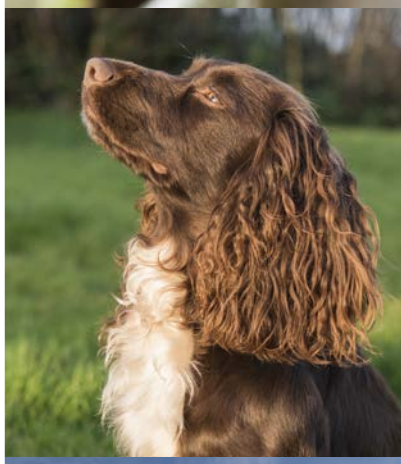
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework



Implementation Plan
2017-18

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Ministerial Foreword

This is the third annual Implementation Plan published under the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework (Wales AHWF) and the second for me in my role as Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs. The year ahead promises to be a challenging one.

When I published last year's Implementation Plan, it was shortly after the EU Referendum. The result of the Referendum has presented us with an unprecedented challenge and is already raising many complex issues. However, it also provides a real opportunity for us to drive change and influence what Wales will look like for our future generations. We must ensure we grasp this opportunity with both hands as we prepare for the forthcoming negotiations.

There is currently much uncertainty surrounding what may happen post EU Exit. I think it is important to say, we in Wales, do have a long-term vision for the future. Through the Well-being of Future Generations Act, we have set goals to improve the social, economic and cultural well-being of Wales. Through the Wales AHWF and our annual Implementation Plans, we have an agreed approach for continued improvement of animal health and welfare standards in Wales. Publication of this Implementation Plan for 2017/18 demonstrates our continued commitment to progress our key animal health and welfare priorities.

These priorities include taking forward the next phase of the Bovine TB Eradication Programme as well as continuing to meet our statutory obligations to safeguard the food chain and public health. We have a number of priorities for animal welfare such as Mobile Animal Exhibits, Animal Welfare Codes of Practice and Welfare of Animals at Time of Slaughter. Weaving through all of this work is the concept of responsible ownership. This also feeds into the priorities of the Wales AHWF Group such as Animal Health Planning and Antimicrobial Resistance. I am keen to see how this concept develops in the coming year.

I am encouraged to see how the ways of working set out in the Wales AHWF and the Well-being of Future Generations Act are being put into practice to deliver real benefits and results. The Wales AHWF Group is continuing to support this work, in particular, gathering evidence through increased stakeholder engagement. We have been able to feed this into the work on EU Exit as well as supporting both existing and new priorities. The approval of funding for the Wales Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme demonstrates what can be achieved through collaborative working and I will be taking a keen interest as the scheme is rolled out across Wales in the Autumn.

We must also remember at the core of our work to raise standards of animal health and welfare is the need for us to protect against the incursion and spread of animal infectious diseases and to maintain a state of preparedness to deal with any outbreak which may occur in Wales. I cannot emphasise this enough. It is crucial we work together to reduce the risk of an outbreak of animal disease which we all know, can lead to substantial cost and disruption. We must also think of the impact this can have on our ability to market Welsh produce and future trade opportunities.

The scope of this Implementation Plan is wide ranging but through real collaborative working, I am confident we can progress these actions to continue to raise animal health and welfare standards and promote healthy Welsh livestock, protect human health and safeguard the local economy.

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 2017/18 sets out the priorities for the year and key actions for delivery as agreed by the 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 can you 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 2016/17. The review sets out progress made against the actions identified within the 2016/17 Implementation Plan. A copy of the review is available on request.

Implications of the EU Referendum Result

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. In January 2017, the First Minister of Wales and the Leader of Plaid Cymru, published a White Paper, Securing Wales' Future, which provides a comprehensive, credible plan for Wales in relation to the UK leaving the EU. The six principles set out in the White Paper guide our approaches to addressing the challenges and opportunities that EU Exit will pose for animal health and welfare.

1. The importance of continued participation in the Single Market to support businesses, and secure jobs and the future prosperity of Wales.
2. A balanced approach to immigration linking migration to jobs and good properly-enforced employment practice which protects all workers whatever their country of origin.
3. On finance and investment, the need for the UK Government to make good on promises made during the referendum campaign that Wales would not lose funding as a result of the UK leaving the EU.
4. A fundamentally different constitutional relationship between the devolved governments and the UK Government – based on mutual respect, reaching agreement through consent.
5. Maintaining the social and environmental protections and values that we prize in Wales, in particular workers' rights, once these are no longer guaranteed through the UK's membership of the EU.
6. Proper consideration of transitional arrangements to ensure the UK does not fall off a cliff-edge in its economic and wider relationship with the EU if longer-term arrangements have not been agreed at the point of exit.

The Welsh Government, in partnership with the Wales AHWF Group and other stakeholders is working to ensure standards of animal health and welfare in Wales are not put at risk as a consequence of leaving the EU. Key issues under consideration include:

- The future legislative framework. The majority of Wales' legislation on animal health and welfare is derived from EU Directives and Regulations. The exception is legislation relating to companion animal welfare, which is largely made under domestic legislation.
- The status of EU nationals in Wales who play a key role in the effective delivery of controls in place to protect both animal and public health is a priority issue. Wales relies heavily on non-UK, EU-qualified vets in both our government services, in private practice and on EU labour in many parts of the supply chain for animal products. This important contribution needs to be assured.
- Animal health and welfare standards and arrangements required for international trade are actively being considered.
- The impact on our science and evidence base and the impact of changed funding arrangements.

Engagement and collaborative working will be crucial over the months and years ahead. Welsh Government officials are fully engaged with the UK wide Animal and Plant Health working group and with the UK Senior Officials Group in their considerations on EU Exit.

The Wales AHWF Group is also representing animal health and welfare interests at the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs' EU Roundtable Group and its sub-groups. The sub-groups have recently been established to allow more detailed discussions on key areas. The Group has secured seats on the following groups:

- Legislation & Regulation Working Group.
- Trade & Supply Chains Working Group.
- Land Management Working Group.
- Evidence & Scenarios Working Group.

The AHWF Group are also continuing to encourage all those with an interest in animal health and welfare to register on our stakeholder database (See Section 4). It is essential for the Welsh Government, animal keepers, vets and all involved in the supply chain to continue to work

together through the forthcoming negotiations and bring about the new arrangements.

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: • 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. The 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

As Chair of the Wales AHWF Group, I feel one of our most important roles in the coming 12 months will be to work with our industry partners and stakeholders to represent animal health and welfare issues through the period of negotiations on EU Exit.

It is evident from the work we have done so far, there is a real commitment to ensure the best outcome for Wales. Through the channels now in place, the Group is playing a full role to support this process.

In parallel, we are keen to progress both our existing and new priorities to raise standards of animal health and welfare in Wales. As we begin this year, I am very pleased to welcome two new members to the Group, Abi Reader and Paula Boyden. Both bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Group, which will enable us to broaden and strengthen our expertise across a number of areas.

Following our very successful stakeholder workshops held in early 2017, we have reviewed and updated our priorities for 2017/18. The feedback and advice provided through the workshops has been invaluable and I am really keen for us to do more of this in the coming year. As part of this work, we are really keen to engage with younger people and will be considering this in the coming months. As ever, if you have views, I would encourage you to feed them into us.

One of the strongest messages coming from the workshops was for active animal health planning to be a top priority. We have taken this on board and it is now included within this Implementation Plan. We are in agreement with you – integrating animal health planning into farm businesses reaps huge benefits including financial gains and greater resilience across the industry. We have already established a sub-group to take this work forward. Membership includes vets and farmers. Ultimately it is the relationship between the farmer and their vet which makes animal health planning a success. There are obvious links to be made here with our continued work to raise awareness of good biosecurity practices.

Looking at our other priorities, Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) continues to be a major challenge and we will be continuing our work to raise awareness of this and to encourage responsible use of veterinary medicines.
In addition, we have included Anthelmintic Resistance (AR) as a priority. We have heard evidence from the Sustainable Control Of Parasites in Sheep (SCOPS) how this is an increasing issue for flocks in Wales. Our work on sheep scab and sheep lameness will also continue. Further into the year, we will be considering cattle lameness. We are also keen to learn more about the growing pig sector in Wales. Again these were issues raised through our stakeholder workshops.

Engagement with the poultry sector does not appear as a separate priority within our plan this year. We have made this decision in light of the avian influenza outbreak, where a high level of communication activity has been undertaken between the Welsh Government, poultry farmers and small holders. This included many of the key messages we were keen to promote. We do not want to duplicate this work but we will be ensuring these stakeholders are included in our wider engagement work, providing opportunity for views to be fed in.

We remain keen to ensure the Group adopts a balanced approach between livestock and companion animal welfare. As a result, we will be continuing to work with the companion animal and equine sectors to progress actions identified last year. In particular, we are looking to continue our work with Animal Welfare

Network Wales and would also welcome views from other animal welfare organisations who may not be members of the network at this time.

Finally, I am pleased to report the Wales Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) Eradication Scheme has secured funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-20. The scheme will begin to be rolled out in the Autumn. This is a huge achievement and a concrete example of what can be achieved through collaborative working.

I am grateful to all those involved for their hard work to date and continued commitment to this scheme going forwards. I would encourage all cattle keepers in Wales to get involved to ensure this scheme is a success.

Best wishes

Peredur Hughes
Chair of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group

Animal Health Planning

What is this and why is action required?

One of the key principles of the Wales AHWF is "prevention is better than cure". Active animal health planning can deliver huge benefits to individual farm businesses and the wider industry. These include improved animal health and welfare standards, increased productivity and profits plus the assurance of greater business resilience. In addition, there are increasing demands from consumers for increased assurance of welfare standards and many industry assurance schemes require animal health planning as a compulsory element.

At the Wales AHWF Group stakeholder workshops held in January 2016, animal health planning was suggested as a priority for the Group to consider in 2017/18. To begin this work, the Wales AHWF Group considered and endorsed the concept proposed by Welsh Government veterinary advisors for all livestock units in Wales to utilise animal health planning as an integral part of their business. At the heart of the concept is ensuring livestock keepers clearly understand the benefits of animal health planning to their business, supporting vets to deliver a high quality animal health planning service, ensuring animal health plans are reviewed and regularly updated to reflect the individual needs of the farm business.

Through this approach, there are enormous opportunities for animal health planning to support delivery of many of the priorities set out within this plan and to embed animal health planning into wider initiatives.

What are we going to do?

The key milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Oversee the work of the Animal Health Planning Sub-Group as they develop proposals to deliver animal health planning in Wales. The Sub-Group is expected to report by December 2017.

- In partnership with Farming Connect, the Veterinary Delivery Partners and other industry organisations, consider the recommendations of the Sub Group and where agreed, work to set out a delivery plan and establish delivery mechanisms.
- As part of any proposal, develop an effective communications strategy to engage with livestock keepers and their vets across Wales.

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

Progress will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group.

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

Anthelmintic Resistance

What is this and why is action required?

The routine use of highly effective anthelmintics (wormers) combined with grazing management has controlled worms successfully in the majority of UK sheep flocks for many years. However, the reliance on these treatments has led to the development of resistance to the anthelmintics used. Increasing numbers of flocks are finding several of the treatments used are no longer effective in eradicating some worm species.

Last year the Wales AHWF Group met with a representative from SCOPS to discuss the Wales Against Anthelmintic Resistance Development (WAARD) report and the work being undertaken by SCOPS to slow the development of anthelmintic resistance. In addition, at the Wales AHWF Group stakeholder workshops, anthelmintic resistance was suggested as a priority for the Group to consider for the 2017/18 year. The Group recognise Anthelmintic resistance is an increasing threat to all sheep farms and also that sheep scab (another priority of the Group) is seen as a major threat contributing to this issue. Over the coming year the Wales AHWF Group is keen to work with SCOPS, the veterinary profession and other industry partners to encourage sheep farmers to take action before anthelmintic resistance occurs in their flocks. This will assist in preserving the usefulness of the older medicine groups and ensure recently developed treatments can be saved for use against more resistant infestations.

What are we going to do?

The key milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Support the work of SCOPS to raise awareness of anthelmintic resistance.
- Promote awareness of anthelmintic resistance through the Farming Connect service.
- Seek the support of the Veterinary Delivery Partners to explore the opportunity to link work on anthelmintic resistance to the work undertaken on Antimicrobial Resistance.
- Explore potential for establishing links with veterinary schools and agricultural colleges.

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

Progress will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Wales AHWF Group.

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.scops.org.uk/need-for-change.html

Antimicrobial Resistance

What is this and why is action required?

Antimicrobial 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 of antimicrobials 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 and are prescribed by veterinary surgeons. The Welsh Government and the Wales AHWF Group are 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:

- Increase awareness and education of AMR, including working with Public Health colleagues to promote European Antimicrobial Awareness Week.
- Through Farming Connect, increase the promotion of good husbandry and biosecurity practices to control zoonoses, endemic and exotic animal diseases – prevention is better than cure.
- Support the work of the Veterinary Delivery Partners on enhancing antibiotic stewardship standards, through producing prescribing and dispensing guidance for vets.
- Ensure all work on antimicrobial resistance is linked to animal health planning.
- 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.

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

www.gov.wales/topics/health/nhswales/plans/amr/?lang=en

www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/75792

"A globally responsible Wales"

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 practice, helping to ensure that animals stay healthy and businesses remain profitable.

Infections 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 neighbour 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 the 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 formed the foundation of the work taken forward in 2016/17.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

> "Prevention is better than cure"

- Continue to progress the recommendations in the Biosecurity Survey Results Report, advise on the way forward and oversee the implementation of these recommendations.
- Commission a further survey to re-assess the level of understanding of biosecurity. Compare the results with the original 2015 survey to identify areas for improvement and advise on an action plan to address these and oversee its delivery.
- Review the cattle keepers handbook and 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.
- Share this work with the Animal Health Planning Sub Group and the Veterinary Delivery Partnership enabling them to incorporate this into their work to develop and promote Animal Health Planning in Wales and antimicrobial resistance.
- Ensure good biosecurity remains a core element of the animal health and welfare theme within Farming Connect and any other relevant overarching strategies.
- Ensure biosecurity is central to any proposals developed by the Group during 2017/18.

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

Progress will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Wales AHWF Group.

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.wales.gov.uk/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 2017/18 are to:

- Continue to oversee the development and implementation of the BVD Eradication Scheme for Wales.
- Raise awareness to encourage uptake of the scheme prior and post-launch – Farming Connect will have a key role in this process.
- Ensure that high standards of biosecurity underpin the development and implementation of the scheme.
- Link this work to animal health planning.
- 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?

The eradication of BVD 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.gov.wales/ahwframework

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 met with Animal Welfare Network Wales (AWNW) and established links with the welfare sector and agreeing initial priority areas of work. In 2016/2017, AWNW worked with the Welsh Government to review the Codes of Practice for the welfare of equines, dogs and cats. 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 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 2017/18 are to:

- Work with the Welsh Government and stakeholders to review and where necessary 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 AWNW to develop Standard Operating Procedures for Police (and other emergency services) for equine emergencies.
- Support and facilitate 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 the Welsh Government and the AWNW on options for improving standards in animal 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/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/wales-animal-health-welfare-framework/?lang=en

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 the 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.

Over the past 12 months, the Wales AHWF Group has made considerable progress to embed these principles into its ways of working. This includes 2 stakeholder workshops, which sought views on priorities for the coming year and also on the impact of EU Exit in the context of animal health and welfare. The evidence gathered has been incorporated into the development of this plan and also into the wider work being taken forward on EU Exit to date. The Group plan to hold further workshops in 2017/18. The Group has also continued to work with the Food Industry Board and Amaeth Cymru to ensure there are established links between these three strategic Groups. For EU Exit the Group has ensured there is representation for animal health and welfare issues at both the Cabinet Secretary's EU Roundtable and its sub groups. This will continue into the coming year.

In terms of engagement with specific sectors, the Group has decided to incorporate work to engage with the poultry sector into this area as a lot of work was done last year by the Welsh Government due to the avian influenza outbreak. The Group is also keen to learn more about the pig sector in Wales.

> "Working in partnership is critical to success"

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Arrange further workshops with stakeholders including a workshop for younger people.
- 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.
- Continue to work closely with Amaeth Cymru and the Food Industry Board.
- Represent animal health and welfare at the EU Exit Roundatble and Sub Groups to consider longer term challenges for animal health and welfare in Wales and the industry as a whole.
- Continue to represent Wales's interests at the GB wide Cattle and Sheep Health and Welfare Groups.

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 major economic consequences 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. These were considered by the Wales AHWF Group. To aid these considerations, the Group commissioned research to improve the baseline information on the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales. A survey of sheep farmers in Wales was carried out in 2016 by Bristol University. Having considered the survey results the Group wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs with their recommendations on the way forward.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Support the industry to develop an application for Rural Development Plan funding to develop an approach which can:
  - Focus on tackling sheep scab in the identified "hot spots" of the Brecon, Bangor and North Ceredigion areas.
  - Support farmers' understanding of diagnosis, treatment and prevention through improved communication of the correct processes to follow and products to use.
  - Improve the knowledge, understanding and equipment of sheep dipping contractors.
- Work with the Welsh Government to develop a programme on parasite control as part of the Farming Connect Service.
- Ensure links with animal health planning and that high standards of biosecurity underpin any actions taken forward.
- 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 provides 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

www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/968/article/2/made

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 more than 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 (Now Farm Animal Welfare Committee) 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 2016, the Wales AHWF Group made sheep lameness one of its priorities. In this period the Group worked with the Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales and Farming Connect to implement the *Life Without lameness – 5 point plan* which has been developed by vets and practical farm experiences. The plan supports the animal in 3 different ways: building resilience, reducing disease challenge and establishing immunity. This work remains on-going and will continue to be monitored over the coming 12 months.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Continue monitoring of the sheep lameness programme being implemented through Farming Connect.
- Work with Farming Connect to measure the impact the sheep lameness programme is having in terms of reducing the levels of sheep lameness in Wales.
- Work with stakeholders to raise awareness, share advice and best practice with farmers.
- 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?

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

The year ahead promises to be a very busy and challenging time. As the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, I believe we must all play our part to ensure we continue to progress our priorities for raising standards of animal health and welfare in Wales.

Entwined within this work will be our continued efforts to assess the implications of EU Exit. Animal health and welfare policy is a key element of this work. We will be working closely with the Wales AHWF Group to consolidate our negotiating position on animal health and welfare issues including links to trade. In addition, the work on EU Animal Health Law has now become a priority for the coming 12 months. There is agreement across the United Kingdom to utilise the next 2 years to influence emerging EU tertiary legislation. Our objective must be to ensure when we exit the EU, there is a legislative framework in place to support trade and the need to respond to animal disease outbreaks quickly and effectively.

Working in partnership has always been a core principle within the Wales AHWF. We are also embedding the ways of working set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It is really important for people and organisations to get involved and for us to work collaboratively to ensure the best use of our resources. Through good husbandry practices, adoption of high welfare standards and disease prevention measures, we can minimise animal disease and reduce the likelihood of livestock contracting or spreading disease. Prevention is always better than cure. There are now many examples of this in practice which we can build on.

Since December, we have been working in partnership across the United Kingdom to deal with the on-going outbreak of avian influenza. I am grateful to all those who have contributed to this work. Avian Influenza remains a constant and real threat to our poultry and other captive birds. I would continue to stress the need for all keepers of poultry and other domestic captive birds to remain alert for signs of the disease and to contact their private veterinarians if they have any concerns. Also for all poultry keepers with 50 birds or more, you must register your flocks on the Poultry Register. I would strongly encourage all poultry keepers, including those with fewer than 50 birds, to register.

In the coming year, I am keen to develop our understanding of responsible ownership of both farmed and companion animals in Wales. As a concept, responsible ownership encompasses a whole range of topics. Refining these messages and embedding a culture of responsible ownership cannot be achieved in isolation. It will require engagement between all stakeholders and I would encourage as many of you as possible to get involved. At the core of responsible ownership continues to be our work on biosecurity. This is a golden thread which must be woven into everything we do. For example, in the coming 12 months we will be implementing the next phase of our Bovine TB Eradication programme. Promoting good biosecurity is embedded into this work and getting this right can have multiple benefits in the fight to prevent or deal with any animal disease outbreaks.

Another priority to review and update the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice. This is a significant piece of work and much progress has been made in the last 12 months. This year, we will be looking to consult on the amended codes and I would encourage all those with an interest to respond to the public consultations. It is important to remember as we work through this period of significant change, the Wales AHWF does set out a way of working which supports us. This is in the interests of promoting healthy Welsh livestock, protecting human health and safeguarding the local economy.

Professor Christianne Glossop
Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales

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, England and Scotland 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 from their local Bee Inspector and/or attend local Pest and Disease workshops, run by the Seasonal Bee Inspectors, annually.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 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 zoonoses). 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 came to an end in 2016. Enhancements to our TB Eradication Plan have been consulted on and the process is underway to roll out new measures to drive down disease incidence even further. The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are:

- Effective implementation of the Welsh elements of the UK TB Eradication Plan.
- Working to roll out the new measures of the TB Eradication Plan which are expected to come into force on 1 October 2017.
- The Welsh Government continues to have a badger vaccination policy. However, it is currently not possible to source the badger Bacillus Calmedde-Guerin vaccine due to issues with its supply and availability. The Welsh Government will continue to work with DEFRA on the supply of vaccine going forward.
- Introduce a regional approach to TB eradication in Wales, including an initial low TB area and associated controls.
- Target the persistent TB herd breakdowns through actions plans developed in partnership with the farmer, case vet, the farmer's vet and the Welsh Government. Action plans will put in place measures to deal with all disease pathways.
- Publish the annual surveillance report and updates to the quarterly TB Dashboard.
- Take forward further enhancements to the Cymorth TB Veterinary Programme. This will include additional non-veterinary support to farms suffering a TB breakdown.
- Supporting the epidemiology work currently being undertaken by Animal and Plant Health Agency 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 Classical Swine Fever. 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 August 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

EU Smarter Rules for Safer Food – EU Animal Health Law

What is this and why is action required?

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. The agreed EU Regulations will apply from December 2019 for plant health/ official controls and April 2021 for animal health. The Regulations are important to the UK in the context of our future trading relationship with the EU and others under a range of scenarios. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations have agreed to use the remaining two years of EU membership to influence the emerging Commission tertiary legislation. The objective is to future proof the regulations to better meet priorities, subject to any commitment to implement the regulations in full, following EU Exit. Any further changes imposed by the new EU regulation would then have to be considered and made in UK law to achieve "equivalence" to allow for future trade.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Work with the other UK administrations to agree priority areas for discussion with European Commission Working Groups and feed into these discussions as appropriate.
- Work with the other UK administrations and relevant teams within the Welsh Government to consider the current legislative position and develop a road map towards implementation of the amendments.
- Work in partnership with EU Exit teams to ensure considerations on the EU Animal Health Law are factored into discussions.
- Ensure stakeholders are kept up to date on progress and where necessary seek and encourage their engagement on the way forward.

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

Progress is monitored through the UK Executive Steering Group. The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales is a member of this Group. Priorities and our influence on them is kept under regular review and we remain flexible in our approach to both on-going and emerging issues.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

The emerging thinking on the negotiating position for Animal and Plant Health is to seek the benefits of regulatory equivalence or partial harmonisation with the current EU regime. This would enable the UK to deliver the same biosecurity outcomes but with the flexibility to adapt national implementation to meet UK priorities. This contributes to all of the strategic outcomes in the Wales AHWF.

Where can you find out more?

www.gov.wales/ahwframework

www.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1497279807716&uri=CELEX:32016R0429

www.eur-lex.europa.eu/content/welcome/about.html

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 2017/18 are to:

- Work with stakeholders and delivery partners to implement the new arrangements for QUs, scheduled to come into force on 11 September.
- Continued communication with industry on the new arrangements.

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.

www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/farmanimaltracing/quarantine-units/?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 several pieces of legislation have been introduced aimed at raising the standards of dog welfare in Wales. The RSPCA also completed their review on Responsible Dog Ownership in Wales.

By being responsible for an animal, a keeper is reducing the risk of health and welfare issues, as well as protecting the general public. Embedding a culture of responsible ownership cannot be achieved in isolation. Future policy development needs to apply to all kept species; both farmed and companion animals. A long term approach now needs to be developed, which is not species-specific. This will require engagement across a number of areas both within and outside of the Welsh Government, including the veterinary profession, health, education and housing sectors, and animal owners.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Continue to work with the RSPCA on the recommendations from the RSPCA Review on Responsible Dog Ownership.
- Engage with departments across the Welsh Government and external partners to develop a plan and policies promoting the responsible ownership of animals 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, sheep 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 (NCPs) 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 both prevent and 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 2017/18 are to:

- Provide 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
- Annual UK Zoonoses Report. www.gov.uk/government/collections/zoonoses-reports

"Working to ensure the safety of food that we eat"

- Monthly Public Health data on Salmonella infections. www.gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2016-new/mobileanimalexhibits/?lang=en

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 (TSEs)

What is this and why is action required?

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) are fatal brain diseases that affect a variety of species. EC Regulation No. 999/2001 requires Member States to implement rules for the prevention, control and eradication of TSEs. 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 always be proportionate to the risk. The most common types of TSEs include:

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathies (BSE) – BSE in cattle is the most common form of TSE, but due to strict controls and testing, incidences in cattle are very low. BSE has never been found in the UK sheep flock. However research has proven that sheep can be artificially infected with BSE and given that some sheep ate the same feed thought to have given cattle BSE, Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls for small ruminants are applied on a precautionary basis.

Scrapie – Scrapie is a TSE that affects sheep and goats and may take the form of either classical or atypical scrapie. Scrapie controls predominantly safeguard animal health as it is not considered to be transmissible to humans, however a precautionary approach is taken and human exposure to the infectivity is actively prevented through these controls.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 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.
- 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 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/bovinespongiformencephalopathy/?lang=en

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

Welfare of Animals – 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. The codes are intended to encourage all those who care for animals to adopt the highest standards. They explain what a person needs to do to meet the standards of care the law requires. Essentially, if you own or are responsible for an animal you have a legal duty of care and to take reasonable steps to ensure its welfare needs are met.

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.

In 2016/2017, the Welsh Government worked with Animal Welfare Network Wales to review the Codes of Practice for the welfare of equines, dogs and cats. Working Groups were established, comprising key stakeholders and recognised experts, to review the Codes of Practice for the welfare of pigs, laying hens, and to develop a new code for broilers (meat chickens). The working groups embraced the partnership approach, which is a principle of the Wales AHWF.

> "Wales has healthy productive animals"

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Consult and publish revised Codes of Practice for the welfare of equines, dogs, cats, pigs, laying hens, and a new code for broilers.
- Work with the Wales AHWF Group, AWNW and other stakeholders to identify if there is a need for new Codes of Practice.

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

Public consultation and continued engagement with stakeholders. 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 the welfare needs of the main kept species are met in line with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, contributing 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

Welfare of Animals – Mobile Animal Exhibits

What is this and why is action required?

There is concern the welfare needs of some animals kept by Mobile Animal Exhibits (MAEs), including circuses, cannot be met in a travelling environment. In December 2015 the Welsh Government commissioned an independent review into the use of wild animals in circuses. The review considered evidence on the welfare, both physical and mental, of wild and/or non-domesticated animals as well as animal behaviour and environmental enrichment. The review concluded the welfare needs of wild animals in travelling environments cannot be satisfied to the same extent as within static environments.

In December 2016, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs announced her wish for a registration or licensing scheme for all MAEs to be introduced in Wales, and for a joint approach to be adopted with the UK Government. Such a scheme could potentially be introduced to replace the outdated Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925 and allow for checks to be made to ensure good welfare standards are maintained.

Early in 2017, a short data capture survey was carried out with Local Authorities which revealed there to be at least 53 MAEs based in Wales. A small selection of these were contacted for a short interview. All expressed a desire for the industry to be regulated in some way. They felt this would ensure the welfare of the animals involved and give their businesses additional credibility. Finally, under the Wales Act 2017, there is now scope to consider the option of banning the use of wild animals in circuses.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Consult on the feasibility of introducing a licensing or registration scheme for MAEs. The consultation will also seek views on the banning the use of wild animals in circuses.
- Present the findings of the public consultation including next steps, to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs.

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 responses to the public consultation.

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/ahwframework

www.gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2016-new/mobileanimalexhibits/?lang=en

Welfare of Animals at Time of Slaughter

What is this and why is action required?

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring a high standard of welfare for all animals kept in Wales is maintained at all stages of their life, including at the point of slaughter. Animals should be protected from avoidable pain, injury, fear and distress during their killing and related operations, including their transport to slaughter.

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. Implementation of the regulations must be consistent, and where breaches are identified they must be addressed. Maintaining consumer confidence and animal welfare are key objectives; we work with Local Authorities, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to improve the delivery and enforcement of the regulations.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are:

- On receipt of the Wales AHWF Group opinion on the CCTV Task and Finish Group report, provide advice to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs on the need and possible implementation of a workable system of CCTV in slaughterhouses.
- Through discussions with Local Authorities, APHA and FSA, improve data presented to the 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.

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

The FSA 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 monitors 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

Veterinary Surveillance

What is this and why is action required?

Veterinary surveillance monitors animal disease trends and provides an early warning system for new and emerging diseases. It provides one of the means of detecting exotic, statutory diseases. Prompt detection enables timely and appropriate decisions to protect food safety, human and animal health, animal welfare and the environment. Surveillance (scanning and active, depending on the disease) 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 the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) introduced a new scanning surveillance model for England and Wales, which had specific outcomes relevant to Wales. The APHA Carmarthen Veterinary Investigation Centre (VIC) is being developed as a Centre of Expertise for surveillance methodology for extensive livestock systems. Iechyd Da, a consortium of Welsh veterinary practices, working in partnership with Aberystwyth University, established the Wales Veterinary Science Centre to provide expert Post Mortem examination (PME), and in future other services. A subsidised carcase collection service was put in place to improve access, particularly in North Wales, to PME facilities.

The Welsh Government has been working with APHA to identify opportunities to improve the veterinary infrastructure of Wales. This has led to the introduction of gamma interferon testing at Carmarthen. APHA have also completed a review of their laboratory network. An outcome of this review is for Carmarthen VIC to be the centre of expertise for parasitology. This means all parasitological testing will be done there. The review also resulted in gamma testing capacity at the Carmarthen VIC being increased.

What are we going to do?

The key delivery milestones for 2017/18 are to:

- Publish a new surveillance strategic framework which will shape development of veterinary surveillance in the coming years.
- Ensure the successful implementation of the outcome of APHA's review of their laboratory network; parasitology testing and increased gamma interferon testing capacity at Carmarthen VIC.
- Continue to work with APHA on the continuing development of their Centre of Expertise in Carmarthen.
- Ensure the review of contracts for private sector contributions to scanning surveillance in Wales build on past successes and deliver improvements for the future.

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

Progress will be monitored through new KPIs for scanning surveillance, in association with the 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 Group.

What are the outcomes we want to achieve?

The scanning surveillance system must ensure risks to the health and welfare of our animals, to public health, and to consumer confidence in our livestock industry, are quickly and efficiently identified. This will contribute towards the achievement of all of the strategic outcomes within the Wales AHWF, in particular, Wales has healthy productive animals and people trust and have confidence in the way food is produced.

Where can you find out more?

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

Section 3: Emerging Policies

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) – Policy Delivery

The Animal and Plant Health Agency act on behalf of the Welsh Government to deliver a range of functions which help safeguard animal health and welfare, protect public health and enhancing food security. 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. The original intention was to devolve outstanding budgets by April 2017. However this work was delayed by the result of the EU Referendum, so will now carry forward to 2017/18 with a view to devolving budgets with effect from April 2018.

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. Through 2017/18, 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 is achieved.

Animal Offenders Register for Wales

In March 2017, RSPCA Cymru produced a briefing document making their case for the introduction of an animal offender register in Wales. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs has asked RSPCA Cymru to establish a Task and Finish Group to consider the establishment of such a register.

"A healthier Wales"

The effectiveness of an animal abuse register as a deterrent in preventing either further abusive actions by an individual or animals being owned by an individual, would require the development of a mechanism to do so and a cross sector/ agency approach. The Welsh Government will await the outcome of the RSPCA Task and Finish Group on this emerging area.

Cattle Lameness

Feedback from the Wales AHWF Stakeholder workshops, held in January 2017, suggested the Wales AHWF Group consider the issues of cattle lameness as well as sheep lameness. The Group has agreed over the coming months to work with industry partners to consider how best to support farmers in dealing with cattle lameness through prevention, control and treatment. This will include a stock take of existing advice available and working with Farming Connect to raise awareness, share advice and best practice with farmers.

Pig Sector in Wales

The Wales AHWF Group recognise the pig sector is growing in Wales and there are initiatives now in place such as Menter Moch Cymru to increase the size of the pig herd in Wales. Feedback from the Wales AHWF Stakeholder workshops suggested the Group consider the pig sector and whether there is any action they can take to support the sector moving forwards. The Group has agreed over the coming months to seek specialist advice on the pig sector in Wales to help inform their thinking on the way forward.

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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Email us at: WAHFG@gov.wales

Or write to us at:
Wales Animal Health & Welfare Framework Team
Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Welsh Government Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

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