



Guide to Campaigning Against Factory Pig Farms

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Immediate actions to take

Under Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations request a copy of the Habitats Assessment for the project which must be completed for the Planning Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency Integrated Pollution Control Permit.

Check if the plans sit within a [European Protected site](#). The Environmental Protection Agency should have assessed the impact on any European Protected site within 7.5km of the pig sheds and also 7.5km from any land spread with the waste.

If Nutrient Management Plans are mentioned as a solution for the land spreading of waste, remember that plants only take up 50% of the nutrients and the rest is lost into the air, water and soil causing surface and groundwater pollution. Check if you are within a [Nitrates Vulnerable Zone](#).

Ask for a copy of the Ammonia Emissions Assessment of the pig sheds and from the land spreading of the waste. Check the report for an 'aerial ammonia emissions assessment' from the land spreading of the waste. This should not be missing and can be challenged.

Ask for a copy of the Cumulative Impact Assessments of all other projects and plans approved and in planning appraisal, which may have an adverse impact on Protected European Sites (Natura 2000 Sites) and Priority Habitats. The assessment should include any ammonia emitting projects such as Anaerobic Digesters, Water Discharge Permits, Sewage Works, Dairy Farms and Composting Sites. Ammonia emissions can travel up to 70km from source.

Ask for a copy of the Bio-aerosol Assessment of the pig sheds and the spreading of the waste. This will normally only contain information on 'Total Bacteria', 'Aspergillus Fumigatus' and 'Gram Negative Bacteria'. 'Gram Positive Bacteria' are the most pathogenic for human infection, make sure this assessment has not been omitted.

Get Your Facts Straight

The best place to start when gathering the facts about a factory pig farm development is with your local planning authority. Information may also be in local newspapers or on radio stations. Bear in mind however that in some cases smaller facilities are not required to apply for planning permission. Once this information has been sourced you should begin to build up a documented profile of the proposed facility and owner.

Owner

In order to identify your opposition you need to know the name of the main beneficiary involved, i.e. the owner of the proposed facility. This is most helpful for gaining community support as once the owner is known, individuals can initiate a dialogue with them. It is also beneficial to find out who is funding the development of the factory farm. For example, *Leavesley Group* were the parent company of *Midland Pig Producers*, the company behind the proposed [mega pig factory in Foston, Derbyshire](#).

Location & size

Determine the exact location of the facility. It is important to make note of any nearby water sources, and if possible the distance between the proposed site and the nearest active residential or commercial property. It is also useful to know the dimensions of the facility and the total pig population at full capacity (sows & piglets housed at the facility at the same time).

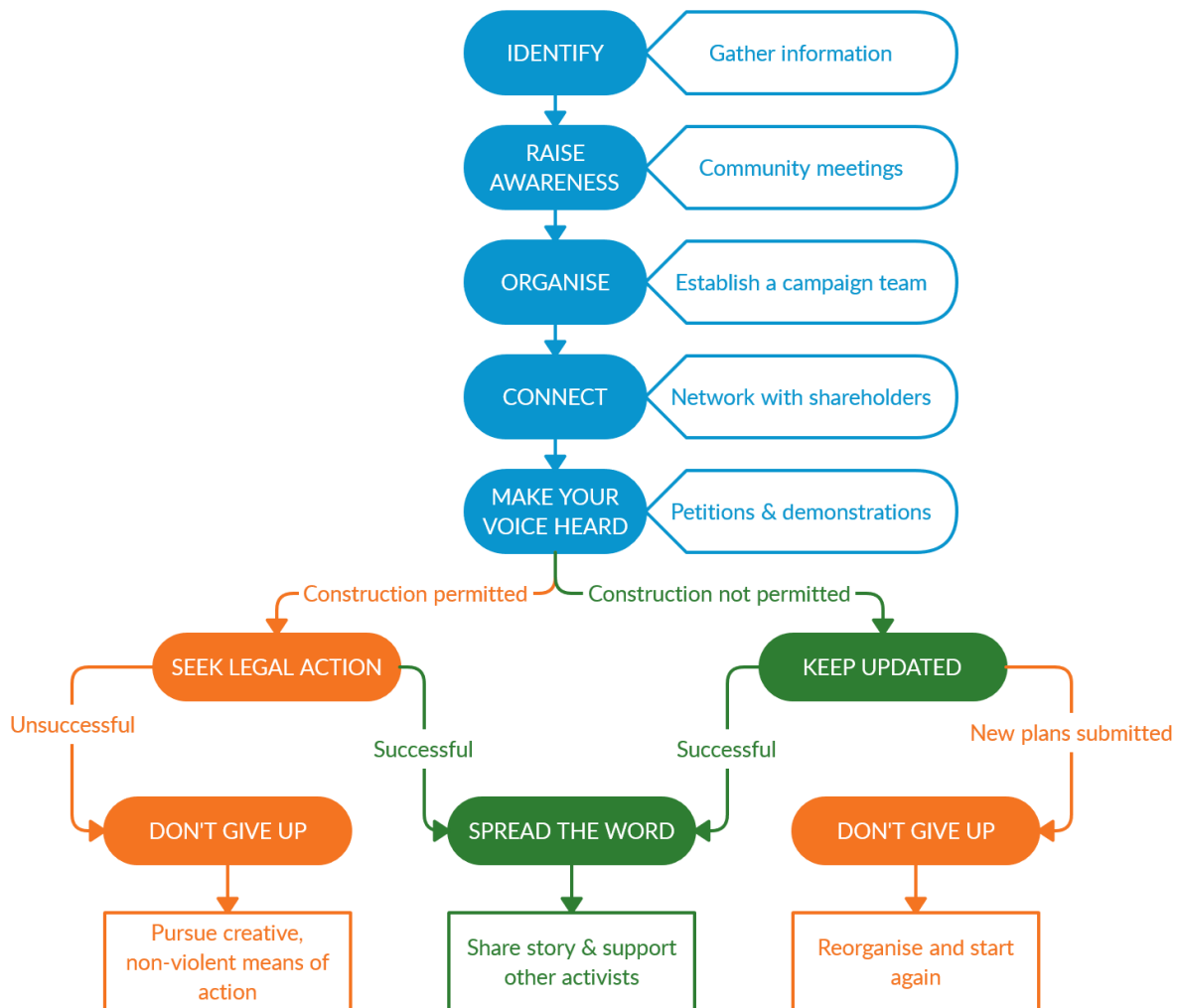
Useful dates

Proposed construction start dates and consultation deadlines will play an important role in your campaign and will serve as milestones. Consultation deadlines are normally the last date that objections to the proposed plans can be submitted for consideration.

Waste management

Your local government may also be able to inform you of how the facility's pig waste will be handled. There may be plans to use anaerobic bio-digesters or spread liquid manure on surrounding fields. It is important to note that whilst anaerobic bio-digesters have been held up as the 'eco' way of dealing with intensive pig farm waste, it is little more than a green wash. Gases, bacteria and dust particles can still escape these units leading to negative environmental and health impacts. If the waste is to be used as manure it may be possible to find out where spreading will take place. This may enable you to extend your support network to communities further afield.

Campaign Timeline



Community Support

Factory pig farms affect everyone in their surrounding environment, not just those living in the immediate vicinity. In order for your campaign to gain momentum you need to form a body of people that oppose the construction of the facility. It is best to start by arranging a public meeting to present the issue to the local community. This event gives you the opportunity to present the information already gathered, raise concerns, and pool resources.

In order to get people interested you could: distribute leaflets or posters; spread the message through social media; contact community groups (religious groups, schools, youth groups, other local campaign groups etc.). You could also arrange a screening of a documentary such as [Pig Business](#) or [food, Inc.](#) to visually show the impacts of factory farming.

From this meeting you should aim to achieve the following:

1. Establish a campaign team of people interested in helping run the campaign.
2. Create a wider group of supporters interested in less time-consuming activities, i.e. signing a petition.
3. Arrange further meetings, including dates and locations, to meet with both groups.
4. Notify people of how they can object to the plans by writing to the local authorities.

The Campaign Team

Potential members of the campaign team should be aware of what they may be required to do before signing up. The campaign team will be responsible for the following:

- ✓ **Monitoring** the development of the planning procedures
- ✓ **Communicating** with national, regional and local government representatives, environment and health authorities and the owners of the proposed factory farm
- ✓ **Networking** with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other relevant campaign groups
- ✓ **Organising** meetings for supporters
- ✓ **Updating** website/social network accounts

Once you have established a core team an initial planning meeting should take place (preferably quite soon after the community meeting). This meeting should:

Assign member roles:

- ✓ Spokesperson/Chair who could become the face of the campaign
- ✓ Event Coordinator to organise meetings and public events
- ✓ Communications Manager to network and liaise with stakeholders; and maintain website/social networks

Name the campaign:

- ✓ The campaign needs a name for people to refer to, whether it be the public or as an entity to be referred to in formal discussions

Establish a timeline:

- ✓ Major dates and events
- ✓ Consultation deadlines
- ✓ Local government elections

Design the campaign's strategy:

- ✓ Will there be a public demonstration?
- ✓ Will leaflets be distributed?
- ✓ At what stage will you arrange to meet different stakeholders?

Get Online

Now that your campaign has an identity it's time to tell people about it. Before you can approach various stakeholders and the media you need somewhere to direct people to. Depending on your 'online' experience there are varying levels of internet usage that you may wish to consider. If you or someone you know has experience in building websites then it may be possible to set up a dedicated website for your campaign. Key things your online portfolio should feature:

Mission statement

Make clearly visible a simple and understandable message stating what your campaign is about.

Images

Upload pictures from meetings, demonstrations, or even of the proposed sites

Contact details

Create an email address for your campaign and place it clearly for people to get in touch with you.

Event details

Dates for meetings, demo, planning deadlines etc. should be made clear – this could be in the format of a calendar.

Interact With The Local Government

Once your campaign and local support are established you should begin communications with your local government. Your correspondence should be sent to the department dealing with planning applications. You may already have this contact if you have sourced your information from the local government. This email should be written on behalf of local residents opposed to the development, and should ensure that the necessary authorities are aware of the local resident's opposition to the factory farm. As many local people as possible should write to the planning authorities to object to the development.

Points to mention in describing the current opposition:

- Number of people present at initial meeting
- Support from community organisations
- Plans to organise a local petition or survey for further support
- Any support from other NGOs and campaign organisations

It is equally valuable to correspond with local leaders, such as your local mayor or MP and ask them to pledge their support. Look out for local elections as future candidates may support your campaign if they feel it is what their electorate want

Organising A Petition

The simplest way is to write out a brief letter stating that your campaign is calling for the proposed factory farm construction to be rejected on the grounds of the negative impacts for human health, the environment, the local community and the welfare of the animals involved. Copies of this letter can then be placed around a number of public places such as shops, bars, restaurants and clubs with extra signatory papers attached. You could also host a mass petition signing in a community space and get a large number of signatures in a short space of time. The results can then be

delivered to the relevant government authority, which is equally a potential photo opportunity for local press.

There are also a wealth of websites available that can help you build an 'online' petition. Your online petition could be a letter that once signed is sent directly to decision makers. The added benefit of these sites is being able to link them to social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter, resulting in a wider outreach than just the local community. These are some of the websites available:

www.avaaz.org
www.change.org
www.care2.com

Get An Expert's Opinion

To add extra weight to your campaign it is useful to get opinions from the following recognised local individuals and organisations:

- Environmental authorities
- Planning consultants
- Relevant professors from Universities
- Doctors and health professionals
- Veterinarians
- Pig farmers and market traders
- Fishermen

Networking With Other Campaign Organisations

Contacting organisations and campaigns has these benefits:

1. Wide established outreach through existing supporters – the more similar the campaign is to yours the more likely existing supporters will support you in your campaign.
2. Access to further information – campaign groups generally share their information database freely and can help point you in the right direction when you're starting out.
3. Relevant contacts – many groups may already have the contact details available for certain government officials or other figures to contact.

Most organisations will be happy to help but remember to be clear in your communications and to highlight similarities between your campaign and theirs.

High Profile & Celebrity Support

To expand your support network further it can sometimes be useful to gain the support of a local, regional, or national celebrity or high-profile figure. These individuals attract media attention especially if they are currently in mainstream news and entertainment. A campaign against a mega factory pig farm in Foston, UK made use of actor Dominic West, to promote their cause. This gained them a platform from which to access a wide variety of newspapers and television networks. Many animal welfare organisations equally use rock stars, models and actors to highlight the impacts of factory farms. It is best however to find someone with a connection to the local area.

Distributing Information

It is a good idea to distribute leaflets or posters to maintain communications with the local public. It is best to do this after communicating with the local government and other campaigns to ensure you have all the information you need. The main reasons for distributing information in this way are:

1. **Education** – raise awareness and make more people interested in your campaign.
2. **Gain more support** – emphasise meetings and the petition in order to get more people backing the campaign.

Possible places to distribute leaflets and posters include:

- **Shops**
- **Butchers**
- **Farmers Markets**
- **Restaurants**
- **Universities and Schools**
- **Town Halls**
- **Public Notice Boards**
- **Religious institutions**



Template for poster design



Template for leaflet design

Media

Depending on your area you may have a range of different media outlets to approach with your campaign's story:

- **Newspapers** are a good place to start, and most towns have at least one local paper. Write to both the editor and any journalists focusing on the environment, planning or farming.
- **Radio** stations have access to a wide reaching audience and also the opportunity for live interviews.
- **Television** stations tend to want an unusual side to it to your story, for example, a celebrity supporter, a creative demonstration, or even a fall in local house prices. They equally tend to like personalised stories about individuals.

Alternative media outlets include video hosting websites, such as **YouTube**, or online newspapers and blogs. The benefit of these websites is that you have more control over what is said and how your campaign is portrayed. The best way to communicate to various media outlets is through a **press release**. A press release is an official statement that provides information about a particular event. This event may be the launching of your campaign, or a meeting with a government representative. The press release should be simple and easy to draw information from. Journalists tend to take more interest in stories that have readily accessible facts and information. Don't try and write a clever or catchy title, leave that to the journalists – instead keep it clear and simple. Make sure the following pieces of information are included before anything else:

1. What is the press release about?
2. Who is involved?
3. When did it happen?
4. Where did it take place?

Numbers are valuable to journalists so try to include the total number of people who have signed the petition, or the expected number of pigs that will be housed in the factory farm. Make your story about the people who are affected. Be sure to include pictures and quotes from local residents to make the article 'come alive'. It may also be useful to include quotes from the campaign leaders or indeed the owner of the proposed facility to attract journalists.

Organising An Event

Events are key to a campaign's success. They provide clear milestones for your campaign and can provide varying levels of results which will help maintain momentum. Events don't have to be big. Hosting a meeting or debate in a local venue; having an interview with a local government official; handing a letter to the factory farm owner; release of a consultant's survey; or a lawyer's reports are all 'events' and therefore qualify as potential news stories.

For small scale events, provide the media with the current figures/and or quotes exposed. Prior to the event you should make use of social networks to make people aware of a meeting. Remember to take these opportunities to link people to your website or online petition (if you have one). Equally, large scale events such as demonstrations, protests, rallies, and even fundraising concerts or quizzes provide a good platform for which to raise the profile of your campaign and gather more support.

It is a good idea to employ the **S.M.A.R.T.** criteria when planning larger events. Ask yourself, what is it you are trying to achieve from this event:

Specific (aim to achieve one thing);

Measurable (can you quantify the results?);

Attainable (do you have the necessary means?);

Relevant (does it relate directly to your cause);

Time-bound (do you have enough time to organise the event before a given date?)

If your event is going to require money then make sure you set out a clear budget to work towards. Costs to your campaign may include:

- **Audio equipment** – *Microphones/Speakers*
- **Stage materials**
- **Transport**
- **Distribution materials** – *Banners/Flyers*
- **Props or costumes**

A typical protest or demonstration could begin with a march towards a final destination to listen to a speaker, alongside your campaign spokesperson. Event supporters need to know what you are doing, why you are doing it and most importantly where and when it will take place. You can use flyers to communicate this information before the event to local people or use social networking for a wider outreach. A slogan should be chosen for a march so that everyone is chanting the same message. This can be written on banners before the event. You could also use props to create a visual impact to increase media attention. Once you have decided upon your tactics and plan you must establish a couple of safety measures to ensure the success of your event:

Police: you are required to notify police of a planned march for public safety. Doing so will not only protect your supporters but may also allow you to block roads for a larger demonstration.

Stewards: it is a good idea to have volunteers available to distribute banners and other materials as well as to coordinate the overall march or demonstration. Make sure they are clearly visible, perhaps with a certain colour t-shirt.

Demonstration Task List

TASK	COMPLETED
Make sure the purpose of your demo is clear - what are you trying to achieve?	
Decide on your message - make it clear and simple. No more than two lines on a banner	
Set a time and date, ensuring you have enough time to plan	
Draw out the planned route on a map	
Decide which activities will take place - will it just be a march, or will you incorporate some sort of street theatre?	
Notify the police of your plans and your contact details. Contact radios, newspapers and television stations	
Distribute leaflets and posters in farmers' markets, schools, universities and food outlets	
Use your campaign network to let other organisations know about the event	

Seeking Legal Action

So you've launched a petition, engaged with local stakeholders, organised fundraising events, created a communication network, held a mass protest and established a presence in the media... but the factory farm has still been given permission to be built!

What do you do next?

After permission has been granted for the factory farm to be built you should start exploring routes of legal action. Being aware of the various options you have is important to enable you to have absolute determination to stop the facility being constructed.

Environment

By contacting your local government you should be able to find out any regulations or criteria that the factory farm is expected to meet. These could be to do with the number of pigs per square metre or how their manure is disposed of. By comparing these regulations with the planning documents of the factory farm you may be able to hold the owners accountable for not meeting standards.

Social

In the UK, there are two main laws that have been used whilst fighting against factory farms, namely

Trespass and Nuisance. The Law of Nuisance refers to the situation whereby a property owner cannot comfortably use his property due to a particular disturbance. This disturbance could be a noise or, in the case of factory farms, an odour. The Law of Trespass refers to the unauthorised entrance, use or interference with a private property that is not yours. It is arguable that factory farms interfere with private property through the contamination of the surrounding air. Furthermore you have the right to not be subject to interference with your private life or home according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, European and American Conventions.

Contacting a lawyer

Whilst seeking legal advice and hiring a lawyer can be expensive, some lawyers will work on cases for free if they have an interest or are passionate about the cause. Once a suitable lawyer is found the first thing to do is to get them to draft a letter to the owners of the potential factory farm explaining your demand to stop constructing the factory farm. This letter should include the legal research you have done as well as any further legal inputs the lawyer may have. The purpose of this letter is not to threaten the company but to make them aware that you understand the legal side to your opposition and that you will take them to court if they proceed with the construction. It is important to keep a record of this letter and also to make sure the local planning authority is aware of your research – especially if the company are not meeting standards. The lawyer should continue to advise you on all matters legal and if you so choose to take the issue to court.

Direct Action

Direct Action refers to physical acts of protest rather than negotiation or verbal based protest. This method of protest has been a legitimate means of political action for hundreds of years, but it is by no means essential to the success of a campaign. Direct action, as part of a wider selection of tactics, can prove beneficial to your campaign as a last resort, if the planning permission is granted and you fear a factory farm may be constructed before you can obtain legal assistance. Examples include:

Occupations

This action refers to having campaigners reside, semi-permanently, in a targeted location. This could be the proposed site, or outside the offices of the company planning the factory farm. If you're planning on staying somewhere for a while remember to take food and sleeping equipment!

Sit-ins

These are a more temporary form of 'occupation' which require a number of people to station themselves in a targeted location, for example during a key event such as a contract signing. The purpose, like longer term occupations is to establish a physical obstacle to the further development of the factory farm.

Roadblocks

It may be possible to cause a road-block to stop construction vehicles, feed trucks or other required transport. This list is by no means comprehensive and many other forms of direct action exist, so get creative!

Whilst various forms of direct action can be effective, it is important to note that they can result in negative consequences. Issues such as trespassing on private property and property damage etc. can result in punishment from legal authorities. Make sure whoever is involved in actions such as these are prepared and aware of these implications before getting involved.

Success Stories

Foston, Derbyshire



A 25,000 unit pig factory application near Foston, Derbyshire, had been the subject of fierce opposition in a four-year-long fight that [saw celebrities – including actor Dominic West](#) and River Cottage chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall – stand up against the proposed farm due to its size. The Environment Agency originally turned down the environment permit application submitted by Midland Pig Producers on the grounds it posed risks to human health as well as human rights. After an appeal was made however, a permit was granted. Midland Pig Producers then officially withdrew their application for the pig farm in March 2015 and have not reapplied, citing public pressure as the reason.

Kenton & Starcross, Devon

Local individuals behind the STOP Powderham Estate Pig Factory campaign were quick to mobilize themselves against a company interested in building an 8000 head pig factory near their community.

After establishing a strong presence in the local community, as well as online (www.stoppowderhampigfactory.co.uk) and in the national media, the campaign managed to cause enough public pressure to dissuade the landowner and company from pursuing a formal planning application, after only a month of action!

Upton Cressett, Shropshire

The strength of Upton's community campaign against a large scale pig farm led to the swift rejection of planning permission by the local council in Shropshire.

The campaign group organised mass emails and letters of objection, which were then sent to the Shropshire Council to oppose the building which would have housed 2000 pigs only 400m away from residential properties.