



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework

Implementation Plan
2016-17





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Ministerial Foreword



This is the second annual Implementation Plan published under the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework (AHWF) and the first for me in my new role as Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs. My portfolio

covers a wide remit which includes animal health and welfare, the Common Agriculture Policy, the Rural Development Programme, the Agri-food sector as well as the protection and management of wildlife and environmental issues in Wales. I am passionate about animal health and welfare and determined to make a difference through the priorities and actions set out in this plan.

I believe one of the most important pieces of legislation passed to date by the Assembly is the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. This is something which will have a profound impact on how we must work together to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Animal health and welfare make a major contribution to the sustainability of the livestock sector, to the wider food and farming industry and more broadly to the countryside, the environment, communities and the economy. I am encouraged to see the Wales AHWF is already taking this opportunity to move to a new way of working to deliver the best long term outcomes for Wales. If we consider the goal of a Prosperous Wales, we know healthy livestock kept to high standards of welfare supports marketing and trade opportunities. It is crucial that we work together to reduce the risk of an outbreak of animal disease which can lead to substantial cost and disruption. For a Resilient Wales, a key principle underpinning the Wales AHWF is that prevention is better than cure. We know that controlling and eliminating

animal disease contributes towards safer food and improved public health. Priorities such as, raising awareness of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), helps deliver the objectives of a Globally Responsible Wales. We should be under no illusions, the development of AMR poses significant risks to global human health. We must raise awareness to ensure antibiotics are used responsibly for the control of diseases in animals.

Partnership working is crucial to the success of the Wales AHWF and there are excellent examples of this approach now working. These include private vets, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Welsh Government working on the TB Eradication Programme. There is also the work of the Animal Welfare Network Wales, the Wales AHWF Group and Welsh Government to begin the process to revise the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice.

Finally, this Implementation Plan is being published when we are just beginning the work to assess the potential implications of the EU referendum result. It is too early at this stage to go into detail on what may happen, however, there will be no immediate changes to regulatory requirements or to EU Investments and funding. We will progress the actions set out within the Wales AHWF Implementation Plan 2016/17 to continue to raise animal health and welfare standards and promote healthy Welsh livestock, protect human health, the environment and safeguarding the local economy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths".

Lesley Griffiths

Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

Background

1. The Wales AHWF sets out our plan for continuing and lasting improvements in standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals whilst also helping to protect public health and making a contribution to the economy and the environment.
2. The long term vision for animal health and welfare in Wales is described through five strategic outcomes:
 - Wales has healthy productive animals
 - Animals in Wales have a good quality of life
 - People trust and have confidence in the way food is produced and the way public health is protected
 - Wales has a thriving rural economy
 - Wales has a high quality environment.
3. The way we work towards achieving our vision for animal health and welfare in Wales is guided by five key principles which are fundamental to our approach:
 - Promoting the benefits of animal health and welfare; prevention is better than cure
 - Understanding and accepting roles and responsibilities
 - Working in partnership
 - Ensuring a clearer understanding of costs and benefits
 - Delivering and enforcing standards effectively.
4. A copy of the full document can be accessed here www.gov.wales/ahwframework
5. This Implementation Plan for 2016/17 sets out the priorities for the year and key actions for delivery as agreed by Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group. These priorities contribute towards the achievement of the strategic outcomes. The description for each priority covers the following questions:
 - What is this and why is action required?
 - What are we going to do?
 - How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?
 - What are the outcomes we want to achieve?
 - Where you can find out more?
6. The Plan also sets out policy areas which are under development. The Plan will be kept under review and updated throughout the year.
7. An end of year review was carried out on the Wales AHWF for 2015/16. The review sets out progress made against the actions identified within the 2015/16 Implementation Plan. The review can be accessed online at www.gov.wales/ahwframework



Implications of the EU Referendum Result

On 23 June, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The First Minister made a statement on 24 June setting out the Welsh Government's six key priorities arising from these changed circumstances. A copy of the Statement can be accessed through the attached link: www.gov.wales/newsroom/firstminister/2016/160624-eu-referendum/?lang=en

It will take some time to work through the implications of the EU referendum result. The process and timetable for leaving the EU will now have to be agreed between the UK Government and the European Council, and the First Minister has made clear his determination that Welsh Government will be fully involved in those discussions. Under the terms of the Lisbon Treaty these negotiations are likely to take up to two years (and maybe longer), so there will be no immediate changes to regulatory requirements or to EU investments and funding. Although the Wales AHWF itself is not governed by European law, there will be implications for

some of the policies and proposals within this Implementation Plan. At the time of writing it is too early to say what the impact will be. Over the coming months Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF will be working closely together to assess the implications of the EU referendum result on animal health and welfare policy as more detail becomes available.

Progress will be updated through the Mid Year Review of the Implementation Plan.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach.

To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven well-being goals. The Wales AHWF make a valuable contribution to these goals outlined in Table 1.



Table 1: Well-being Goals and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework

Goal	Animal Health and Welfare Framework
A prosperous Wales	Healthy livestock kept to high standards of welfare supports marketing and trade opportunities and helps farmers increase profit margins as well as sustain and create jobs. An outbreak of animal disease incurs direct and indirect economic impacts which can lead to substantial cost and disruption.
A resilient Wales	One of the key principles underpinning the Wales AHWF is that prevention is better than cure to minimise the risk of disease through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust contingency planning • Robust business continuity plans • Robust and speedy response to welfare incidences to negate further intensive interventions.
A healthier Wales	Controlling and eliminating animal disease contributes towards safer food and improved public health. Minimising the risk to people from diseases such as, for example, salmonella can help reduce the demand on health services. Animals can also contribute to the well-being of people both mentally and physically.
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities	Minimising the impact of animal disease helps protect rural communities by sustaining profitable farm businesses – helping to safeguard and create jobs.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Implementation of the Wales AHWF will comply with the Welsh Government’s commitment towards the Welsh Language through the Welsh Language Standards.
A globally responsible Wales	A serious and growing concern in both veterinary medicine and global public health is Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). There is commitment through the Wales AHWF to support the UK Government’s five year AMR Strategy.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act puts in place a “Sustainable Development Principle” which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the Act. Following these ways of working will help us work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long term challenges we are facing.

Animal health and welfare make a major contribution to the sustainability of the livestock sector, to the wider food and farming industry and more broadly to the countryside, the environment, communities and the economy. The Wales AHWF aims to apply the Sustainable Development Principle as follows:



Long term – The Wales AHWF has been agreed for a 10 year period but the strategic outcomes themselves set out a longer term vision.



Prevention – A key principle underpinning the Wales AHWF is that prevention is better than cure to minimise the risk of disease. No matter what disease we are concerned about the basic approach is the same:

- Keep infection out
- Identify infections early
- Stop infection spreading
- Stamp infection out and/or develop programmes to manage the problem.



Integration – Throughout the development of the Wales AHWF and its implementation, work has been on-going to consider how animal health and welfare policies/ interventions may impact on each of the well-being goals and how this can be maximised by establishing links with other areas such as the proposed Strategic Framework for Agriculture, the Environment Act, the Economy and Public Health.



Collaboration – Crucial to the success of the Wales AHWF is increased collaborative working with industry and other partners to collect, share and use information to agree priorities, identify solutions (including low/no cost solutions) and make effective decisions to maximise impact and ensure best use of resources.



Involvement – Working in partnership is a key principle which underpins the Wales AHWF. Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group are actively encouraging people to get involved to build partnership networks. These can be across Government, other administrations, delivery agencies as well as with industry representatives livestock keepers and other animal owners.



Section 1: Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group Priorities

Introduction



The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group has a crucial role to support the implementation of the Wales AHWF. The Group is now entering its third year of working together and I feel that we have the foundations

in place to really make a difference. The next 12 months will no doubt be challenging as the work begins to assess the implications of the EU referendum result on animal health and welfare. Even before the result of the EU referendum was known the Wales AHWF Group decided to really focus on improving partnership working and increasing collaboration across the animal health and welfare remit. As we move forward through this uncertain time, it will be imperative that everyone with a stake in animal health and welfare works together to ensure we keep raising standards. A key element of this will be working with groups like the Food Industry Board, the Strategic Partnership Framework Group for Agriculture and the GB wide, cattle and sheep health and welfare groups. However, I also want to look at this from grass roots upwards. From my own perspective, there are things I can do as a farmer on my own farm as well as in my role as Chair for the Wales AHWF Group. We all have a stake in raising standards of animal health and welfare in Wales. I want to encourage everyone to think about what actions you can take and how you can work with others to really make a difference.

Another of the biggest challenges we all face at the moment is Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The publication of the “The Review

on Antimicrobial Resistance” by Jim O’Neill included the aim of reducing the use of antibiotics on farm animals. The Wales AHWF Group are in broad agreement with this aim and will continue to support the UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy. We will also be looking to raise awareness on the responsible use of medicines amongst the farming industry, pet owners and the veterinary profession.

In 2015/16 the Wales AHWF Group commissioned surveys on biosecurity and sheep scab to improve the evidence base around some of the main challenges we are facing. Raising awareness of biosecurity will continue to be one of our top priorities over the coming year. I am looking forward to working with the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales and industry partners as we take this work forward. Through good husbandry practices, adoption of high welfare standards and disease prevention measures, we can work together to minimise the likelihood of livestock contracting or spreading disease.

On sheep scab the results of the survey (due in the Autumn) will allow us to take a fresh review of the recommendations made previously by the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group. We have also agreed that sheep lameness is a priority for the next 12 months. Sheep lameness represents a significant animal welfare and economic challenge and is something which I feel we can work with industry partners to make an impact on.

Having secured funding for the first phase of the Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) Eradication Scheme, we will be continuing to support the BVD Sub Group over the coming months as they begin the process of setting up and implementing the scheme.

The Wales AHWF Group did a lot of work in 2015/16 to improve engagement with the companion and equine welfare sector. I do feel that a lot of progress has been made. We have a specific priority for 2016/17 to work with the Welsh Government and the Welfare Sector to review the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice. The Wales AHWF Group are also interested in pursuing more strategic links to Public Health, Education and Local Government, priorities raised by our welfare sector partners. This is an approach we will look to apply as we consider engagement with the poultry sector. This is a

fast growing sector in Wales and we are keen to get a better understanding of the disease risks, their management and how the sector operates in Wales. We need to work with Welsh Government and the sector to ensure that we are in the best position possible to control any disease outbreaks in Wales.

Peredur Hughes

Chair of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group



Antimicrobial Resistance

What is this and why is action required?

Antibiotic resistance is a growing concern in veterinary medicine for animal health and a serious and growing global public health problem. Increasing attention is being focused on use in animals due to concerns of resistance affecting public health. Antibiotics authorised for use in animals come under the control of the UK's Veterinary Medicines legislation, an area of responsibility not devolved to the Welsh Government and delivered by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group is committed to supporting the UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) strategy which was launched by the UK Government in 2013. Key to the strategy is a 'One-Health' approach involving separate, and where ever possible integrated, human and animal medicine actions and targets. The three strategic aims are to:

- Improve the knowledge and understanding of AMR
- Conserve and steward the effectiveness of existing treatments
- Stimulate the development of new antibiotics, diagnostics and novel therapies.

What are we going to do?

Working in partnership, the Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group will work to:

- Increase awareness and education of AMR
- Increase the promotion of good husbandry and biosecurity practices to control zoonoses, endemic and exotic animal diseases – prevention is better than cure – *a prime mechanism for this will be the Farming Connect Service*
- Promoting the responsible use of antibiotics
- Support work at the UK level to develop improved data collection and evidence gathering relating to AMR to ensure a robust evidence base is in place to inform future actions.

“A globally responsible Wales”

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Wales AHWF Group. Progress reports will also be provided as part of the monitoring process for the UK Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.uk/government/collections/antimicrobial-resistance-amr-information-and-resources

Biosecurity

What is this and why is action required?

Implementation of good biosecurity practices is the first line of defence against serious notifiable infectious diseases like Foot and Mouth disease or bovine TB. It also is, or should be, a vital part of daily farming life, helping to ensure that animals stay healthy and businesses remain profitable. Diseases can spread as a result of the movement of animals, people and machinery between and within farms and other premises where animals are kept. This can include farm visitors, both people and vehicles, the introduction of new animals, contact with neighbours livestock, shared farm equipment, contamination by vermin and wild birds and animals drinking from contaminated rivers and streams. In summary, biosecurity needs to be considered because:

It helps protect the health of animals by preventing the spread of infectious animal diseases between farms and within farms and other premises where animals are kept – less disease means healthier animals and a better profit margin

- It helps to protect the health of people
- It helps industry to control and eradicate costly disease
- It helps reduce the use of antibiotics and other pharmaceutical products.

The Wales AHWF Group is working in partnership with Welsh Government to raise awareness of good biosecurity practices and the benefits these can bring. In 2015/16, the Wales AHWF Group commissioned a survey to assess the level of understanding of biosecurity amongst farmers. The results of this survey form the foundation of the work to be taken forward in 2016/17.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Consider the recommendations in the Biosecurity Survey Results Report, advise on the way forward and oversee the implementation of these recommendations

“Prevention is better than cure”

- Continue promoting the cattle keepers' handbook
- Produce a sheep keepers' handbook to promote key messages and good practice
- Consider equine biosecurity as part of the overarching campaign on biosecurity, working with partners to establish and promote key messages
- Promote farm health planning, in particular through the Farming Connect Service
- Ensure that good biosecurity is a core element of the overarching strategies such as the proposed Strategic Framework for Agriculture and the Farming Connect Service
- Ensure that biosecurity is central to any proposals developed by the Group during 2016/17.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Wales AHWF Group. The survey will also provide an indicative baseline on awareness and understanding. It is the intention to run the survey again in 2017/18.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/biosecurity/?lang=en

www.gov.wales/ahwframework

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea

What is this and why is action required?

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) is a pestivirus infection of cattle, which can cause a variety of clinical outcomes that range from sub-clinical infections to more severe outcomes including abortion, infertility, and the fatal Mucosal Disease. BVD is maintained by a small population of animals that become “Persistently Infected” with the virus. Persistently infected animals are the major reservoir of BVD, becoming infected whilst in the uterus during early pregnancy. Such infections remain throughout the pregnancy and after birth, for the lifetime of the animal. Veterinary advice suggests that there is a clear strategy for controlling and eradicating BVD by identifying, restricting and removing persistently infected cattle from the population. BVD is currently a non-statutory disease with no direct implications on public health. BVD impacts on production with the potential for significant economic consequences to cattle producers and also has animal welfare implications. The Wales AHWF Group is supporting the development and implementation of an industry led BVD Eradication Scheme for Wales. It is envisaged that the scheme would consist of a voluntary testing scheme for 2 years with a view to introducing legislation in year 3 that will require compulsory testing.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Continue to oversee the development of the proposed BVD Eradication Scheme
- Raise awareness to encourage uptake of the scheme prior and post launch
- Ensure that high standards of biosecurity underpin the development and implementation of the scheme
- Work across borders e.g. through the GB wide Cattle Health and Welfare Group to keep abreast of the position in England and Scotland.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Work will be taken forward to establish an evidence base. Key performance indicators could include:

- The number of herds that test or maintain their BVD free (accredited) status of the disease
- A declining number of individual positive test results if a central database is in operation
- A declining number of bulk milk test positive results for the dairy industry.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework



Engagement with the Poultry Sector in Wales

What is this and why is action required?

The poultry sector in Wales is a fast growing area of business. In January 2016, Food and Drink Wales published their report on the poultry sector. Within this report, it states that the major issues facing Welsh and UK poultry producers are to do with animal health. Some of these include:

- The risk of avian influenza
- Antibiotic use
- Campylobacter – the most common cause of bacterial food poisoning in the UK.

The report also states that there are just over 7,300 registered poultry keepers (all species) in Wales. There are 30 very large producers (over 100,000 birds) on 41 sites. The 2 largest companies account for half the Welsh flock at 3.89 million birds across 33 sites. The vast majority of registered poultry keepers (all species) in Wales are hobby keepers. Some Welsh farmers have also diversified into poultry.

It is a legal requirement for premises with 50 or more birds to register on the Great Britain Poultry Register. The Register gathers essential information about certain species of birds held on premises in Great Britain. The information contained in the Register is used for disease control purposes and helps prevent and limit the spread of disease as it enhances contingency planning.

The Wales AHWF Group is keen to improve engagement with this sector to get a better understanding of the disease risks, their management and how the sector operates in Wales. Following discussion at their meeting in March 2016, the Group recognised the importance of being in the best position possible to control any disease outbreaks in Wales. A key element of this is to have a sound understanding of the types and location of poultry throughout Wales and to ensure poultry keepers are properly informed about disease risks and their control.

“Reducing the impact of animal disease on your business and well-being”

What are we going to do?

The key milestones for 2016/17 are to work with delivery agents and industry partners to:

- Undertake a publicity campaign to encourage poultry keepers to register their poultry on the GB Poultry Register
- Consider and develop a programme of poultry keeper education through local educational meetings and literature
- Encourage poultry keepers to register with a veterinary practice
- Work with Local Authorities to encourage small holders to register
- Consider opportunities to link up with the actions for biosecurity and antimicrobial resistance.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

APHA maintain statistics on numbers/mapping of poultry in Wales. Progress will also be reviewed the quarterly Wales AHWF Group meetings.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/poultry/?lang=en

www.businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/poultry-and-eggs

www.gov.uk/guidance/poultry-registration

Engagement with the Welfare Sector – Equine and Companion Animals

What is this and why is action required?

One of the key lessons learned from the implementation of the Great Britain Animal Health and Welfare Strategy was that the focus of activity tended to be on animal health and the livestock sector. This was a theme which also came through strongly during the public consultation on the Wales AHWF in 2014. In 2015/16, the Wales AHWF Group made it a priority to ensure that there is a balanced approach across the scope of the Framework. In order to take this forward, the Group has held discussions with the Animal Welfare Network Wales to start embedding links with the welfare sector and to consider priority areas of work. This work will continue into 2016/17, initially through the work on reviewing and updating the Companion Animal Welfare Codes of Practice. Other priorities have also been identified for action and these are set out below. The Group is also keen to engage with stakeholders who may not be members of the Animal Welfare Network Wales (AWNW) and would encourage anyone with an interest to register their details as set out on page 34 of this document.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Work with Welsh Government and stakeholders to review and update the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice
- Consider Equine Biosecurity as part of the overarching campaign on Biosecurity, working with partners to establish and promote key messages – see Section on Biosecurity
- Working with AWWN to develop Standard Operating Procedures for Police (and other emergency services) for equine emergencies
- Supporting and facilitating discussions with partners in Local Government, Health and Social Services and Education

“The way we treat animals is an important reflection of our society”

- Continue to work with Welsh Government and the AWWN on options for improving sanctuaries.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

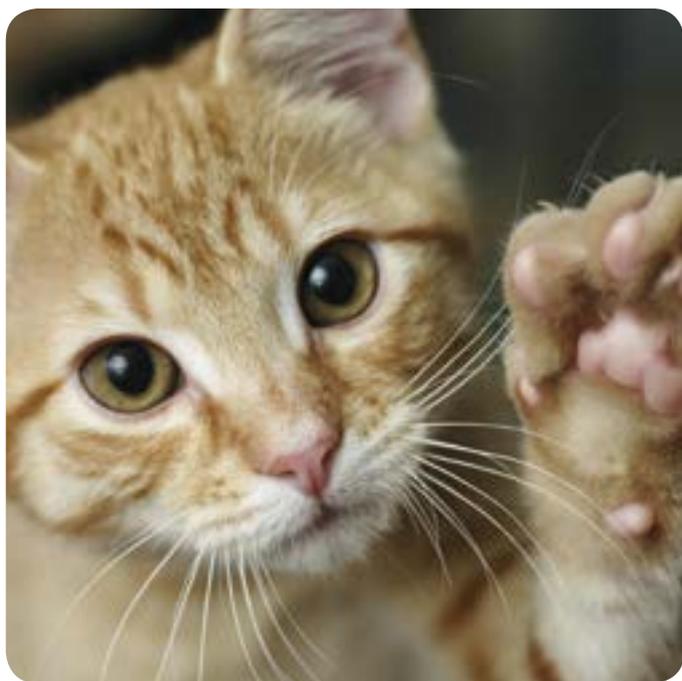
The Wales AHWF Group will monitor progress through its quarterly meetings. There will be a formal review after six months and next steps agreed at this point.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This contributes to the strategic outcome that animals in Wales have a good quality of life.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework



Increased Collaboration and Partnership Working

What is this and why is action required?

Everyone has a stake in raising standards of animal health and welfare in Wales. Critical to the success of the Wales AHWF Group is partnership working which is a key principle underpinning its implementation. The Wales AHWF Group has a crucial role to play to increase co-operation and collaboration between Welsh Government, livestock keepers and other animal owners and industry representatives, covering the whole spectrum of animal health and welfare issues.

These are principles which also underpin the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Implementation of the Wales AHWF can make an important contribution to the seven well-being goals set out in this Act.

With the Well-being of Future Generations Act now in place, the Wales AHWF Group is keen to focus on improving partnership working and collaboration with and between partners over the coming 12 months. This could include the sharing of evidence and data to identify threats and opportunities and where possible sharing resources and improving the information available on animal health and welfare. The Group is also keen to continue working with the Food Industry Board and develop an effective working relationship with the newly established Strategic Partnership Board for Agriculture.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Encourage partners to register their interests and join partnership networks as set out on page 34 of this document
- Encourage stakeholders/partner organisations to work together to achieve common goals, an existing example is the BVD sub group
- Scope out the potential for a web based information hub covering animal health and welfare issues
- Offer facilitation support on using the outcomes based approach

“Working in partnership is critical to success”

- Work closely with the Food Industry Board and the Strategic Partnership Board for Agriculture to consider longer term challenges for animal health and welfare in Wales and the industry as a whole.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

The Wales AHWF Group will monitor progress through its quarterly meetings. There will be a formal review after six months and next steps agreed at this point.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework

www.gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en



Sheep Scab

What is this and why is action required?

Sheep scab is caused by a mite (*Psoroptes ovis*). It is transmitted by direct contact with infected sheep or contaminated objects or from areas where infected sheep have recently been present. The scab mites live on the surface of the skin causing an allergy to their droppings. It is this allergic reaction that causes the sheep to scratch. Sheep scab is reported as a major problem throughout Wales that carries a statutory obligation for sheep keepers to control disease although reporting is not enforced and it poses no risks to human health. Flock owners and sheep keepers are legally obliged to treat and control sheep scab in their flocks. Reports of untreated sheep scab are referred to Local Authorities who are responsible for enforcement of The Sheep Scab Order 1997. The Sheep Scab Order gives the Local Authority the means to control sheep scab when owners do not take appropriate measures. Local Authority inspectors have powers to serve notices to ensure that owners and sheep keepers comply with the requirements of the order.

Sheep scab is seen as having significant economic consequence for sheep producers and is a significant animal welfare issue for sheep. In 2014, the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group produced *The Challenge of Eradicating Sheep Scab* – a report of recommendations to the Welsh Government by the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group. The report makes a number of recommendations that are currently being considered and refined to identify what recommendations may be taken forward. In 2015/16, the Wales AHWF Group also commissioned research to improve the baseline information on the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales, and a survey of sheep farmers in Wales was carried out in March 2016 by Bristol University. Over 1,700 responses were received. These are being analysed and used to help inform next steps.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Consider the results of the survey looking at the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales, in particular to identify any geographical areas that require additional support
- Work with the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group to re-evaluate the recommendations in the report *The Challenge of Eradicating Sheep Scab*
- Work with Welsh Government to develop a programme on parasite control as part of the Farming Connect Service
- Ensure that high standards of biosecurity underpin any actions taken forward from *The Challenge of Eradicating Sheep Scab* report
- Continue working across borders e.g. through the GB wide Sheep Health and Welfare Group to keep abreast of the position in England and Scotland.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

As stated above, the research commissioned in 2015/16 will help establish the baseline information on the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales. Local Authority returns on the incidence of reported sheep scab will continue to be collated on a quarterly basis.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/sheep-scab/?lang=en

Sheep Lameness

What is this and why is action required?

Footrot and scald are the leading causes of lameness in sheep flocks in the UK. They are contagious conditions caused by the bacteria *Dichelobacter nodosus* and are estimated to be present on >90% of farms. Lameness affects an estimated three million sheep at any one time (Farm Animal Welfare Council 2011), representing a significant animal welfare and economic challenge. It is a considerable constraint to sustainable sheep production, costing the UK sheep industry £24 million/year (Nieuwhof and Bishop 2005) or an estimated £10 per ewe put to the ram (tup) in a flock with an average prevalence.

In 2011, the Farm Animal Welfare Council set a target of reducing lameness to less than 5% by 2016, and to less than 2% by 2021 across Great Britain. As such, a solution is urgently required to help farmers deliver these low levels of lameness through an integrated approach to the prevention, control and treatment of lameness in sheep.

In 2015 the Wales AHWF Group discussed sheep lameness as a potential priority, including a presentation at their meeting in September 2015 from FAI Farms on the 5 Point Plan which is geared to achieving sustained low levels of lameness. The plan supports the animal in 3 different ways: building resilience, reducing disease challenge and establishing immunity. Sheep lameness is also an animal health and welfare priority within the new Farming Connect Service.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Establish a national Welsh working group on sheep lameness involving key stakeholders from Wales' industry, veterinary, farmer and academic communities

- Work with the established working group to:
 - consider and agree actions to achieve sustained low levels of lameness. This will include for example, consideration of the "5 Point Plan"
 - identify sources of and then secure appropriate funding
 - work in partnership with the Farming Connect Service to raise awareness, share advice and best practice with farmers
 - consider how to best involve veterinary surgeons in the work being taken forward.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

The Wales AHWF Group will monitor progress through its quarterly meetings. Consideration will also be given to establishing a baseline of lameness on Welsh farms to monitor progress and evaluate effectiveness.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute to the strategic outcomes that Wales has a thriving rural economy, a high quality environment and that animals in Wales have a good quality of life.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework



Section 2: Welsh Government Priorities

Introduction



We all have a role to play to raise standards of animal health and welfare. As the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, my role is to lead this work. With my team, I am committed to promoting higher standards of animal

health and welfare and maintaining veterinary services which not only are fit for purpose but which work in close collaboration with animal owners and keepers to promote best practice. At the heart of this work is the principle that prevention is better than cure. At the national, local and individual farm level raising standards of animal health starts with preventing incursion of infectious disease. This can be evidenced at the Government level through our work on surveillance, horizon scanning, risk assessment, import controls and post mortem testing. The early and accurate detection of disease threats is essential for animal and public health and requires an effective surveillance system. In recent years the surveillance system has undergone some major changes and Welsh Government has been successful in stipulating some additional safeguards to ensure good surveillance across Wales. We are also working in partnership with the Wales AHWF Group and the Farming Connect Service to raise awareness and provide training on areas such as biosecurity, Antimicrobial Resistance, BVD, bovine TB, parasites, sheep lameness so that farmers have the knowledge and information needed to apply this principle on farm. I would like to see each farm applying strict biosecurity protocols developed in conjunction with your private vet to include purchasing decisions, visitor policy, health planning, monitoring and where necessary preventative medicine (vaccination). There is a need to ensure accurate diagnosis of problems

when they do arise. We have the ability to do this in Wales through our two post mortem examination laboratory facilities in Carmarthen and Aberystwyth – support these labs and they will support you.

In addition to the established animal health and welfare issues, we will be working with the Wales AHWF Group to raise awareness of Antimicrobial Resistance and responsible use of medicines to help deliver the objectives of a Globally Responsible Wales. Antimicrobial Resistances poses a significant risk to global human health recognised most recently in the independent review “Tackling Drug – Resistant Infections Globally” by Lord Jim O’Neill.

Antibiotics are essential for human health care and they are also essential for the control of diseases in animals. Reducing the levels of disease results in reduced use of medication – and reduced risk of developing AMR. The right medicine at the right dose for the right length of time (all correctly stored) must be our mantra and these actions will also help to reduce costs.

Underpinning everything we do is the need for partnership working and increased collaboration. This will be even more important through this 2016/17 as we face a period of significant change. We will need to work with the Wales AHWF Group and all of our partners to assess the implications of the result of the EU referendum on animal health and welfare policy and future AHWF Implementation Plans. In the meantime we must continue to press ahead with the Implementation Plan for 2016/17 and the principles of embedding high standards of animal health and welfare. This is in the interests of promoting healthy Welsh livestock, protecting human health, the environment and safeguarding the local economy.

Dr Christianne Glossop

Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales

Animal Welfare Codes of Practice

What is this and why is action required?

Section 14 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 provides power for the Welsh Government to issue Codes of Practice to promote animal welfare. The Welsh Government has published Codes of Practice for both livestock and companion animals, reflecting the science and legislation in force at the time of their publication.

In 2015, it was agreed that a review should be undertaken of the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice. The objectives of the review are to:

- Quality assure the existing Codes of Practice and update them where required with new science and legislation
- Consider whether Codes of Practice are required for additional species.

As part of the review process for the Companion Animal Welfare Codes of Practice, the Animal Welfare Network Wales started working with Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group to undertake an initial review of the existing Codes and propose amendments. This work will continue through the 2016/17 year. For the Livestock Animal Welfare Codes of Practice the Wales AHWF Group have endorsed the approach proposed by Welsh Government to establish working groups to provide technical advice on the Pig and Laying Hen Welfare



Codes of Practice. Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group have also identified the need for a new Welfare Code for Broilers. Through the work undertaken with the working groups, consideration will also be given to what additional species Codes of Practice are required.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Work with the Animal Welfare Network Wales and the Wales AHWF Group to complete the initial review of the Companion Animal Welfare Codes of Practice
- Establish small informal working groups to provide technical advice to complete the initial review of the Pig and Laying Hens Welfare Codes of Practice
- Undertake a full public consultation on the proposed amendments to the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice
- Consider what additional species Welfare Codes of Practice are required.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Feedback through engagement with stakeholders and interested parties during the initial revision process may provide a useful indicator of the need for revised guidance prior to the formal consultation process.

Progress will be monitored monthly with a formal review after six months in line with the Mid-Year review of the Implementation Plan.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

To provide accurate advice to animal keepers and enforcers, to ensure an animal's welfare needs are met in line with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This will contribute to the strategic outcome that animals in Wales have a good quality of life.

Where can you find out more?

www.wales.gov.uk/animalwelfare

Bees

What is this and why is action required?

Bees play an important role in the sustainability of the countryside. *Apis Mellifera* (the European Honey Bee) is the major managed pollinator available for field and outdoor fruit crops. *Bombus* (the Bumble Bee) are commercially reared for the managed pollination of a number of protected crops, including tomatoes. There are approximately 4,000 beekeepers in Wales, with approximately 20,000 hives (fig. based on 2001). Throughout the UK the number of beekeepers is thought to be 44,000 who maintain 274,000 colonies of honey bees. A number of these are commercial beekeepers. The National Bee Unit (NBU) manages a web-based database of beekeepers in Wales and England called Beebase. This website also provides information on:

- The activities of the National Bee Unit
- Pest and disease (including their recognition and control)
- Interactive maps
- Information on research
- Publications
- Advisory leaflets.

Bee keepers registered on Beebase can request a free apiary inspection from their local Bee Inspector. They can also receive information and advice on disease recognition and control.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Work with delivery partners to support seasonal and full time Bee Inspectors to control bee disease in Wales
- Work in partnership with Defra, other devolved administrations and beekeeping associations to consider the future of the Apiculture Programme
- Contribute to the management and cost of the National Bee Unit.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored monthly with a formal review after six months in line with the mid-year review of the Implementation Plan. Next steps will be agreed at this point.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This contributes to all of the strategic outcomes in the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/bees/?lang=en



Bovine TB

What is this and why is action required?

Bovine TB is caused by a bacterium and can affect all mammals. It is a notifiable disease because it can affect humans as well as animals (a zoonosis). The risk to public health is kept low because of regular testing of cattle, milk pasteurisation and inspections at abattoirs. The disease has a significant impact on farms and the agricultural economy. Treatment for infected cattle is not an option. Since 2010 we have tested every herd in Wales on an annual basis with the aim of identifying infection before cattle show any signs of illness. This helps us remove infected cattle before they have chance to infect others. TB eradication is complicated by the fact that wildlife, such as badgers and deer, can also be infected. This makes it difficult to eliminate the disease from areas where cattle and wildlife can infect each other. It will be a combination of measures aimed at all the sources of infection that will allow us to eradicate bovine TB.

What are we going to do?

A TB Eradication Programme was introduced in 2008 and since then, measures aimed at tackling the disease have been progressively introduced and built upon. The Strategic Framework for the eradication of bovine TB in Wales comes to an end in 2016 and a review is currently underway. The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are:

- Effective implementation of the Welsh elements of the UK TB Eradication Plan
- Review the bovine TB strategy and take forward a refreshed programme following Ministerial agreement
- Review the badger vaccination policy in light of the supply and availability of the badger BCG vaccine
- Introduce a regional approach to TB eradication in Wales, including an initial low TB area and associated controls
- Target the persistent TB herd breakdowns, implementing intensive measures to eradicate the disease in these herds

"A prosperous Wales"

- Publish the annual surveillance report and updates to the quarterly TB Dashboard
- Take forward further enhancements to the Cymorth TB Veterinary Programme
- Supporting the epidemiology work currently being undertaken by APHA which will inform the policy on disease control going forward.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Data is published monthly on the number of new herd incidents and numbers of cattle slaughtered in Wales. A comparison is made to the figures of previous months to give an indication of the direction of disease prevalence.

www.wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/?topic=Environment+and+countryside&lang=en

A TB Dashboard is updated on a quarterly basis to present the latest disease picture visually:

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/bovinetberadication/tb-dashboard/?lang=en

An annual Surveillance Report is produced on a Wales and GB basis, links as follows:

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinetuberculosis/bovinetberadication/?lang=en

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

The Welsh Government recognises that TB eradication is a long term objective. It is anticipated that the measures contained within the Programme will lead to sustained reductions in TB incidence and prevalence and eventually the eradication of bovine TB in Wales. This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.wales.gov.uk/bovinetb

Contingency Planning

What is this and why is action required?

Contingency Planning provides the framework for the management and administrative structures that would be put into place in Wales in the event of a major outbreak of an infectious animal disease. The Welsh Government Contingency Plan for Exotic Animal Diseases covers arrangements for dealing with outbreaks and incidents of exotic disease of animals. These include Foot and Mouth Disease, Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease. It also sets out the systems, procedures and lines of communication for those involved in an animal disease outbreak.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Undertake the annual review of the Welsh Government Contingency Plan for Exotic Animal Diseases, taking account of the Defra Contingency Plan, lessons learnt from Local and National exercises and actual disease outbreaks by March 2017
- Assist in the development of and participation in APHA disease control exercises at both GB/UK and local levels
- Participate in wider resilience based activity e.g. attendance at Wales Resilience Steering Group and non-animal health exercises. Also attendance at Wales Resilience Forum and Civil Contingencies Group
- Review disease response capability assessments in liaison with other Devolved Administrations.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Exercises provide an invaluable opportunity to test disease control strategies and contingency plans in a 'safe environment'.

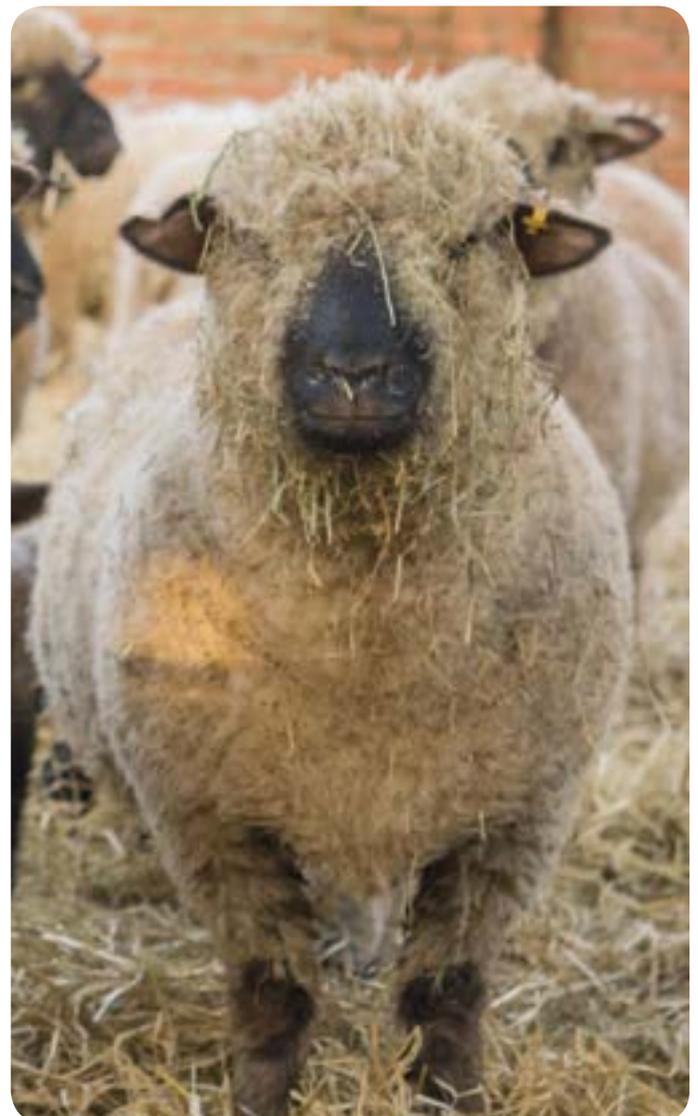
“Reducing the impact of animal disease on your business and wellbeing”

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

Continuous review, development and improvement of contingency plans with a view to ensuring our plans are robust. This contributes to all of the strategic outcomes in the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/uk-contingency-planning/?lang=en



Mobile Animal Exhibits

What is this and why is action required?

For some time, the Welsh Government has had concerns about the use of wild animals in Mobile Animal Exhibits. Mobile Animal Exhibits come in variable forms and typically are not subject to any stringent licensing regime or routine inspection. Examples include circuses; mobile zoos/petting farms; animal encounters; animals used for film and other entertainment; bird displays and reindeer parades. In 2015, Welsh Government commissioned an independent literature review and an analysis of the scientific evidence available as to whether captive wild animals in travelling circuses and other animal shows' achieve their optimal welfare requirements as set out under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The report is being considered by the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales and advice sought from the Wales AHWF Group and other expert groups. The evidence gathered will be used as a starting point when considering whether legislative intervention is required to safeguard the welfare of animals used in circuses and other Mobile Animal Exhibits.

It was also agreed that Welsh Government would continue discussions with the Welsh Government Association (WPGA), APHA and Local Authorities to map out a cohesive, Wales-wide approach to monitoring public safety and animal health and welfare standards in Mobile Animal Exhibits. As part of this work a checklist document will be developed to provide advice to enforcers about the powers available to them when visiting Mobile Animal Exhibits, and other relevant information. It also allows information sharing between Local Authorities to prevent repeat visits, for example, to travelling circuses, thus reducing resource.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Consider the independent review, seek advice from the Wales AHWF Group and other experts group to provide advice to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs on options for the way forward

- Work in partnership with the WPGA, APHA and Local Authorities to develop and role out a checklist document to provide consistent advice to enforcers.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored monthly with a formal review after six months in line with the mid-year review of the Implementation Plan. Next steps will be agreed by the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs following consideration of the evidence and options presented through the independent review.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute to the strategic outcome that animals in Wales have a good quality of life. Implementing these actions will also provide public assurance that enforcers are visiting these establishments and, where necessary taking appropriate action.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework



Quarantine Units Project

What is this and why is action required?

Standstill controls, with some exceptions, require that when cattle, sheep and goats are moved onto a holding a six day standstill (6DSS) on that premises will be triggered preventing animals moving from the holding except for direct to slaughter. Pigs moving onto a holding will trigger a 20 day standstill, as they present a higher risk, but they trigger only a 6DSS on any cattle, sheep or goats on the holding.

In 2011, Gareth Williams, an independent adviser was appointed to consider whether the regulatory framework that applies to farmers in Wales was measured and appropriate.

Recommendation 33 in the resultant “Working Smarter” report requires:

“The issues around the 6-day standstill rule must be addressed and resolved by the Welsh Government and the farming industry working together. All options must be considered including the Macdonald modelling on separation and isolation facilities, farm-to-farm movements and also the Scottish Government’s approach. Solutions must permit efficient cross border movements and be easily understood by farmers.”

In May 2015 the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food and the Minister for Natural Resources agreed to the introduction of a general exemption to the 6DSS for cattle, sheep and goats for farms using approved Quarantine Units (QUs). The decision was informed by a business case which assessed the benefits, costs and risks for different options for delivery of QUs. The Welsh Government has been working closely with the industry, through the Livestock Identification Advisory Group, the Standstill Task and Finish Group and a series of workshops held in September 2015, on proposals for QUs. A public consultation on the introduction of QUs closed for responses in February 2016.

The new arrangements will simplify the standstill regime by replacing complex exemptions for Isolation Units and Sole Occupancy Authorities

with a general exemption for QUs. QUs will allow greater flexibility for farmers while maintaining movement controls to help prevent the spread of disease.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Subject to Ministerial approval, work with stakeholders and delivery partners to implement QUs in Wales, by end of December 2016
- Amend the Disease Control (Wales) Order 2003 and General Movement Licences to reflect the new arrangements
- Communicate the new arrangements to the industry.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored through Livestock Identification Advisory Group and through overall monitoring of the Working Smarter Report.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute to all of the strategic outcomes in the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

Working Smarter

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/farming/workingsmarter/?lang=en

General Movement Licences

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/farmanimaltracing/general-movement-licences/?lang=en

Results of the Consultation on the Introduction of Quarantine Units

www.gov.wales/consultations/environmentandcountryside/consultation-six-day-standstill-quarantine-units/?status=closed&lang=en

Responsible Ownership

What is this and why is action required?

The way we treat animals is an important reflection of the values of our society. Since the implementation of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, the Welsh Government has been developing policies to promote animal welfare and responsible ownership. Over the last few years, legislation has been introduced aimed at raising the standards of welfare of dogs in Wales. These include:

- Docking of Working Dogs' Tails (Wales) Regulations 2007
- Animal Welfare (Electronic Collars) (Wales) Regulations 2010
- Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014
- The Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015

In 2015, Welsh Government also announced that the RSPCA would lead a Review on Responsible Dog Ownership.

By being responsible for an animal, a keeper is reducing the risk of health and welfare issues, as well as protecting the general public. Responsible ownership cannot be achieved in silo and requires engagement across a number of areas both within and outside of Welsh Government, including, the veterinary profession, health, education, housing and individual animal owners.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Consider the recommendations from the RSPCA Review on Responsible Dog Ownership in Wales
- Engage with departments across Welsh Government and external partners to develop a plan to promote the responsible ownership of companion animals, livestock and other animals in captivity across Wales.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

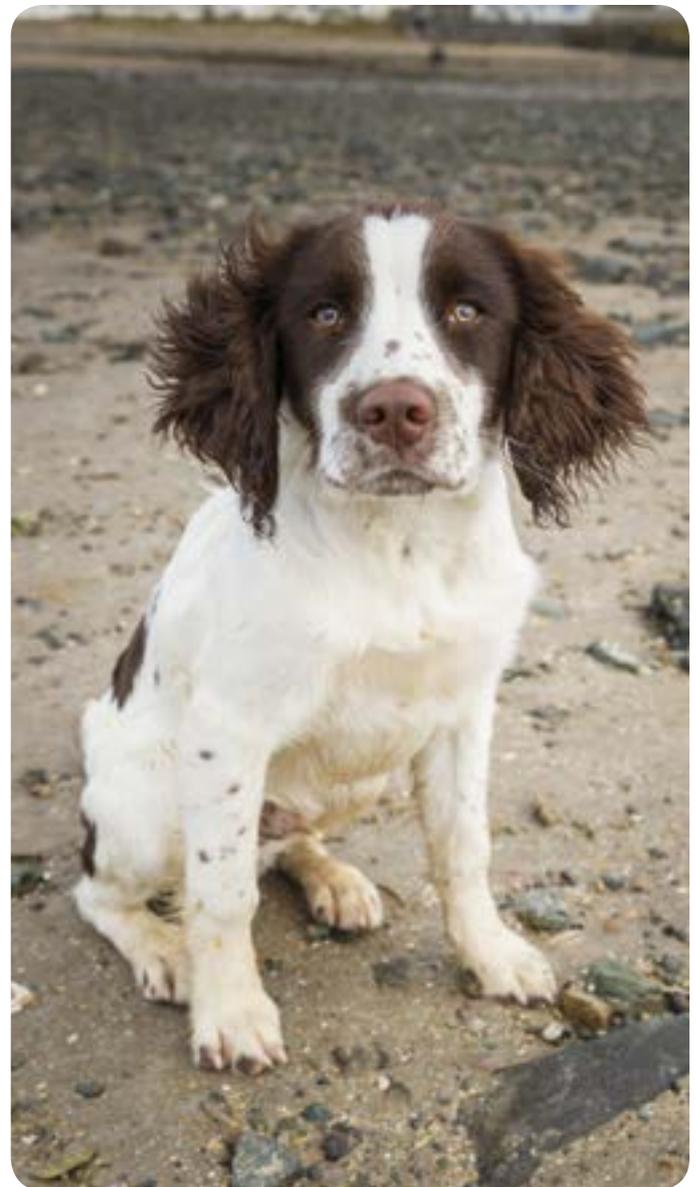
Progress will be monitored monthly with a formal review after six months in line with the mid-year review of the Implementation Plan. Next steps will be agreed at this point.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute to the strategic outcome that animals in Wales have a good quality of life.

Where can you find out more?

www.wales.gov.uk/animalwelfare



Salmonella

What is this and why is action required?

There are more than 2,500 strains of salmonella bacteria. These live in the digestive tracts of domestic and wild animals including, chicken, cattle and pigs. Salmonella can cause food poisoning. Foods such as eggs, chicken, pork and dairy produce can carry salmonellas.

The European Union (EU) Zoonoses Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 requires Member States to take effective measures to detect and control Salmonellas of public health significance in specified animal species at all relevant stages of production. National Control Plans are established to protect human health by achieving agreed targets through auditable 3 year programmes. These are currently in place for poultry (breeding flocks of Gallus gallus, laying hens, broilers and turkeys). Generally instances of these diseases are very low. There is a range of activity consisting of surveillance, testing and controls in place which serve to either prevent or identify endemic disease. Where instances do occur there are procedures in place to restrict the spread of the disease and manage it.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Effective and timely response to any notifiable disease occurrence or alleged breach of the testing regimes set out in the National Control Plans
- Work with delivery partners to monitor and review services to ensure they continue to meet needs.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

The following reports are available:

- Salmonella in livestock production in Great Britain, 2013 www.gov.uk/government/statistics/salmonella-in-livestock-production-in-great-britain-2013

“Working to ensure the safety of food that we eat”

- Annual UK Zoonoses Report. www.gov.uk/government/collections/zoonoses-reports
- Monthly Public Health data on Salmonella infections www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=457&pid=27920

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF, in particular: Wales has healthy productive animals; people trust and have confidence in the way food is produced and that public health is protected; Wales has a thriving rural economy.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/salmonella/?lang=en



Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

What is this and why is action required?

BSE in Cattle – Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) are fatal brain diseases suffered by a variety of species, the most common of which is BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) in cattle. EC Regulation No.999/2001 requires Member States to implement rules for the prevention control and eradication of TSEs. BSE controls safeguard animal and public health. There is a need to maintain risk-based TSE controls and testing, and to continue to reduce the annual number of new BSE cases, with the objective of eradicating the disease. Controls must be proportionate to the risk and generally instances of these diseases are very low.

BSE in Sheep – BSE has never been found in the UK sheep flock. However, some sheep ate the same feed (Meat and Bone Meal) which is thought to have given cattle BSE and laboratory research has shown that sheep can be artificially infected with BSE. There is, therefore, a possible risk that BSE is in sheep and Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls are applied on a precautionary basis. The Food Standards Agency continue to take a precautionary approach and recommend precautionary and proportionate measures to protect the public against the possible risk of BSE in sheep.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are:



“Wales has healthy productive animals”

- To draft and consult on consolidated Welsh TSE regulations, which will revoke and replace the 2008 Regulations
- Effective and timely response to any notifiable disease occurrence
- To continue to work with delivery partners to monitor and review services to ensure they continue to meet needs.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Statistics are published by the Animal Plant and Health Agency on the disease surveillance of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies.

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/active-tse-surveillance-statistics

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cattle-tse-surveillance-statistics

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF, in particular: Wales has healthy productive animals; people trust and have confidence in the way food is produced and that public health is protected; Wales has a thriving rural economy.

Where can you find out more?

BSE in Cattle

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinespongiformencephalopathy/?lang=en

BSE in Sheep

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/bovinespongiformencephalopathy/bse-in-sheep/?lang=en

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies – Scrapie

What is this and why is action required?

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs)

are fatal brain diseases suffered by a variety of species, one of which is scrapie in sheep and goats. EC Regulation No.99/2001 requires Member States to implement rules for the prevention, control and eradication of TSE's. Scrapie controls predominantly safeguard animal health as it is not considered to be transmissible to humans.

Classical scrapie has been recognised in the UK flock for over 250 years. Scrapie first became notifiable in 1993 for intra-community trade purposes. It transmits naturally between genetically susceptible individuals particularly at lambing/kidding and via colostrum/milk and infection can persist in the environment. The prevalence of classical scrapie infection in British sheep is calculated to have fallen by 40% from 2003 to 2007. Goats are regarded as more uniformly susceptible to classical scrapie.

Atypical scrapie was first detected in the UK sheep flock through the EU active surveillance programme, which started in 2002. The disease appears to be either poorly or not naturally transmissible and may be sporadic. There is a need to maintain risk-based TSE controls and testing, and to continue to reduce the annual number of new TSE cases, with the objective of eradicating the disease. Controls must be proportionate to the risk.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are:

- To draft and consult on consolidated Welsh TSE regulations, which will revoke and replace the 2008 Regulations
- Effective and timely response to any notifiable disease occurrence, and implementation and adherence to the requirements of the Compulsory Scrapie Flock Scheme where necessary
- Work with delivery partners to monitor and review services to ensure they continue to meet needs.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Statistics are published by APHA on the disease surveillance of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies.

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/active-tse-surveillance-statistics

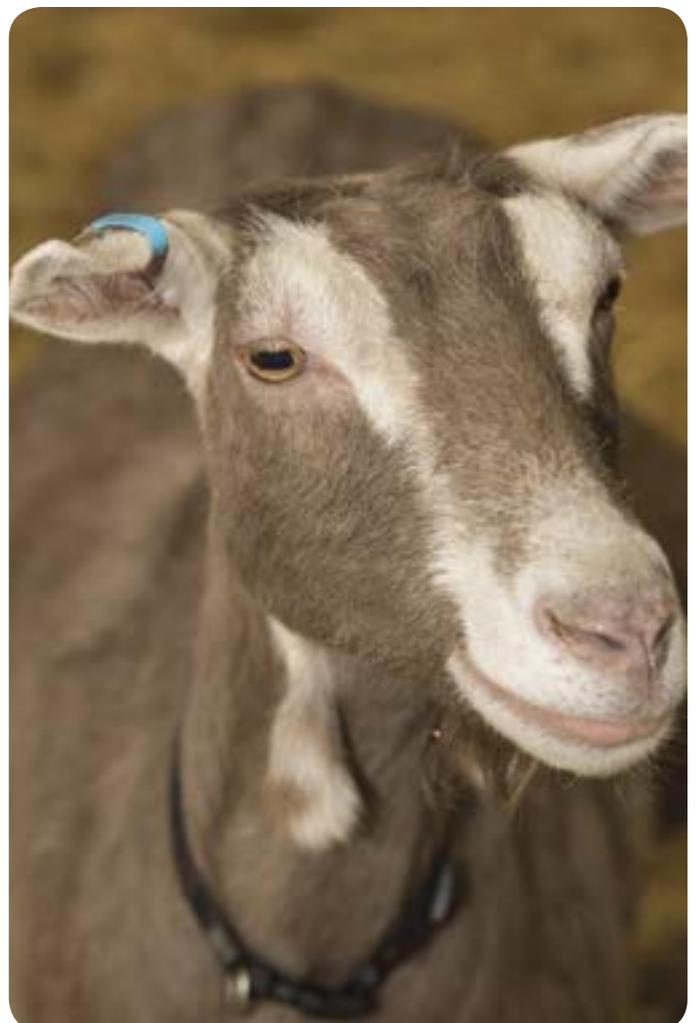
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cattle-tse-surveillance-statistics

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF. In particular, Wales has healthy productive animals, people trust and have confidence in the way food is produced and that public health is protected, Wales has a thriving rural economy.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/scrapie/?lang=en



Surveillance and Laboratory Review

What is this and why is action required?

Surveillance seeks to monitor animal disease trends and provide an early warning system of new and exotic diseases. Prompt detection enables timely and appropriate decisions to protect food safety, human and animal health, animal welfare and the environment. Surveillance is also required to maintain or achieve formal freedom from disease for the purposes of international trade in livestock and animal products. Scanning surveillance is funded by Defra on an England and Wales basis as the relevant budgets are not currently devolved.

In 2014 APHA introduced a new scanning surveillance model in England and Wales.

The APHA Carmarthen Veterinary Investigation Centre is being developed as a Centre of Expertise for cattle and sheep and surveillance methodology for extensive livestock systems. Iechyd Da, a consortium of Welsh veterinary practices, working in partnership with Aberystwyth University, has established the Wales Veterinary Science Centre to provide expert post mortem examination (PME) services. A subsidised carcase collection service has also been put in place to serve Wales to improve access for Welsh farmers to PME facilities. Some of the recommendations for the model have yet to be fully implemented, such as the IT system for monitoring the progress on laboratory samples, and officials are continuing to work with APHA

The Welsh Government has been working with APHA to identify opportunities to improve the veterinary infrastructure of Wales. This led to the introduction of gamma interferon testing at Carmarthen and discussions are continuing to determine whether other laboratory testing services could be introduced as an outcome of APHA's review of their laboratory services network.

The GB Surveillance Strategy was first introduced in 2003 and republished in 2010 following a review. The Welsh Government will be working with the other GB administrations to develop a Framework to replace the current strategy.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are to:

- Publish a new surveillance framework
- Seek benefits for Wales from APHA's review of their laboratory network
- Continue to work with APHA on the continuing development of their Centre of Expertise in Carmarthen.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

Progress will be monitored through regular meetings with APHA.

The Animal Health Surveillance Governance Board is responsible for animal health scanning surveillance in Wales and England and will provide strategic advice for animal health surveillance to the Welsh Government through the Wales AHWF.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This contributes to all of the strategic outcomes in the AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

APHA Scanning Surveillance Reports
www.ahvla.defra.gov.uk/vet-gateway/surveillance/index.htm

Animal Health Surveillance Governance Board
www.gov.uk/government/groups/animal-health-surveillance-governance-board

Welfare of Animals at Time of Slaughter

What is this and why is action required?

Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations. The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 (WATOK) and The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Consequential Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2014 fully implements Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 in Wales. It must be ensured that the procedures being delivered are effective and consistent in all slaughterhouses, and where breaches are identified that they are addressed. Maintaining consumer confidence is a key objective following media reports about welfare of animals at time of killing, in particular where breaches of welfare standards have been published in the UK media. There is also a need to improve the provisions in place for the welfare requirements for animals during transport presented for slaughter and during slaughter related operations.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2016/17 are:

- Review the report produced by the CCTV Task and Finish Group to assess the need and possible implementation of a workable system of CCTV in slaughterhouses
- Through discussions with Local Authorities APHA and Food Standards Agency (FSA), improve data presented to Welsh Government on reporting, which will improve the evidence gathered on non compliance with welfare requirements of animals transported to slaughterhouses
- Working with Wales Heads of Trading Standards to develop and establish a different way of delivering key animal health and welfare enforcement across all Local Authorities via the creation of an Enforcement Delivery Plan
- Work with UK Government to contribute to European Commission developments following the EC consumer study on animal welfare influence on purchasing decisions.

How will we monitor progress – what is the evidence base?

The Food Standards Agency deliver and monitor welfare provisions at slaughterhouses in Wales by providing monthly reports to the Welsh Government about the welfare of animals at slaughterhouse in Wales.

The FSA publish its animal welfare survey of slaughterhouses.

www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2015/13501/animal-welfare-survey-of-slaughterhouses-published

APHA deliver and monitor the welfare of farm animals on behalf of the Welsh Government. They publish statistics on the number of animal welfare inspections carried out on farms in Great Britain.

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/animal-welfare-inspections-on-farm

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

This will contribute to the strategic outcome that animals in Wales have a good quality of life.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/animalwelfare/livestockwelfare/welfare-of-animals-at-time-of-killing/?lang=en

Section 3: Emerging Policies

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) – Future Services

APHA is an executive agency of Defra but they also act on behalf of both the Welsh and Scottish Governments. APHA's responsibility includes helping to safeguard animal health and welfare, protecting public health and enhancing food security. The range of functions APHA operate across Great Britain (GB) include:

- Research and consultancy
- The surveillance and management of disease controls including import and export controls
- Welfare inspections on farm and during transport
- Protecting the nation's food supply through egg marketing inspections
- Protecting CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)
- Support and facilitation of international trade
- Acting as the national, European and international reference laboratory for several exotic and zoonotic notifiable diseases.

In support of the Welsh Government, APHA deliver the majority of Welsh animal health and welfare policy including priority issues such as:

- Promoting higher standards of animal health and welfare
- Delivering the TB Eradication Programme
- Delivering sustainable farming, food and fisheries industries
- Reviewing and testing contingency plans for animal disease emergencies.

“A healthier Wales”

A significant proportion of the budget to run APHA activity in Wales was devolved to the Welsh Government in April 2011. This primarily relates to implementing field services. The majority of surveillance budgets are still held by Defra on behalf of the Devolved Administrations. Work is on-going between GB Administrations on the issue of developing options for devolving the remaining budgets relating to APHA services. Proposals that emerge from this work would be put to respective GB Ministers to consider.

A Working Group was established in 2015 to evaluate the procedures in place between GB Administrations as well as with APHA, with a view to improve governance, financial transparency and general ways of working. This culminated in agreement for APHA to continue to act on behalf of the Welsh Government in the delivery of animal health and welfare services for the next three years. However, in the interest of striving for greater efficiency and effectiveness as well as to enhance quality of delivery, work is on-going to consider further opportunities for improving animal health and welfare services within Wales as well as shared services operated across GB.

Animal and Plant Health Agency – Review of Charges for Services Delivered by APHA

Work is on-going to evaluate where it may be appropriate to apply a charge to businesses that benefit from APHA services. Charges for some services have not been updated for some time and do not reflect the full cost of the service. Officials from each Government Administration are working with APHA to review charges. This will require agreement of Ministers in all three administrations.

The APHA Charging Project is currently being undertaken in two tranches. Tranche 1 (T1) covers areas where APHA already charge for services. However, charges had not been updated for some time and no longer reflected Full Cost Recovery. Tranche 2 (T2) will introduce new charges for existing services.

Through 2016/17 Welsh Government officials will continue to work with colleagues in APHA and the other GB Government Administrations to ensure a joined-up GB wide approach.

EU Animal Health Law

On 6 May 2013, the European Commission published a package of legislative proposals ('Smarter Rules for Safer Food') with the aim of strengthening standards along the whole agri-food chain. The aim of this work is to establish a single, simplified regulatory framework that sets out the objectives, scope and principles of regulatory intervention based on good governance and compliance with international standards.

Welsh Government will engage with Defra and the other UK administrations to assess the impact of the EU referendum result on this work.



Section 4: Keeping you Informed

Join Our Partnership Networks

Partnership working and increased collaboration with stakeholders is a fundamental element to the implementation of the Framework. To receive latest news and information directly on opportunities to get involved then you can register your interest on our stakeholder database.

Please complete the registration form at: www.gov.wales/ahwframework

If you would like a hard copy of the registration form then please contact us using the details below.

Visit Our Website

Find the latest information on the Framework and the Wales AHWF Group at:
www.gov.wales/ahwframework

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