I'm Linda. I'm 67 (how did that happen? Growing old disgracefully anyway). I live in Surrey, I'm married, no children and always had rescue dogs and currently have two ex-racing greyhounds, Joe and Dotty (pictured). I volunteer at the Greyhound Rescue and have always done some sort of voluntary work con-nected with animals, I did home-check for the RSPCA years back and fairly recently worked in an RSPCA shop and I also ran a membership/sponsorship scheme for a local wildlife rescue charity.

I'd known about Animal Free Research UK for a while, under its previous name and then I came across the Bude group on Facebook - I have a holiday bungalow on a site near Bude so am a regular visitor.

Why did you decide to leave a gift in your will to us?

Having no children, all our money is being left to animal charities and Animal Free Research UK is a cause very close to my heart. I was a supporter of BUAV back in the day and have been against any sort of animal testing for as long as I can remember.

Many of us delay writing a will. How easy did you find making a will?

I have always had a will written up, since my thirties. As we had no beneficiaries as such, we wanted to guarantee the money would go where we want it to go. I write my own will (using an internet template) and have changed it from time to time over the years. I often urge friends with families to think about leaving their money to their children up to the limit of inheritance tax and then perhaps give the rest to charity.

What do you hope for the future of animal free science?

I would not want an animal to suffer to save me. In fact, it's been proven time and time again, animal experiments do not even work. So, I just have to hope that one day it will all end.

What will you leave behind?

During our lifetime we each support charitable causes that are close to our hearts - those with which we share our values and beliefs. We see cruelty or injustice - and we are compelled to connect with likeminded people who also want a more compassionate future to become a reality.

The same is true after life: leaving a gift in your will is simply a continuation of those same values and experiences held so dear during life.

Because of this, and wanting to provide for family or friends, your will is one of the most important legal documents you will ever sign – and one of the most heartfelt demonstrations of support that an individual can make to a charity.

"Thankfully, the wheels are now turning towards humane methods of research and I want to be a part of that change, even after my life has ended, so leaving a legacy to Animal Free Research UK is the best way for me to achieve that."

Rosemary, a committed proud supporter and legacy pledger.

We believe that we can bring an end to animals being used in medical research and every day we take a step closer as new discoveries are being unearthed - but we cannot do this without the generosity of our supporters.

After providing for your friends and family, we hope you'll consider including a gift in your will to Animal Free Research UK. Thank you.

For more information about Leaving a Legacy, please visit our website:
www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/leave-a-legacy

Should you wish to discuss this further or have any queries relating to leaving a gift in your will, please contact **legacies@animalfreeresearchuk.org**

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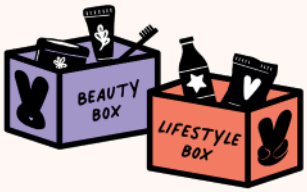

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