

Greens for Animal Protection:

Statement from Ashley Gunstock

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

This quote, attributed to Mahatma Gandhi and which I heard after I joined The Green Party in 1989, has stayed with me ever since. I adore animals as I believe that, with their own unique personalities, they enrich our lives and that any civilisation which does not care for the animal kingdom is fundamentally uncivilised. That society today has little or no regard for and thinks nothing of cruelty towards animals, along with our poor record on the continued use of animal testing, see link below – is a sad indictment of our civilisation.

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2021/sep/12/how-the-cruel-death-of-a-little-stray-dog-led-to-riots-in-1900s-britain>

With that in mind, although having long been brought up on a meat-based diet, I decided that animals do not have to die to give me what I need in the way of nourishment or for my welfare. So it is the issue of animal welfare and not my health which caused me to become a vegetarian over twenty years ago. I am now, in fact, also weening myself off dairy produce and towards a more plant based diet.

Although I haven't directly been involved in any Animal Rights campaigns, often when I am campaigning on our street stall or on the doorstep while canvassing at election time, I am asked if I support the rights of animals. I am proud to say that I do and that The Green Party is the only political group that has an Animal Rights manifesto.

In view of all that – and especially as the meat and fishing industries are so damaging for the environment of all sentient life on the planet – I will always stand up for the protection and care of all animals.