



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Animal Welfare Plan for Wales: year 1 progress report

Update on progress made during the first year of the plan.

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Introduction

Our **Animal Welfare Plan for Wales (AWPW)** was published 4 November 2021. It sets out how we will deliver our four animal welfare **Programme for Government** commitments and outlines how we will integrate a broad range of ongoing animal welfare policy work.

The Plan sets out how the Animal Health and Welfare Group will monitor the effectiveness and implementation of the plan and review the schedule of actions and timescales to ensure its currency, relevance and impact, with such reviews taking place annually (see page 12 of the AWPW).

The following provides an update on progress made during its first year.

Summary

We have made progress across all four of our animal welfare Programme for Government commitments:

- Work on Animal Welfare enforcement policy has progressed with a call for evidence to establish if existing regulation remains sufficient.
- The Local Authority Enforcement project is well underway, with 11 new Officers taking up posts.
- Our 12-week **consultation** on proposals to require CCTV in slaughterhouses was launched on 14 November.
- We have been working with the other Government Administrations to examine the use of enriched cages for laying hens, farrowing crates for pigs and breeding cages for gamebirds.
- We continue to work with the UK and Scottish Governments on proposals to improve animal welfare during transport. There has been significant

engagement with stakeholders, including industry experts and animal welfare organisations.

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill makes provisions to deliver important reforms. We await a report stage date and continue to push for the Bill's progression in all inter-Governmental forums.

Section 1: Programme for Government Commitments

PfG Commitment 1: Develop a national model for regulation of animal welfare, introducing registration for animal welfare establishments, commercial breeders for pets or for shooting, and animal exhibits

- We have written to our Local Authorities and third sector organisations, via the Animal Welfare Network for Wales (AWNW) and Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales (CAWGW), to identify priorities. Responses will help us establish whether existing legislation requires updating and if new regulation is required.
- We have liaised with the Local Authority lead on Animal Health and Welfare to identify the licensing regimes in force which fall within the scope of the review.
- Having recently concluded this period of evidence gathering, we will now begin to consider responses received and draft a document outlining the areas identified for priority, both in respect of existing legislation and where greater regulation may be required, for wider consultation.
- The Local Authority Enforcement Project has evolved from an initial focus on dog breeding to include all licensing activity involving animals. Building on previous work, the rebranded 'Animal Licensing Wales' project aims to

develop a co-operative approach in standards, enforcement practices and advice on the statutory guidance supporting existing legislation.

- The Local Authority Enforcement Project has helped support inspections at dog breeding premises and is already driving significant change:
 - Training has been delivered to 49 officers across 22 Local Authorities;
 - Nine regional inspectors and two senior inspectors have completed training and taken up posts.

PfG Commitment 2: Improve the qualifications for animal welfare inspectors to raise their professional status

- Our Animal Licensing Project is developing a process for extending and strengthening the training for all Local Authority licensing enforcement officers as new licensing regulations are introduced.
- To date it has trained nine regional enforcement officers and two senior intelligence officers, creating a higher level of expertise to support Local Authorities with more complex cases.
- The project has received high recognition with the first trained senior intelligence officer being nominated for a Pet Industry Federation award and the programme itself receiving the RSPCA Innovator Footprint award.

PfG Commitment 3: Require CCTV in all slaughterhouses

- In November 2021, the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales wrote to all slaughterhouse operators in Wales to advise of our commitment to require CCTV in all areas where live animals are present.
- We have worked with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to understand facilities in Welsh slaughterhouses and to assess the impacts our commitment will have on individual businesses, particularly our smaller slaughterhouses.

- On 14 November 2022, we launched a 12-week public consultation. Our proposals require CCTV in all approved slaughterhouses in areas where live animals are present. There will be requirements for slaughterhouse operators to allow enforcement agencies to access footage and for footage to be stored for a specified period.
- The 12-week public consultation closed in February 2023. We will analyse returns and publish a summary of responses, including next steps.

PfG Commitment 4: Restrict the use of cages for Farmed Animals

- We are working with other administrations to consider how to further improve standards of farmed animal welfare by examining the use of enriched cages for laying hens, farrowing crates for pigs and breeding cages for gamebirds.
- We are considering impacts on the welfare of the animals, the industry, the commercial availability of alternative systems, as well as impacts on consumers, the environment and trade.
- We commissioned research to understand more about the use of cages for farmed animals, including:
 - How and where cages are used (including in the rearing of gamebirds)
 - What systems are used and to what extent
 - What species, or sub-sets of species are they used for
 - What alternative non-caged systems are used within GB and beyond?

Section 2: Ongoing, Wales-based Policy Work

Statutory Guidance for the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021

- Our statutory guidance for pet sales and for the licencing regime to support the Animal Welfare (Licencing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 was published on 28 October 2021. Further guidance documents will be created should other licencing regimes be added to this Statutory Instrument: [Statutory guidance for the pet sales licensing regime | GOV.WALES](#)

Update statutory Guidance for the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014

- Revisions to our Statutory Guidance on Dog Breeding have been published.
- The Animal Licensing Project are now forming a working group to consider issues such as pen sizes with a view to further revisions to the guidance: [Dog breeding establishments: guidance for local authorities | GOV.WALES](#)

Licensing of Animal Exhibits and Animal Establishments

- We are considering options and timelines for regulating animal welfare establishments and animal exhibits, and also determining whether any intervention is required with regard to greyhound racing in Wales.
- Building on previous work, we will continue to work with Defra and Scottish Government to ensure a consistent approach where appropriate.
- We intend to undertake public consultation exercises on these matters.

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- We are working with the Welsh Government-funded Animal Licensing Project to develop a process for extending and strengthening the established model for the training of enforcement officers as new licensing regulations are introduced.
- Officials are monitoring the heightened interest in greyhound racing and intend to include questions in any consultation on revised proposals.

Microchipping of Dogs and Cats

- Proposals to extend compulsory microchipping to include kittens and cats in Wales will draw upon UK-wide research published in 2021.
- Following completion of our analysis of the research, we will consider whether any amendments are required on the current microchipping regulations for dogs and possible new measures for kittens and cats. Any proposed changes would be subject to a full public consultation process.

Codes of Practice

- Our codes of practice are intended to encourage all those who are responsible for animals to adopt the highest standards of husbandry. They explain what a person needs to do to meet the standards of care the law requires.
- We have established a Working Group with the other UK administrations to consider a review cycle for the codes. There are clear benefits to working collaboratively to update codes.
- The review of our Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes will remain on hold while we examine the evidence around the use of cages for breeding gamebirds. Publication of our revised Code of Practice for the Welfare of Pigs remains on hold.

Section 3: UK/GB Policy Collaboration

Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill

- The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill is a UK Government Bill sponsored by Defra. It makes provisions to deliver reforms relating to the welfare of kept animals including farm animals, companion animals and kept wild animals.
- Legislative Consent Memorandums, in respect of all the clauses contained in the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill have been laid in the Senedd, including prohibiting live export, provisions to address dogs attacking/worrying livestock, pet imports, keeping primates as pets and zoo standards.
- We meet regularly with Defra and Devolved counterparts at the Animal Welfare Policy Group (AWPG) Kept Animals Bill (KAB) sub-group.
- The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill is at Commons Report stage. UK Government Ministers have been reviewing the Bill and its packaging, as well as key handling issues while we wait for a new Report stage date.
- The Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths, raised the Kept Animals Bill at January's Inter-Ministerial Group Meeting and has since written to Rt Hon Lord Benyon at Defra, setting out our concern over lack of progress and urging the UK Government to proceed beyond report stage.

Welfare in Transport

- We are working with the UK Government on introducing a ban on the export of live cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and equines for slaughter, including for fattening for subsequent slaughter, through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill.
- We share the view animals should only be transported when necessary and journey durations should be minimised. Exports for purposes other than

slaughter or fattening, such as for breeding or competitions and shows, will continue to be permitted. Poultry are not in scope of the ban.

- Evidence has shown very long journeys can cause heat stress, dehydration, and physical injuries in transported animals.
- We are now working with stakeholders and experts – including animal welfare and farming groups – to further develop these measures to help enhance the welfare of farmed animals during transport.

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