

UK fur imports and sales - public briefing

End fur sales in the UK respect for animals

FIGHTING THE INTERNATIONAL FUR TRADE

The UK banned fur farming in 2000, but real fur is still imported and sold. A proposed ban would close that loophole and stop the UK profiting from cruelty in the global fur trade.

It's time to finish what Parliament started and close a loophole

In 2000, the UK became the first country in the world to ban fur farming. That historic legislation began as a Private Member's Bill, promoted by Maria Eagle MP, and succeeded after a public campaign led by Respect for Animals. But while fur farms have long been shut down in Britain, the cruelty is continued because the UK still allows the import and sale of real fur from animals kept and killed in the very conditions we outlawed here.

What the bill would do

The Fur (Import and Sale) Bill, introduced by Ruth Jones MP, aims to:

- Extend current bans on the import of cat, dog and seal fur to include mink, foxes, raccoon dogs, chinchillas, coyotes and more.
- Prohibit the sale of all new fur products in England.
- Ensure the UK no longer supports or profits from the suffering of animals in the global fur trade.

Why this bill matters

1. We have banned fur farming yet we still allow fur imports?

This Bill honours the moral principle that led to the Fur Farming (Prohibition) Acts. Continuing to import fur from cruel overseas farms contradicts the very reason we banned it here.

2. The public backs the bill.

A 2022 poll found that 77% of British people support banning imports of products made by methods already illegal in the UK. This Bill reflects public opinion.

3. The fur trade is inherently cruel.

Animals like mink and foxes are kept in tiny wire cages, unable to express natural behaviours. They are killed in horrific ways including gassing and anal electrocution—all for non-essential fashion items.

4. It's a public health issue.

A 2024 Nature study identified 39 viruses in fur-farmed animals, including several with pandemic potential. Fur farms are reservoirs for dangerous zoonotic diseases.

5. It's legally sound.

WTO rules allow trade bans to protect “public morals”—the basis for our existing bans on cat, dog and seal products. This Bill is on a strong legal footing.