



## Let's get started

**Animal Futures: The Big Conversation** is your chance to have your say on the world you want to see for animals and humans, and explore how we can create it together. The RSPCA will be taking the outcomes from the whole conversation to drive our future campaigning work, urge the Government to take action and rally everyone to build a better world for every animal – one where they're treated with kindness and respect.

As a group you can discuss one to four of the conversation themes: how we use animals; animals and technology; farmed animals and food; and animals in the wild. We want to hear what you think about how we treat animals now and what we all need to change to improve their lives in the future.

Ready to get started? Let's talk!



## Let's talk

- What role do animals play in your life?
- What memories or experiences make them meaningful to you?



## Let's talk about animals in the wild

### What's emerging

Our activities are having serious effects on wild animals in the UK. Construction on land from the development of roads to buildings and increased farming are destroying natural habitats, making it harder for wildlife to move and thrive. Freshwater habitats are at risk from pollution caused by agricultural runoff, sewage and other waste. Climate change is also disrupting animals' migration, breeding and feeding patterns.

### What this might mean for animals

If this continues, it will cause further habitat loss and population declines for many species. And while some animals may adapt to new environments, not all species will be able to. Environmental challenges are putting more animals at risk of extinction. But restoring habitats, reducing pollution and tackling climate change could create better conditions for wildlife – including ecosystems that we rely on for our health, wellbeing and survival.

### What we can do about it

We can stop habitat loss by thinking about how we use land and enforcing stronger pollution controls. People can support conservation groups, reduce their environmental footprint, and push for policies that safeguard wildlife and their homes.

## Let's talk

- Where have you experienced this in your own life?
- What concerns you most about wildlife?
- Imagine it's 2050 and life for wildlife has changed for the better. What's different from now?


## Let's talk about how we use animals

### What's emerging

Animals are used by millions of people in the UK for food, companionship, sports and entertainment, as well as scientific and medical research.


However, we now have more and more evidence that many different types of animals, from lobsters to pigeons, can feel emotions and pain.

### What this might mean for animals



Recognising that many different animals feel emotions and pain raises questions about how we should use them in the future. Recognising that animals deserve independent and fulfilling lives of their own can help us think of them as more than mere possessions. This could mean stronger laws and policies for animals' rights. However, there may be some pushback against new rights and protections. Some people may not be ready to change the way they live with or use animals – for economic, cultural or practical reasons.

### What we can do about it



We can treat animals in ways that recognise their ability to feel both positive and negative emotions, such as joy and sadness, and their right to a fulfilling life of their own. We can choose to buy ethical products and call for animal welfare reforms. We can change laws, policies and practices to give more animals better protection.

## Let's talk

- How do you see animals being treated in your life?
- What concerns you most about how we use animals?
- Imagine it's 2050 and how we use animals has changed for the better. What's different from now?



## Let's talk about animals and technology

### What's emerging

Technology is changing how we care for, monitor, and even create and breed animals. GPS trackers, shock collars and automated feeding systems for pets and farmed animals are already being used. And newer technologies, such as gene editing (often referred to as 'precision breeding'), will allow people to 'design' animals like never before. Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems could be used in many ways, including monitoring animals and making important decisions about their care. AI can also help track and tackle disease and climate impacts, or even allow people to talk directly with animals.



### What this might mean for animals

Precision breeding could be used to create farmed animals who are resistant to serious diseases. But it could also be used to design animals that produce more meat and dairy, causing suffering and putting human needs before animals. AI systems could help people better understand and care for animals, but could result in automated farming that feeds, tends to and culls animals remotely, without human supervision or connection.



### What we can do about it

To make the most of these new tools, without causing harm, we can set limits on the use of certain technologies, introduce specific protections for animals, and think carefully about how we use animal tech in our own lives.

## Let's talk

- How have you seen technology used with animals, for example to care for, monitor or even breed them?
- What concerns you most about the impact of technology on animals?
- Imagine it's 2050 and technology is being used to improve animals' lives. What's different from now? Which practices have stopped?



## Let's talk about farmed animals and food

### What's emerging

The food we choose to eat and how we choose to produce it affects the wellbeing of millions of animals. Lower-welfare farming is growing, with nearly 2,000 lower-welfare farms now in the UK, which is 200 more than five years ago. Every year billions of animals are suffering on these farms, but some farmers are working to improve animal welfare and there is growing interest in alternative proteins and plant-based diets.



### What this might mean for animals

Global demand for food means the number of animals on lower-welfare farms is likely to increase. More lower-welfare farming means more animals living in cramped, stressful conditions. This raises serious animal welfare concerns. However, changes in people's eating habits, towards more alternative proteins and plant-based diets, could reduce our demand for farmed animals.



### What we can do about it

Governments can strengthen laws on lower-welfare farming, while farmers can choose to follow higher welfare standards. Food businesses can also invest in alternative proteins (e.g. plant-based foods). And people can help by eating less meat, fish, eggs and dairy, instead choosing higher-welfare products, and supporting ethical farmers and brands.

## Let's talk

- What is your experience with farmed animals?
- What concerns you most about farmed animals and food?
- Imagine it's 2050 and the lives of farmed animals have changed for the better. What's different from now?