

BY-ELECTION UPDATE

New Henley MP says rise in animal testing under Labour is “unacceptable”

The new Conservative MP for Henley, John Howell, has told the BUAV that “a 15 per cent rise in the number of living animals used in scientific procedures since 2001 is unacceptable and the Home Office has shown scant regard for this spiralling trend.”

Mr Howell, who was elected as the MP for Henley on 26th June, responded to a letter from the BUAV’s Chief Executive, Michelle Thew¹, asking for a statement of his views on animal experimentation.

He said²: “I am deeply concerned that for a fifth consecutive year, [official Government] figures show that the number of animals used in scientific procedures has risen... it is clear that reform of the current legislation is needed...”

He added that the “The Conservative Party is also committed to tackling this issue where Labour has failed” and on the issue of household product tests using animals, he stated: “As for a ban on using animals to test household products, the Conservative Party is open to such a prospect but a final decision will not be taken until late June.

The BUAV is calling for a total ban on animal testing for household products and their ingredients throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. More than 165 MPs have now signed an Early Day Motion (EDM)³ calling for the Government to stop granting licences for animal testing for such purposes.

Notes to editors

1 Michelle Thew is available for interview.

2 Mr Howell's full statement, together with those from the other main candidates, are available on the BUAV website http://www.buav.org/e_henley_election.php#cons

3. EDM 1215 was tabled by David Drew MP and sponsored by a cross-party selection of MPs. Its full text: *“That this House notes the Government's 1997 policy prohibition on the use of animals to test the safety of cosmetic products and their ingredients, which was said to have been introduced on the basis that the suffering caused was not justified given the nature of the product; notes with regret that the Government has not implemented a similar prohibition on the use of animals to test household products, such as washing-up liquid or floor cleaners, and their ingredients; supports the campaign of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection to end the suffering of animals in tests for household products and their ingredients; and calls on the Government to implement a policy prohibition on issuing licences to test household products and their ingredients on animals as a matter of urgency.”*

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35441&SESSION=891>

The BUAV has been campaigning for over 100 years to achieve a world where nobody wants or believes we need to experiment on animals. We are committed to achieving our aims through reliable and reasoned evidence-based debate. We are proudly non-violent and respect the quality of life for all – animals and people.

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