# ASA clears RSPCA adverts amid complaints over welfare claims



The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has concluded that a series of advertisements promoting the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) do not breach existing advertising regulations. This decision follows an investigation launched in response to three complaints, including one from the advocacy group Adfree Cities, which claimed that the ads misrepresented welfare standards associated with the RSPCA’s certification scheme.

The campaign was created by AMV BBDO and debuted in April 2024, marking the RSPCA's first rebranding effort in over half a century. Central to the campaign is a two-minute film that depicts various animals—utilising computer-generated imagery for some of them—undergoing distress in industrial farming settings, paired with Aretha Franklin’s iconic song “Respect.” The latter half of the advertisement contrasts this suffering with scenes of animals being cared for, displaying a message that reads: “Every animal deserves our kindness. Respect. RSPCA. For every kind.”

In addition to the longer film, the campaign features a 30-second advertisement and supplementary outdoor advertising, showcasing images of various animals accompanied by the phrase: “RSPCA. For every kind. Every kind of animal deserves our kindness.” This initiative aims to promote a broader message of kindness towards all animals.

Adfree Cities argued that the RSPCA’s message of alleviating farm animal suffering was misleading, noting that the organisation permits large-scale animal farming practices, which some public surveys suggest are opposed by a majority of the UK population—specifically, 78% of respondents.

In light of the complaints, the RSPCA commissioned an independent report to assess the performance of its RSPCA Assured scheme, a charity dedicated to certifying farm animal welfare. A spokesperson for the RSPCA clarified that the campaign's intent was to encourage audiences to reconsider their relationships with all animals, positing that it conveyed an "all-encompassing message" rather than solely focusing on farm animals.

The ASA concluded its investigation by stating there was insufficient evidence to suggest widespread non-compliance with the standards set by the certification scheme, asserting that the advertisements were not misleading to consumers. The decision confirms the RSPCA's advertising strategy remains compliant with the regulations as stipulated by the ASA.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rspca-advert-asa-complaint-misleading-b2615153.html> - This article reports on the Advertising Standards Authority's investigation into RSPCA Assured advertisements following complaints of misleading claims, confirming the ASA's involvement in assessing the advertisements' compliance with advertising regulations.
2. <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/assured> - This page details the RSPCA's commissioning of an independent report by Crowe LLP to assess the performance of its RSPCA Assured scheme, addressing concerns about farm animal welfare.
3. <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/assured> - The RSPCA's clarification that the campaign's intent was to encourage audiences to reconsider their relationships with all animals, conveying an 'all-encompassing message' rather than solely focusing on farm animals, is outlined here.
4. <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/assured> - The ASA's conclusion that there was insufficient evidence to suggest widespread non-compliance with the standards set by the certification scheme, asserting that the advertisements were not misleading to consumers, is detailed in this report.
5. <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/assured> - The RSPCA's announcement of an ambitious modernisation programme, including improving governance and oversight, data collection, reporting, and assessments, in response to the independent review's recommendations, is discussed here.
6. <https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/assured> - The RSPCA's commitment to implementing the 20 detailed recommendations from the Crowe Report to ensure the RSPCA Assured scheme remains transparent and robust is outlined in this publication.
7. <https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/asa-clears-rspca-ad-following-investigation-withholding-information-animal-cruelty/1916836> - Please view link - unable to able to access data