

Your update

from RSPCA Assured



Majority of RSPCA Assured assessments last year were in-person, despite Covid

By Rebecca Lenik, PR Manager

Almost three-quarters of assessments carried out by RSPCA Assured in 2020 were in-person, despite the unprecedented challenges of Covid-19 and Avian Influenza (AI). And we hope for all audits to be in-person, as soon as safely possible, following the lifting of the current national lockdown and AI restrictions.

Out of a total of 3,535 assessments last year, 72% (2,541) of these were conducted in-person, with the remaining 994 carried out via live video streaming. In addition, 93% (867) of monitoring visits - carried out on RSPCA Assured farms by RSPCA farm livestock officers - last year were in-person.

This result is something RSPCA Assured CEO, Clive Brazier, puts down to the commitment of assessors and members to safeguarding the welfare of both farm animals and people during the pandemic. He says:

“There was a time when I thought we might not get back to visiting farms in person last year. But the determination of staff to get back on-farm, and the willingness of our members to host them when safe to do so, made it possible. Improving farm animal welfare is what we do and I’m really pleased with what’s been achieved.”

Read more [here](#).

Have you filled in our satisfaction survey yet?

By Liam Kurzeja, Head of Marketing

There’s still time to let us know what you think of RSPCA Assured and its service by filling in our [short survey](#). It should only take approx. 2-4 minutes.

We want you to feel like you’re getting the most out of your relationship with us so we would really welcome your feedback.

The survey closes on Friday 5 March. If you have any queries, please [get in touch](#).



Who are the RSPCA Farm Livestock Officers?

By Allan Pearson, RSPCA Field Operations Manager

All farms on the RSPCA Assured scheme are visited once a year by one of our assessors. These are species-specific experts who ensure all of the RSPCA’s higher welfare standards are being met. In addition to these visits, many farms are also visited by one of the RSPCA’s Farm Livestock Officers (FLOs).

These visits are, whenever possible, unannounced, and are one of the things which set the RSPCA and RSPCA Assured apart from other assurance schemes.

What's the difference between an RSPCA Assured assessor and a FLO?

The RSPCA Assured assessors are the team that carries out full annual assessments, while the FLO team carry out the monitoring visits.

RSPCA Assured assessors are specialised to visit specific types of farm, that might be pigs or chickens or hens or even multiple species. The RSPCA's FLOs are organised and work on a geographical basis; within their designated areas, they visit all types of farm and are knowledgeable on all animal farming systems.

Much like RSPCA Assured assessors, the FLOs check that the RSPCA welfare standards are being maintained but unlike our assessors, they are able to advise on different farming practises and how best to implement the standards. So rather than signalling non-conformances which must be rectified, any infraction is recorded and the FLOs are able to advise how best to resolve the issue along with a deadline.

In order to maintain good farm management, our assessors must ensure that all records (vaccinations, vet visits etc...) are kept up to date. While the FLOs also check policies, plans and records, they have more scope to focus purely on animal welfare.

The Farm Livestock Officers often form part of the RSPCA's Standards Technical Advisory Groups (STAGs) as such they provide the RSPCA's Farm Animal Department with a lot of information and on-the-ground farm experience used to help guide the development of the welfare standards.





The Sourcing Better Framework

By Liam Kurzeja, Head of Marketing

The [Eating Better Alliance](#) has released a handy [step-by-step guide](#) to help supermarkets and restaurants source better meat and dairy.

The pathway to better meat for the foodservice & retail sectors covers 8 key areas:

- Biodiversity
- Animal welfare
- Soil health
- Antibiotic use
- GHG emissions
- Local pollution
- Land use change
- Water scarcity

Find out more in the [#SourcingBetter guide](#) from the Eating Better alliance.

'Get to Know' our Marketing Manager, Xenia Kingsley

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive

People are at the heart of RSPCA Assured. Without the dedicated work of each individual, we couldn't keep improving the lives of farm animals.

To introduce you to the people that make RSPCA Assured a success, here is the next instalment of our 'Get to Know' interviews with Marketing Manager, Xenia Kingsley:



What is your role at RSPCA Assured? What are you responsible for?

As the Marketing Manager, I'm responsible for a wide range of marketing activities at RSPCA Assured. This includes line-managing our Marketing Executive, managing our TV advertising, conducting consumer research, writing our annual reviews, and overseeing one-off projects such as developing our Social Responsibility Policies.

I also represent RSPCA Assured on the RSPCA's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group, which I'm very passionate about.

Why did you want to join RSPCA Assured?

The RSPCA is a charity I've admired since I was a kid! I've loved animals for as long as I can remember.

I've long been interested in food provenance and ethics and studied Marketing Food & Drink at the University of Brighton. Before joining RSPCA Assured, I'd been working in business to business marketing, representing FTSE 100 corporations.

I wanted to do something more worthwhile, so when the role came up at RSPCA Assured, it felt like a perfect fit and a fantastic opportunity.

What do you enjoy doing most in your role?

I enjoy being creative! My brain loves thinking up ideas. I take immense pride in developing a project from start to finish. It's so rewarding seeing how my efforts can have a positive impact on the lives of farmed animals.

Where have you worked previously? What roles were these?

I've had several jobs since joining the workforce. I managed wine shops for 5 years, spent a few years running a pub and even sold LED light bulbs. I enjoyed working in food and drink, and felt a pull to the marketing side of the industry. After studying the topic at university, I went on to work as a marketer for big B2B organisations.

What expertise do you bring (have you brought) to the RSPCA Assured team?

My previous roles had an emphasis on results and measurement. So when I joined the RSPCA Assured team, I brought quite a process driven approach with me.

I'm an experienced marketer, a proven copywriter and a creative thinker. But most importantly, I've brought a lot of passion and enthusiasm to the role. I genuinely believe in what RSPCA Assured is doing and want to see it succeed.

What is your first memory of a farm?

We weren't very well-off when I was growing up, so our family holidays were what people would now call "staycations"; camping and travelling around the UK. I remember being about 4 years old, and staying on a farm in Devon.

One day, me and my sister were climbing a haystack in the barn, and to our surprise, we found a cat with a little nest of kittens. With the farmer's blessing and our parent's permission, we ended up bringing them home with us. The kitten I claimed was a ginger tom called Carrots. He was my first, but by no means last, pet to be named after food!

If you were a farm animal, what would you be and why?

I would have to say a pig. They're sociable, intelligent, playful, emotional, love to eat and enjoy swimming. Also, they get sunburned way too easily, love naps and have poor eyesight, which all sounds a little too familiar to me.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Before the pandemic, I used to enjoy going to gigs, visiting the theatre, attending drag shows, going to the pub with friends and hosting a weekly quiz night at my local pub.

Since the first lockdown, I have spent my time walking my dog Kipper, bingeing Netflix shows, playing computer games, listening to True Crime podcasts and reading tons of books (66 and counting since March).

When the weather is good, I like sea swimming and foraging for edible mushrooms, of which there is a surprising variety in Sussex! I've also been dipping in and out of trying to learn German on Duolingo.

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Some really top-notch stonebaked margherita pizza.

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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