

## Creating cage free communities: a guide to local action

### *Convenience stores*

Firstly, **thank you** for taking the initiative to bring the fight to End the Cage Age to your local community. The dedication and compassion of supporters like you is helping to improve the lives of millions of farm animals.

This guide is designed to give you all the tools and information you need to achieve cage-free commitments on whole eggs in your town. For further support, please contact:

#### **Compassion's Supporter Engagement Team:**

**Email:** [supporters@ciwf.org](mailto:supporters@ciwf.org)

**Tel.** 01483 521 953 (lines open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).

**Address:** Supporter Engagement Team, Compassion in World Farming, River Court, Mill Lane, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1EZ.

### **End the Cage Age**

The End the Cage Age campaign has united a continent against cages, generating more than 1.6 million signatures on a European Citizens Initiative (ECI) to ban cages for over 300 million farmed animals in Europe. Here in the UK, meanwhile, well over a quarter of a million people have called on the Government to End the Cage Age.

### **Engaging food businesses**

In addition to campaigning for political change, engaging with food businesses is a powerful way to improve the lives of farm animals. That's why, for more than a decade, Compassion has been working with some of the world's biggest food companies to help them move away from factory farming.

As a result, over 1.8 billion animals are set to benefit every year from corporate higher welfare commitments. And amongst these successes are a host of pledges from major food companies to stop selling whole eggs from caged hens. By 2025, all the major UK supermarkets, and a variety of other retailers, will be cage free on whole eggs.

However, a number of convenience stores are lagging behind on such commitments, still selling cheap eggs from caged hens – thereby undercutting businesses that have committed to sell only cage free eggs.

If we are to ensure that only whole eggs from cage free hens are sold in the UK, we need to put a stop to the sale of low-welfare eggs and ensure the entire food industry is moving towards a cage free future.

Compassion is well-placed to engage with the head offices of convenience stores – but we need your help to influence individual branches on the ground. That’s because, in many cases, the managers of individual stores can make their own decisions on the products they sell, including eggs.

We need you to use your voice, your influence as a local resident, to encourage store managers to go cage free. Here's a list of stores to approach.

## Businesses to approach

- **Londis**
- **Premier**
- **Budgens**
- **Family Shopper**
- **Best-One**
- **Day-Today/Today’s**
- **Lifestyle Express**
- **Select & Save**
- **Xtra Local**

## How to approach companies

**1) Make sure the store is in the [‘Businesses to approach’](#) list.**

**2) Consider involving friends, family, or people in your community.**

There may even be a Compassion in World Farming local volunteer group who could help! Check the map at [ciwf.org.uk/get-involved/join-a-local-group/](http://ciwf.org.uk/get-involved/join-a-local-group/) or contact our Supporter Engagement Team to find out.

**3) Visit the store & carry out the checks in the [Template Shop Survey](#).**

Top tip: if you’re carrying out the activity as part of a group, try splitting up and going into stores either individually or in smaller groups at different times. This way, your single group can achieve the impact of multiple shoppers!

***If you’re unable to visit the store:** please use [Template Letter 2](#) to draft a letter to send to the store manager.*

**4) If you find caged eggs on sale, ask to speak to the manager** – they’re likely to know the most about the company’s policy on caged eggs and should be able to make decisions about the type of eggs they sell in-store.

**If the manager is available to talk,** use the [Template Script](#) to guide your conversation, plus the [Business Benefits](#) guide to help win them round. If they’re not available, simply ask a staff member for the manager’s name and when the manager will be back, agree to return to the store/call back then, and leave a copy of [Template Letter 1](#).

Please be polite and friendly when speaking to store managers – they may not have thought about the issue before and your objective is to encourage them to feel it's in their interest to go cage-free.

- 5) **If the store manager agrees to consider a cage free pledge**, this is great! Arrange a follow-up visit to check what progress they've made.
- 6) **If no caged eggs are on sale**, please note this in the shop survey then ask the manager if they already have a cage free policy in-store.
- 7) **If the store already has a cage free policy, or if, on your return visit, the manager has begun the process of going cage free**, this is brilliant!

First of all, thank the manager for making a cage free pledge and offer to give them a certificate to display in store (see notes on certificates below).

Next, **contact our Supporter Engagement Team** (by phone, email or post) **to share the details**. Please send your completed shop survey and a summary of any progress the manager has made towards their cage free pledge. You can also request a cage free certificate – once you've received it, return to the store and present it to the manager.

On your return visit, tell the manager that, with their permission, you'd like to take a photo and get a quote from them to share with Compassion. Please let them know Compassion may share the image and quote on social media and possibly in other communications. You can take the photo with a camera or your mobile – just ensure it's a well-lit, horizontal shot that shows you and the manager smiling, with the manager holding up their cage free pledge certificate.

- 8) **If the manager refuses to make a cage free pledge**: ask them why, offer them some campaign materials and encourage them to visit [ciwf.org.uk/endcages](http://ciwf.org.uk/endcages) to find out more. Please do still send us your completed shop survey – it will help us to understand the level of support for going cage free and the reasons why some are choosing not to.



## Template Script

For a conversation in-person or over the phone with the store manager after you've carried out the in-store checks (listed in the [Template Shop Survey](#)).

- **Introduce yourself:** a local resident carrying out a survey across town on the ranges of eggs sold in different shops (Caged, Barn, Free Range and Organic).
- **Explain the background:**
  - You're supporting the End the Cage Age campaign led by Compassion in World Farming, which aims to ban cages for farm animals. *Show them the leaflet and mention the growing public demand for a ban on cages.*
  - Mention that major companies have already made commitments to remove whole eggs from caged hens from their supply chain by 2025, e.g. Lidl, Aldi, Asda and Iceland.
  - Explain that, whilst their company might have made a cage free pledge or expressed an interest in doing so, many individual branches can actually make their *own* decisions about the eggs they sell – that's why you've visited the store today!
- **Tell the manager the results of your in-store checks then ask them the 'questions for managers' in the [Template Shop Survey](#).**
- **If the manager says they can influence the eggs sold in-store:**
  - Show them the '[Business Benefits](#)' document to help win them round
  - Ask if they're willing to consider making a commitment
- **If the manager is willing to consider a commitment:** this is great! Schedule a follow-up visit and encourage them to take steps towards changing the eggs they sell (e.g. contacting their Head Office/their suppliers). If the manager refuses to consider a commitment, please ask why and make a note of this on your shop survey.
- **Round it up:** Thank them for their time, hand them the campaign materials and confirm the time & date of your next visit (if relevant).

## Template letter 1

*If the manager was unavailable, or if you're leaving a letter with the manager after completing your store survey.*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I'm a local resident carrying out a survey across town to find out the ranges of eggs sold in local shops (Caged, Barn, Free Range and Organic). I'm doing this to support the End the Cage Age campaign led by Compassion in World Farming, which calls for a ban on cages for all farm animals, including millions of egg-laying hens.

Many major retailers, including Spar, Nisa and Costcutter have made cage free commitments. I understand that many convenience stores are independently owned and therefore store managers can make decisions about the choice of products on their shelves.

[If no caged eggs on sale: That's why I'd like to ask whether you already have a policy of stocking only cage free eggs in your store.]\*

[If caged eggs are on sale: That's why I'd like to speak to you about switching to entirely cage free eggs in your store.]\*

Britain is a nation of animal lovers, and consumers nationwide care about the welfare of farm animals. Yet, millions of hens in this country are still suffering in cages. UK businesses, like yours, UK businesses, like yours, can meet customer needs and help put an end to this cruelty by going cage free on eggs.

Unfortunately, you weren't available when I came to visit the store, but \_\_\_\_\_ suggested I come back on \_\_\_\_\_ to speak to you. I look forward to speaking to you then.

In the meantime, please do take a look at the materials I left in store to find out more – you can also visit [ciwf.org.uk/endcages](http://ciwf.org.uk/endcages).

Best wishes,

\_\_\_\_\_

My contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Compassion in World Farming's Supporter Engagement Team:

Email: [supporters@ciwf.org](mailto:supporters@ciwf.org)

Tel. 01483 521 953 (lines open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).

\*Use appropriate version of this sentence, depending on whether caged eggs are on sale in the store.

## Template letter 2

*If you're choosing to send a letter only.*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I'm a local resident carrying out a survey across town to find out the ranges of eggs sold in local shops (Caged, Barn, Free Range and Organic). I'm doing this to support the End the Cage Age campaign led by Compassion in World Farming, which calls for a ban on cages for all farm animals, including millions of egg-laying hens.

Many major retailers, including Spar, Nisa and Costcutter, have made cage free commitments. I understand that many convenience stores are independently owned and therefore store managers can make decisions about the choice of products on their shelves. That's why I'd like to ask you whether you have a policy of only stocking cage free eggs or, if not, whether you would consider switching to entirely cage free eggs in your store.

Britain is a nation of animal lovers, and consumers nationwide care about the welfare of farm animals. Yet, millions of hens in this country are still suffering in cages. UK businesses, like yours, UK businesses, like yours, can meet customer needs and help put an end to this cruelty by going cage free on eggs.

Please take a look at the enclosed campaign leaflet for more information about the impact of cages on animal welfare, along with the 'business benefits' document for an overview of how switching to cage free eggs can benefit both you and your customers.

I'd be grateful if you could contact me to confirm whether you already sell only cage free eggs in store, and if not, whether you will consider making a commitment to do so. My contact details are below.

Best wishes,

\_\_\_\_\_

My contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Business Benefits of Going Cage Free

### The Problem:

Around 16 million egg-laying hens in the UK spend their entire adult lives in cages. That means more than a third of all eggs sold in Britain come from caged hens. In these cages, each hen has space equivalent to little more than a sheet of A4 paper; there is a rudimentary area to lay her egg and a low perch and small scratch pad. She is unable to satisfy important behaviours such as perching and nesting, let alone dustbathing and foraging, jumping and running.

### The Solution:

Alternatives, such as free range or organic systems, provide the best opportunity to deliver a good quality of life for hens. When well-designed, barn systems in which the hens live free from cages indoors can also offer a significantly higher quality of life than caged systems. The British Egg Industry Council has recently announced a new standard for barn eggs, so it's likely that these will become more available as producers convert their caged housing to meet the cage free egg demand from retailer commitments. Barn eggs may also meet the price point of caged eggs – an important incentive for businesses.



### Why Go Cage Free?

- **Keep up with rising consumer demand**

Animal welfare is a major concern for customers. In a 2018 YouGov survey, almost two-thirds of respondents felt the use of cages in farming is outdated (67%) and an even higher percentage believe cages are cruel (81%).<sup>1</sup> Separate research showed that one third of all “boycotts” carried out by individual UK shoppers were made against companies with poor animal welfare standards.<sup>2</sup>

- **It's cheaper than you might think**

The cost difference between caged and higher-welfare eggs is lower than you might expect. Figures suggest that switching from caged to free range eggs will cost customers **just 4p more per egg** – a small price to pay to improve the lives of farm animals nationwide.<sup>3</sup>

- **Keep up with the competition**

More and more retailers are prioritising animal welfare as an important area of their business, including well-known retailers like Spar, Nisa and Costcutter. By 2025, all the major UK supermarkets, and a host of other retailers, will be cage free on whole eggs.

- **Attract good publicity and new customers**

Switching to cage free products offers a great PR opportunity for free, helping you to reach new, conscientious customers and improve your reputation in your community – and maintain consumer loyalty.

<sup>1</sup>Figures taken from a survey undertaken by YouGov Plc on behalf of Compassion in World Farming. Total sample size was 2119 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 20th-23rd April 2018. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

<sup>2</sup> Pg. 24, *Ethical Consumer Markets Report 2018*: <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/EC%20Markets%20Report%202018%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Figures calculated based on average prices of value cage, barn and free range eggs in UK supermarkets in Aug 2019. Average UK consumer egg consumption taken from industry 2018 data: <https://www.egginfo.co.uk/egg-facts-and-figures/industry-information/data>