Millions of animals still used in British laboratories despite Government pledge to phase out testing

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New figures reveal rise in beagles, monkeys and horses used in experiments

New Government figures released today reveal that 2.54 million scientific procedures were carried out on living animals in Great Britain in 2025, prompting renewed calls for urgent action to reduce reliance on animal testing.

Although the total number of procedures fell by just 3.8% compared with 2024, animal welfare charity Naturewatch Foundation says the pace of change is "far too slow" and warns that millions of animals continue to suffer despite the Government's commitment to phase out animal testing.

The latest Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain show:

- 2.54 million scientific procedures were carried out on living animals in 2025.
- More than 17,500 procedures were classified as severe, causing animals significant pain, suffering or distress.
- The number of beagles used for the first time increased from 1,593 to 1,640.
- The number of non-human primates used for the first time rose sharply from 1,478 to 1,845.
- The number of horses used for the first time increased from 60 to 100.

Naturewatch Foundation says the increase in dogs, primates and horses is particularly concerning at a time when ministers have pledged to replace animal testing with modern, human-relevant alternatives.

Laura Lendrum, Animal Experiments Campaign Manager at Naturewatch Foundation, said:

"While we welcome a decrease in overall animals used, we are greatly concerned that the number of beagles, non-human primates and horses used in 2025 actually increased. The government pledged to phase-out the use of animals in science. We urgently need to see this reflected in these numbers and move towards science that is human-focused, more reliable and avoids the use of animals in research."

Last year, the Government announced plans to work with scientists, industry and animal welfare organisations to accelerate the replacement of animal testing. Naturewatch Foundation says today's figures demonstrate the need for the strategy to ensure it delivers swift and measurable change.

The charity continues to campaign for greater investment in innovative, non-animal research methods and believes replacing animal experiments will improve both scientific outcomes and animal welfare.

Naturewatch Foundation is also encouraging consumers to support companies that do not benefit from animal testing. Its Compassionate Shopping Guide helps shoppers identify brands that are committed to cruelty-free practices and are helping drive the transition towards animal-free science.

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About Naturewatch Foundation: Naturewatch Foundation is a UK-based animal welfare charity dedicated to ending cruelty and improving the lives of animals through campaigning, education and advocacy. For over 30 years, the charity has led initiatives to tackle illegal and unethical practices, including puppy farming, animal experiments and wildlife crime. By working with policymakers, enforcement agencies and the public, Naturewatch Foundation strives to make the world a kinder place for animals. Visit naturewatch.org to find out more.

Notes to editors:

- Government figures are taken from the Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain 2025, published on 9 July 2026.
- In 2025, 2.54 million scientific procedures were carried out on living animals in Great Britain, a 3.81% decrease compared with 2024.
- 17,593 procedures were classified as severe.
- Naturewatch Foundation campaigns to end animal experiments and promote humane, human-relevant alternatives.

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