

Dear James,

I am extremely disappointed that live farm animal exports have, today, resumed from Dover.

Live exports have no place in modern British farming. Most farmers don't do it; only 6% of the public support animals being exported live and even David Heath, UK Agriculture Minister, is reported to have said he is 'no fan' of the practice. **Yet he continues to take no action.**

On my regular trips to and from Belgium in the 80s and 90s, I witnessed this abominable practice at first hand. I recall a number of occasions when the ferry was rolling; trollies, kitchenware and waiters were flying across the restaurant floor and the ferry struggled over many hours to enter the port. These dramas were just one part of the distress caused to the animals on the car decks. On another occasion, in freezing temperatures in Calais, with me wrapped up in my car with the heater on, two animal transporters left the ferry destined for who-knows-where (perhaps Italy or Greece) at 80 kph with no food or water breaks. Imagine the wind-chill in freezing temperatures at 80 kph.

Would you please ask David Heath to address the outdated Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act (1847) which states that if someone pays the correct fee to a UK port, they must be allowed to ship their goods. Few today would consider live animals to be 'goods' but whilst this law remains unchanged an animal is viewed no differently to a piece of furniture or a bag of potatoes.

Or perhaps you could take direct action? I believe that there will, in the coming weeks, be an MPs' ballot for a Private Members Bill. A small shortlist of successful MPs can then propose a new piece of legislation or request an amendment to an existing law. Could you, through this mechanism, call for an amendment to the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act?

Yours sincerely

Paul Turner