



From the CEO



I am very proud of the achievements of The Vegan Society in 2017. During this year our campaigns reached new heights. Plate Up for the Planet was a big success, inspiring over 10,000 people to try out a vegan diet for

a week and introducing many more to the idea that veganism and environmentalism go hand in hand.

One of the stand-out stories of the year has been working with farmer Jay Wilde. After seeing our work Jay decided he no longer could send animals to slaughter. Together with Hillside Animal Sanctuary we rehomed 59 cows, and with Jay are striving to find a sustainable future for his farm.

We also increased our political profile, building on relationships with MPs and policy makers to increase awareness of vegan solutions. Alongside the New Economics Foundation we released our second Grow Green report, which was launched at party conferences over the summer.

Thank you to everyone who has made our work this year possible – from members to volunteers to staff and supporters, we couldn't have done it without you.

George Gill

From the Chair of Council



Veganism has continued to gain recognition as a healthy, ethical and environmentally friendly choice that can do much to address the challenges the world faces. The Vegan Society's membership has increased, along

with interest in our Trademark and VEG 1 supplement. We have expanded our general outreach work and funded a major campaign on the environmental benefits of veganism.

George Gill has been appointed as CEO following his highly successful interim appointment. George brings a drive for successful delivery of our strategy that has already made a significant difference.

The AGM approved constitutional changes to improve overall governance and enhance democratic control by our members. Council have updated our strategy, refocusing on our particular role as an organisation which from a foundation of solid evidence seeks to inspire change.

The Vegan Society is not just the staff and trustees but all our members who support, inform and ultimately control our work. Together we will continue to make progress towards our goal of a vegan world.

Stephen Walsh

The bigger picture

Veganism continued to make headline news throughout 2017.

The year began with dairy farmers complaining of an advertising campaign which deemed their industry 'inhumane'. Vegans were gratified that the Advertising Standards Authority upheld our right to use such language, perhaps marking a turning point in public discourse on the use of animals.

A whole host of new films and documentaries which promote the vegan message were released over the course of the year. These focused on many of the major reasons why people choose to go vegan – from animal rights, to health, to the environment. Crucially, these were often found on accessible platforms. Many charted the multi million dollar production *Okja*, and comedian Simon Amstell's mockumentary *Carnage* to be game changers.

The accessibility of veganism continued to grow with cafes, restaurants and supermarkets upping their vegan game. Many new lines and products were added, and continued to exceed expectations in terms of sales. At the end of the year media company Forbes published an article entitled "Why you should turn your business vegan in 2018".

The number of high-profile vegans speaking out about their lifestyles continued to rise, gaining more awareness for the movement and sparking the interest of many.

Plate Up for the Planet



Staff and celebrity guests at Camp Bestival

In 2017 we launched our biggest and most ambitious campaign yet. Plate Up for the Planet was created to bring veganism to a whole new audience – specifically those who are concerned about the environment, but are unaware of the impact that their diet has on the planet.

We brought this campaign to events and festivals across the summer, where we found thousands of people interested in our message and keen to take part. We developed a 7-day vegan challenge which offered support, advice and recipes and signed up over 10,000 people.

The results were very encouraging. Out of those who responded to our survey, almost 50% stated that they would remain vegan, while 80% said they would take steps to reduce the amount of animal products they consumed. At the end of the summer our online calculator showed that altogether we saved enough carbon dioxide to fly to the moon and back.

For Plate Up for the Planet we worked with high profile vegans and environmentalists to widen the campaign's appeal. Evanna Lynch of Harry Potter fame was delighted to contribute to the campaign's success.



I got involved with Plate Up for the Planet because I wanted to remind people that veganism is as much a human concern as an animal one. We're facing a much larger problem even than animal rights, as the entire natural world is affected by our food choices. As a citizen of the world, you have a responsibility to care about the environment and concern yourself with the problems in the agriculture industry.
Evanna Lynch

World Vegan Month celebrations

Established in 1944, World Vegan Month takes place every November and is an international celebration of all things vegan, and how far the movement has come. Starting with a bang, #WorldVeganMonth trended on twitter and engagement rose from there.

There was plenty of activity at The Vegan Society during the month. We commissioned research into the changing nature of attitudes towards veganism, created delicious new recipes which garnered plenty of press interest, and took part in a series of radio interviews alongside actor and vegan Peter Egan.

We also jumped at the opportunity to work alongside poet and activist Benjamin Zephaniah, who has long been a supporter of The Vegan Society's work. 'Love the Life' by Benjamin Zephaniah and The Sea is a vegan manifesto which shines a light on the many benefits of this compassionate lifestyle. We collaborated with Benjamin to produce a music video, starring a group of enthusiastic vegans (and one dog!) who took part in showing veganism in its best light.



Ambassador Benjamin Zephaniah performs with local vegans

I really loved working on this track. I wanted it to be a celebration of vegans and veganism. When I turned up to shoot the video there were about two people and Kiki the dog, but it didn't take long before more people came. My instructions to the video makers and the vegans gathered there was to just have

a good time. To celebrate. To be happy. And so it was. There was a great group of people who I can't thank enough. Kiki made sure that we were all on the beat, and that we all had a great time. Vegans have always rocked, but now they reggae too. Do you feel me?
Professor Benjamin Zephaniah

An eventful year



We were proud to speak alongside other vegan influencers

Throughout 2017 we attended more events, shows and festivals than ever before, bringing the vegan message to new people and driving up support for our work.

In January we were very excited to attend the first Vegan Life Live event. Here we put on talks and workshops hosted by many of our staff, including a panel discussion about vegan activism alongside Clea Grady from Veganuary and Toni Shepherd from Animal Equality. We appreciated the chance to speak alongside representatives from vegan organisations that do such great work.

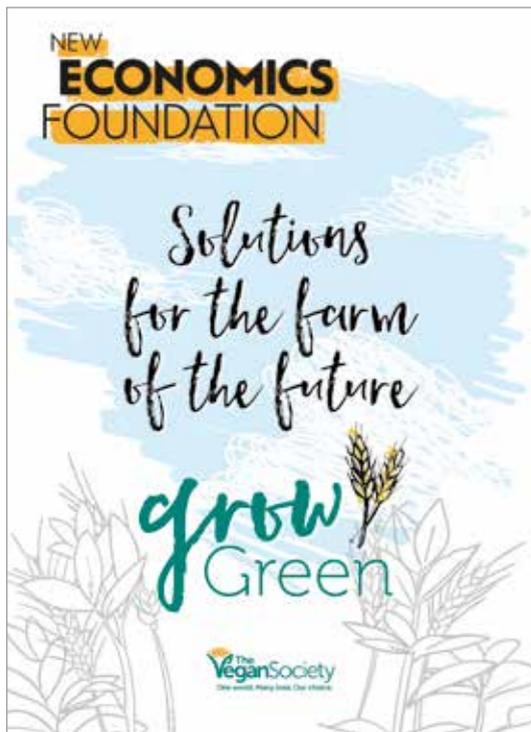
Vegan Society staff attended our first ever fitness expo, Body Power. Staff members took the vegan message directly to the health and fitness community, showing that physical strength and plant-based diets can go hand in hand.

Our Dietitian Heather Russell gave a talk to an audience keen to find out more about plant-based nutrition and what it could do for them athletically. We were joined by volunteer Peter Antonio, a vegan Personal Trainer, who was able to reassure visitors that they can excel in all fields on a vegan diet.

 I really enjoyed helping out at Body Power. Showing that veganism and fitness are more than compatible is an important area to focus on. No matter what your goal, an appropriately planned vegan diet can support it. At the event I was able to speak to many individuals who were considering adopting a vegan diet, but who had concerns about it limiting their athletic potential or negatively affecting their health. Fortunately, as I currently practice as a Personal Trainer and Registered Sports Nutritionist, I was able to put a lot of people's minds at ease.

Peter Antonio

A new farming future



Grow Green is our ongoing campaign to encourage a shift from animal farming to crop farming. Building on our previous work, we published a new report entitled *Grow Green II: Solutions for the Farm of the Future*.

Whereas the initial report outlines the case for the benefits of plant protein and the reasons to switch support from animal farms to crop farms, *Grow Green II* outlines how climate change could be tackled through plant protein agriculture, and suggests specific government policies which could encourage this transition.

The report was launched during the political party conference season. The Vegan Society attended several of these, and had a large stand at the Labour Party Conference. Here we encouraged voters and delegates to consider the strategies outlined in the report. Attendees enjoyed engaging with us and voted for us to win an award for Best Delegates Choice

Stand. We also hosted a well-attended panel discussion with leaders in vegan farming practices and farming ministers.

Grow Green II was written in collaboration with think-tank the New Economics Foundation. Griffin Carpenter from NEF worked on the publication and spoke on numerous radio programmes about the report's findings.

Griffin says, "There is a growing recognition that plant-based proteins will constitute an important staple in British diets as the environmental and ethical impacts of animal agriculture become ever clearer. This was an exciting research project to be a part of as it revealed how British farms can be a part of that transition in the way that we feed ourselves. The report's policy recommendations will help steer the direction of post-Brexit agricultural policy in the years to come."

Freedom for farm cows



Ethel gets a hug from Jay

A long-time vegetarian, Derbyshire farmer Jay Wilde had felt unhappy sending cows to slaughter for many years.

Early in 2017 he was introduced to our Grow Green campaign, and saw that we were keen to support farmers to transition to more compassionate and sustainable practices. He got in touch with us, and started a chain of events which has had a dramatic influence on the lives of the cows on his farm, and for the future of his business.

After an initial meeting, Jay decided to find a permanent, safe home for the cows, giving up a huge chunk of his income in the process. We contacted Hillside Animal Sanctuary in Norfolk, who thankfully were able to take all of the cows. The story captured the interest of the press and resulted in a segment on TV programme *Countryfile* broadcast to around seven million people, as well as a short film by BBC stories.

We are continuing to work with Jay and his wife Katja to find a sustainable future for the farm, to set a shining example of what can be achieved when compassion is put first.

Jay and Katja's story struck a chord with many on social media.

Beautiful. I'm in happy tears right now! Best of luck with your new vegan farm. The world needs more of you!
Holly

Such an amazing story
Henry

Hope he advertises on social media when his vegan produce goes into production, I'd go out of my way to support him and buy the produce as I'm sure many would.
Zoe

Wonderful man. He stuck by his principles and let them live a peaceful and happy life. Wish all cows got to do that.
Jacqui

Vegan Trademark takes over



As interest in vegan products reaches an all-time high, our Trademark Team are kept busy registering products with our internationally-recognised trademark.

Asda became the first supermarket to directly work with us and register a number of its own-brand products with the Vegan Trademark. From chutney to vodka to mince pies, customers benefited from an easier shopping experience when looking for vegan products and millions more were exposed to our trademark.

During the summer we launched the #YesItsVegan campaign to raise awareness of our trademark standards and to highlight the



Our Trademark awareness campaign at the Just V Show

importance of vegan labelling. This kicked off at the Just V Show in London's Olympia where visitors were able to take part in a trademark treasure hunt. Discs featuring the logo were hidden on our Vegan Trademark holder's stalls, and visitors who managed to find them were given a goodie bag filled with trademark registered products.

You may well be aware of Forest Green Rovers as the only vegan football club. Based in Stroud and chaired by eco warrior Dale Vince of Ecotricity, the club pledged to serve only vegan food at their grounds in 2016. Last year we were very proud to award the club with our

trademark – a great opportunity to promote veganism to football enthusiasts.

Social media users were pleased to hear that we set up @VeganTrademark accounts on Instagram and Twitter. This is a great way to keep up to date with the latest news, competitions and newly registered products. Our followers have also been tagging us under products which don't carry the trademark yet. This gives us the opportunity to investigate, and shows companies that there is a consumer demand for reliable vegan labelling.

Recognising our volunteers

We value the contribution that all volunteers are able to make for us, from office volunteers to those who write for our blog, to Local Contacts who give specialist advice to vegans in their area.

Annette White is a longstanding Vegan Society volunteer who continued her excellent work for us throughout 2017, running information stalls on our behalf in her local area.

I love talking to people about things I'm passionate about. Running stalls for The Vegan Society is incredibly rewarding. I feel privileged to go out and talk to people about veganism.

Lots of people want to go vegan, but hesitate. They just need a little push and some help along the way. Personal contact is so important. Sometimes going vegan can seem a bit daunting until you meet someone who is vegan and speak to them about it.

I'm mainly interested in speaking to people who are thinking about going vegan. They're the people who need help the most. I ask them questions and give them advice and resources like leaflets and recipe cards. People are so grateful.

I've met plenty of like-minded people as a result of doing this. When I moved to the area, I didn't know any vegans or anyone at all really. Once I started doing groups and stalls, they appeared. I thought I was the only vegan in the area and then found out there are loads.

I'm very happy with the level of support I get from The Vegan Society. They always reply to my emails speedily, and are always available if I need any help. It's been a brilliant year for the society and I'm sure it will continue to go from strength to strength.
Annette



Volunteer Erin helps us prepare for an event

Supporting vegan families

It can be hard to find reliable nutrition advice, especially if you're a new vegan and don't know where to look. Our in-house Dietitian, Heather Russell, is available to help people access the knowledge they need.

Karen and her partner went vegan overnight. She got in touch with us to ensure she could feed the family safe in the knowledge that they were getting all that they needed from their diets.



When we went vegan, my son David was only seven months old. I was weaning him, and I didn't want to feed him cow's milk. I spoke to my health visitor and my GP about veganism and neither of them were very supportive or understanding. I didn't know where else to turn, so I got in touch with The Vegan Society.

I wanted to make sure David was getting everything he needed, and to set my mind at rest. I spoke to Heather,

who gave me some great advice. She recommended VEG 1 supplements for me and my husband, and vitamin D drops for David. I was worried about protein and omega 3 – but every question I had, Heather gave me an answer for.

Getting in touch with The Vegan Society is one of the best things I've done – they've been so helpful. I wouldn't have known what to do without Heather's

support. I would have felt lost, stressed and worried but now I'm confident about my child's nutrition.

My husband and I both now feel so much healthier since going vegan. It has made such a massive difference. We have more energy, our skin is better, our weight is healthier and our mood has improved so much. We couldn't have done it without the support of The Vegan Society.
Karen

Coming in 2018

While many milestones have been reached and many records broken – it doesn't stop here.

In 2018 we will take our campaigning to the next level, expanding and improving Plate Up for the Planet.

We will also work to improve institutional catering for vegans, and to ensure hospitals, prisons, schools and care homes are providing the inclusive care which is required of them.

We will conduct research into the effectiveness of different communication methods around vegan outreach. This will be done alongside academic experts, and will inform our campaigns work going forwards.

We will continue to expand our staff body and move into new office premises to house our growing teams.

With help from our supporters we will enable more people than ever to go and stay vegan, ultimately creating a better world for both human and nonhuman animals.





The Vegan Society, Donald Watson House, 34-35 Ludgate Hill, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, B3 1EH
t +44 (0)121 523 1730 info@vegansociety.com www.vegansociety.com
Registered Charity No. 279228 Company Reg. No. 1468880 VAT Reg. No. 448597395