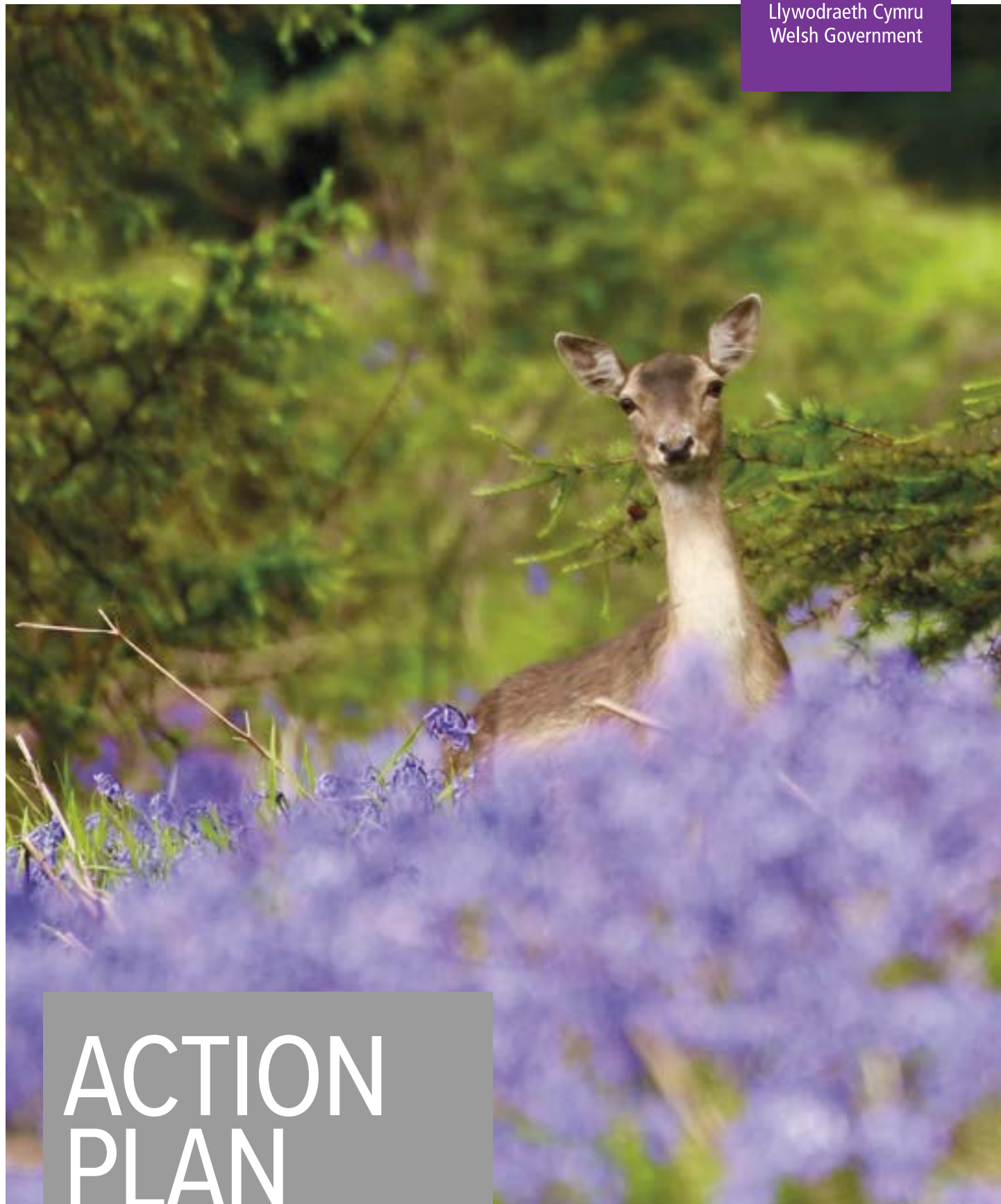


2017-2022



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



ACTION PLAN

FOR WILD DEER
MANAGEMENT IN WALES

GOV.WALES

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CABINET SECRETARY'S FOREWORD

In February 2011, we launched the Wild Deer Management strategy which set out our aims for the management of wild deer in Wales. The accompanying 5-year action plan, which concluded in 2016, began the work to deliver the objectives of the strategy and has been successful in completing a wide range of actions. I am now pleased to present an updated action plan which sets out the actions necessary to realise our vision for Wales to benefit from its wild deer population, in balance with the natural, social and economic environment.

Although wild deer are not as numerous or widespread in Wales as in other parts of the UK, their numbers and distribution are increasing along with their impact. We are in a unique position in Wales as we are able to address the potential problems deer can pose before the impacts become too great. Wild deer are a valued part of our natural heritage and can fulfil an important ecological role. However, at high densities they can have significant negative impacts on forestry and woodland, priority habitats and native flora. Deer can also have a localised impact on agriculture and are potential vectors of disease. An increase in deer numbers will also mean an increased risk of deer vehicle collisions, which have become a significant problem in some areas of the UK.

Without appropriate management, deer will directly affect a number of outcomes of the Woodlands for Wales strategy, our commitments to agriculture and rural development, and national, international and EU biodiversity commitments. They present a threat to Welsh Government targets on the expansion of woodland cover, which relates to our climate change policies. Management is also required to reduce or mitigate the risk arising from the establishment of invasive non-native deer species in Wales.

We are committed to a more integrated approach to land management in line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and our Natural Resources Management policy. The strategy for wild deer management in Wales stresses the importance of a co-ordinated approach to management at a landscape scale involving private landowners, public bodies and non-governmental organisations. Only through working in partnership, can we collectively deliver the outcomes set out in the strategy and I am pleased so many partners have come together to agree this updated action plan. Through this collaborative approach to the delivery of actions, we aim to uphold the value of wild deer as part of our natural heritage and ensure where active management is required, it is sustainable as well as safe, humane and effective.



Lesley Griffiths AM

Welsh Government, Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs Management



1. INTRODUCTION

This updated Action Plan builds on the achievements of the initial action plan for deer management in Wales, which covered the period 2011 – 2016. This new plan sets out the activities to be undertaken over the next 5 years to continue the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Welsh Government’s Strategy for Wild Deer Management in Wales. The Strategy, which was published in February 2011, takes a long-term view on the management of wild deer and the accompanying five-year action plans identifies what needs to happen in the short term or to begin happening and continue over a longer period. The action plan identifies who is responsible for taking the lead for each action to help deliver the long term outcomes, but recognises it will require co-ordinated action by many organisations if we are to achieve our vision **‘Wales benefits from its wild deer population in balance with the natural, social and economic environment.’**

The actions in the action plan for 2017 – 2022 continue to be framed around the outcomes identified in the Strategy and use its ‘Agenda for Action’ as a basis to build on the deer management activities and partnerships that already exist in Wales.

The outcomes identified in the strategy are:

- Raise awareness of deer and their impacts, both positive and negative;
- Manage the impacts of deer;
- Where possible reduce the impacts of non-native deer species;
- Ensure deer management is delivered in a responsible, competent and ethical manner;
- Make venison from wild deer management more widely available to local markets;
- Minimise the number and severity of deer-vehicle collisions;
- Monitor animal health and disease issues in wild deer and address where appropriate; and
- Minimise illegal activities related to wild deer in Wales.

A strong delivery partnership has been built and the delivery of the actions in this second action plan will continue to require a collaborative approach as none of them can be achieved through the efforts of a single individual, group or organisation. We will actively promote and facilitate opportunities for this to happen and for both existing and new partners with an interest in the management of wild deer in Wales to become involved in the important work of implementing this plan.

2. DELIVERING THE ACTIONS

The Wales Deer Forum (WDF) (Appendix 1) will continue to be key to facilitating the collaboration required to deliver the actions. The management of deer by landowners, public bodies and non-governmental organisations will be achieved through working together at a landscape scale.

Through this approach we aim to uphold the value of wild deer as part of our natural heritage, and ensure where their active management is required, it is sustainable as well as safe, humane and effective.

Awareness raising remains a key aim of this action plan. This needs to be tailored to a variety of audiences using a range of communications channels. Again this will require collaboration to ensure clear and consistent messages are delivered appropriately to the different audiences using the many diverse opportunities for communication available through the WDF and wider Deer Initiative Partnership.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES – OUR APPROACH TO WILD DEER MANAGEMENT

The delivery of the actions is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

Valuing wild deer: Wild deer are valued as part of our natural heritage, and their management should reflect this. Native species in particular can fulfil important ecological roles and make positive contributions to biodiversity. At the same time these positive values need to be balanced against the considerable negative impacts deer can have on agriculture, forestry and the wider environment.

Partnership: The lead responsibility for deer management lies with landowners and land managers, whether owners or tenants. As wild deer regularly cross man-made boundaries, cooperation at a landscape scale is crucial.

We (and our agencies) help to support landowners, land managers and others through an agreed framework for sustainable wild deer management which is set out in the Strategy. We remain committed to the partnership approach for the co-ordination, delivery and review of this framework for wild deer management. We believe this is best achieved through a broad range of public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders working together.

Sustainable management: In line with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, we are committed to delivering sustainable management of natural resources in line with the 9 principles outlined. In relation to wild deer, we will achieve this through partnership delivery of this action plan and the associated strategy. Wild deer need to be managed at a landscape scale to reflect their population dynamics, but in balance with smaller scale environments and in the context of our long-term strategies, such as the planned expansion of woodland and dealing with the challenges of climate change.

Protecting deer welfare: We endorse the need to ensure high standards of welfare for wild deer, in particular through the use of trained and competent people in deer management and the application of best practice. Deer welfare is threatened by deer–vehicle collisions which

can create a public safety hazard. It is also threatened by illegal activities such as poaching, and where deer populations reach higher densities there is an increased risk of adverse impacts on deer health.

Evidence-based policy: Sustainable deer management relies on sound scientific evidence, and it is important to continue to develop and challenge the evidence base so deer management can improve and achieve its objectives.

Building on existing mechanisms: We intend to continue to build on the extensive work that has already been done by individuals and organisations, including through the delivery of the initial action plan. We will strengthen and extend partnership working, making best use of available resources.

4. OTHER WELSH GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES WHICH THE WILD DEER MANAGEMENT IN WALES ACTION PLAN WILL HELP DELIVER.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

The Act puts in place seven well-being goals:

- A prosperous Wales;
- A resilient Wales;
- A healthier Wales;
- A more equal Wales;
- A Wales of cohesive communities;
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and
- A globally responsible Wales.

This Action Plan will directly contribute to the goal of creating “a resilient Wales” and is also relevant to the goals of “a prosperous Wales” and “a globally responsible Wales”. It is already established as a joined up and integrated approach with partnership working at its heart.

The Act also places a well-being duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in achieving these goals. It sets out five “ways of working” for public bodies to demonstrate they have applied the sustainable development principle.

This Action Plan meets these “ways of working” to deliver the sustainable development principle. It has been developed through the involvement of stakeholders and partners with the aim of taking low impact action now to prevent deer issues becoming a greater problem in the longer term. The actions will be delivered collaboratively by partners and will help deliver outcomes in other policies and strategies.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduces an approach to natural resource management that is about managing our natural environment in a joined up sustainable way that delivers real outcomes for the environment, people, the economy and our communities. The aim is to make the most of the opportunities that Wales' natural resources present while safeguarding and building the resilience of natural systems to continue to provide these benefits in the long term.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduces nine simple principles of sustainable management of natural resources, all of which are met by the Wild Deer Management Strategy:

- **Adaptive Management:** Manage adaptively, by planning, monitoring and reviewing action;
- **Scale:** Consider the appropriate spatial scale for action;
- **Collaboration and engagement:** Promote and engage in collaboration and co-operation;
- **Public participation:** Make appropriate arrangement for public participation in decision –making;
- **Evidence:** Take account of all relevant evidence and gather evidence in respect of uncertainties;
- **Multiple benefits:** Take account of the benefits and intrinsic value of natural resources;
- **Preventative action:** Take action to prevent significant damage to ecosystems;
- **Long term:** Take account of the short, medium and long term consequences of actions; and
- **Building resilience:** Take account of the resilience of ecosystems.

The Act introduces a biodiversity duty applicable to a range of public authorities which will help to reverse the decline and secure the long-term resilience of biodiversity in Wales.

It also provides Natural Resources Wales (NRW) with new tools to help manage our natural resources sustainably. Land management agreements will allow NRW to work with landowners to manage their land in a sustainable way. Experimental schemes will allow NRW to trial new ways of working.

The Wild Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan are well aligned to the ambitions of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. They are of direct relevance to the three key features introduced by the Act: the State of Natural Resources Report; the National Natural Resources Policy and Area Statements. The work already undertaken in identifying Deer Priority Areas, assessing impacts and establishing collaborative management to deal with the adverse impacts of deer populations on key habitats should be a strong contributor to the delivery of the Act. The introduction of Area Statements provides an important opportunity to reflect and build upon the work that is already being undertaken in the Deer Priority Areas and to consider the need for further action in potential additional Deer Priority Areas.

Woodlands for Wales (2009)

Woodlands for Wales sets out the Welsh Government (WG) 50-year strategy for woodlands and trees, and is supported by an action plan. Successful delivery of many of the objectives of this strategy will be more difficult unless the negative impacts of deer are properly addressed.

The creation of new woodland is a key objective and this will be compromised if the potential negative impacts of wild deer are not managed. We also want our woodlands to be more structurally and species diverse to increase resilience and an increasing deer population will need to be addressed if this is to be achieved.

Native wild deer are a part of our rich biodiversity and where managed sustainably can add value to existing woodlands, including ancient woodlands. However, if deer densities become too high, they can bring about detrimental changes which can affect the resilience of the woodland habitat and the biodiversity it supports. Without appropriate management, deer populations will cause long-term changes to the composition and habitat value of our woodlands.

Woodland products contribute to the Welsh economy and the impacts of deer can have financial implications including the additional costs of tree protection, putting right damage caused to young trees through browsing and also the loss of future timber revenue through adverse effects on timber quality.

This Action Plan will deliver directly towards the following Woodlands for Wales strategy outcomes:

Outcome 1: More woodlands and trees are managed sustainably;

Outcome 2: Woodland ecosystems are healthy and resilient;

Outcome 4: Woodland cover in Wales increases;

Outcome 16: Woodland management achieves high standards of environmental stewardship;

Outcome 17: Woodlands and trees of special conservation value are in favourable management; and

Outcome 18: Woodland biodiversity is supported and native woodland is in favourable management.

Nature Recovery Plan for Wales 2015

The Nature Recovery Plan for Wales comprises:

Part 1: Our Strategy for Nature sets out our commitment to biodiversity in Wales, the issues we need to address, and our objectives for action. It sets out how our current and proposed action, particularly through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and through the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, will contribute to reversing the loss of biodiversity in Wales.

Part 2: Our Action Plan sets out those actions which have been specifically identified to meet our objectives to reverse the decline of biodiversity.

Part 3: The Nature Recovery Framework (in development) will show the governance structure for the Nature Recovery Plan, and the roles and responsibilities of everybody involved in the delivery of action for biodiversity in Wales. It will also define the accountability measures in place to ensure delivery.

The ambition to be addressed through the Nature Recovery Plan is:

‘To reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society’.

The Nature Recovery Plan defines the objectives and key actions needed in Wales to achieve our ambition and meet both the Resilient Wales goal and the global and European commitments to halting the loss of biodiversity.

Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.

Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.

Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation.

Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats.

Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.

Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

It will be important for there to be positive engagement between the Nature Recovery Plan and the Strategy and Action plan for Wild Deer Management. The Wild Deer Management Strategy and Action Plan already embrace the principles of sustainable management of natural resources and can make important contributions to all of the Nature Recovery Plan objectives.

LIFE Natura 2000 Programme

There are 123 designated habitat and species features on the 92 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 20 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in Wales. Together these comprise the Natura 2000 network.

The purpose of the LIFE Natura 2000 Programme for Wales, led by NRW is to enable Wales to make significant progress towards bringing Natura 2000 species and habitats into favourable condition and help meet its commitments under the European Habitats and Birds Directives.

The LIFE Natura 2000 Programme has created 11 Thematic Action Plans, each of which detail priority strategic actions to address major issues and risks which have been identified as having an adverse impact on Natura 2000 features across the network.

Outcome 3 of the Wild Deer Management Strategy and the associated actions for non-native deer species is of particular relevance to the thematic plan on non-native invasive species and pathogens.

The thematic plan on woodland management specifically identified the negative effects of deer grazing and browsing as an existing pressure and future threat to semi-natural woodland SACs. It references deer management extensively, making use of two of the Deer Priority Areas established under the Wild Deer Management Strategy to illustrate the need for action. It also extends clear support to both the Wild Deer Management Strategy and the Action Plan as key components in delivering the objective of the Woodland Management Thematic Plan to improve the condition of semi-natural woodland SACs.

EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species

The regulation came into force on 1 January 2015, after which the European Commission had a further 12 months to propose a statutory list of species to which the regulation will apply. Once the list is adopted, Member States then have up to 18 months to put in place the required measures. The species on the list will be subject to risk assessments and action plans; Member States will be required to have surveillance and control procedures in place such that if/when a species arrives it can be detected and quickly assessed for feasibility of control. If control is feasible it has to be started within three months of the species having been detected. In addition, for widespread and non-controllable species there is a requirement to have management plans in place.

Of the two non-native deer species present in the wild in Wales, only Muntjac appears on the statutory list of species applicable to the regulation. A GB-wide Risk Assessment has been prepared and a management plan is being developed. Outcome 3 of the Strategy for Wild Deer Management and any associated actions in an Action Plan will specifically deal with the requirements of the Regulations.

Food for Wales, Food from Wales 2010-2020 – A Food Strategy for Wales

Food from Wales is founded on principles of sustainable development, which include economic, social and environmental aspects of the production and consumption of food. It accepts Government cannot deliver this alone, and industry and other stakeholders have a key role in its delivery.

The Strategy takes into consideration cross-cutting issues such as health, food culture and education, food security, environmental sustainability and community development to provide the basis for an integrated approach to food policy in Wales.

The strategy is supported by the action plan “Towards Sustainable Growth: an Action Plan for the Food and Drink Industry 2014-2020”. The vision is one of green growth where businesses are the custodians of Welsh natural resources; are both environmentally and socially responsible; and are producing safe food.

The Wild Deer Management Action Plan supports this vision through actions which support and encourage ways to add value to wild venison by following best practice, adherence to Hygiene Regulations and encouraging the local processing and sale of Welsh venison.

5. HOW THE ACTION PLAN IS SET OUT

The Action Plan is in the form of a table which shows:

Outcomes we want to achieve which are set out in the Welsh Government's *Strategy for Wild Deer Management in Wales*.

Actions that will contribute towards delivering the outcomes.

Lead Bodies involved in delivering the action who have a funding and/or co-ordinating role, and thus an active role in driving forward the actions to ensure that they are delivered.

Delivery Agents are the groups and organisations working in partnership to deliver the actions.

The proposed lead bodies identified for each action will be supported by many other organisations working in partnership to deliver the action. The Deer Initiative Partnership organisations and other WDF members are key to delivering most of the actions in this plan. They will play a vital role in supporting the lead bodies.



6. ACTION PLAN – TABLE OF ACTIONS, LEAD BODIES AND DELIVERY AGENTS

Outcome 1: Raise awareness of deer and their impacts, both positive and negative.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>1.1 Maintain a Wild Deer Management in Wales communications plan with input from all relevant stakeholders. Promote the key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are the deer? – which species are found in Wales, where are they and what do they contribute to the environment, society and the economy. • Why manage deer? – the benefits of sustainable management of deer in Wales. • How to manage deer – the promotion of Best Practice and endorsement of standards and ethical management. • The importance of monitoring the presence and impacts of deer and how to contribute to this. • The importance of minimising illegal activities related to wild deer - to encourage reporting and more informed policing. 	NRW	DI Ltd/ DIP/ WDF	Maintain for the duration of the Action Plan and review annually.
<p>1.2 Implement the communications plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve all members of DIP and WDF in delivering the key messages, which should be adapted to suit different audiences. • Explore the use of new communications channels, including others used by WG to contact the rural business community. 	DI Ltd	WDF and DIP	Launch a refreshed Communications Plan to DIP Wales by summer 2017 and continue implementation for the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 2: Manage the impact of deer impacts.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>2.1 Further develop the protocol for collating data from the most cost effective sources to monitor deer presence and impact in Wales.</p>	NRW	DI Ltd	Update the draft Protocol to reflect new developments in data handling by DI by summer 2017.
<p>2.2 Implement the protocol.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of data. • Collation and interpretation of anonymised data. • Prepare annual report of findings to the WDF and DIP. 	DI Ltd	WDF and DIP	For the duration of the Action Plan. Report annually to WDF and DIP.
<p>2.3 Consolidate and further develop collaborative management in the three established Priority Geographical Areas where impacts are of a particular concern - Lower Wye Valley, Elwy Valley and Teifi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the approach through the publication of case studies for the Priority Areas and update these every 5 years. 	NRW	DI Ltd	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>2.4 From Action 2.2 identify further priority geographical areas where negative impacts are of particular concern and collaborative management at a local and landscape scale needs to be supported, as and when resources become available.</p>	NRW	DI Ltd	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>2.5 Ensure that managing the impact of deer is reflected in the National Natural Resources Policy and included in the Area Statements to be drawn up in response to the WG's Environment (Wales) Act 2016.</p>	NRW and WG	NRW and WG	For the duration of the Action Plan.

<p>2.6 Monitor developments in deer research and specifically in alternative control methods and consider their application in Wales.</p>	WG	WG/DI Ltd	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>2.7 Provide grants to landowners/managers through applicable and appropriate schemes to support the management of deer in Wales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote grant availability to WDF, DIPs and others with an interest in deer management. • Grant uptake review. 	WG	WG, DI Ltd and WDF	<p>For the duration of the Action Plan.</p> <p>Uptake Review 2019.</p>

Outcome 3: Where possible reduce the impacts of non-native deer species.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>3.1 Develop, maintain and update the individual species action plans for sika and muntjac in Wales.</p>	WBP – INNS Group	NRW	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>3.2 Implement the species specific action plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake communications campaign to WDF, DIP and other relevant stakeholders for muntjac Action Plan. 	WG/NRW	NRW/DIP and WDF	<p>For the duration of the Action Plan.</p> <p>Communications campaign by Dec 2018.</p>
<p>3.3 Monitor for new releases, escape or colonisation by Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) and take appropriate action as necessary.</p>	NRW	DIP/DI Ltd and WDF	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>3.4 Where possible identify and monitor parks and zoos as possible sources of future escapees of INNS.</p>	NRW	NRW	For the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 4: Ensure that deer management is delivered in a responsible, competent and ethical manner.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>4.1 Undertake deer management on the NRW Estate and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Estate in a responsible, competent and ethical manner in line with Best Practice Guidance and to the Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC).</p>	NRW/DIO	NRW/DIO	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>4.2 Encourage the private sector, voluntary bodies and other public body landowners/managers to manage wild deer in line with Best Practice Guidance and to the DSC standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver Best Practice and DSC training events. • DIP Wales Partnership organisations to encourage, support and where appropriate, continuous skills maintenance and development activities for DSC 1 and DSC 2 holders. 	WG	DI Ltd/DIP and WDF	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>4.3 Maintain Welsh Government endorsement of the National Occupational Standards and the Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC) as the benchmark for stalker training.</p>	WG	WG	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>4.4 Maintain and develop Best Practice guidance through the DIP Best Practice Working Group, ensuring direct representation from Wales.</p>	NRW	DIP BPWG	For the duration of the Action Plan.



Outcome 5: Venison from wild deer management is made more widely available to local markets.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>5.1 Improve retailer, caterer and public awareness of Welsh wild venison.</p>	WG	DIP/ WDF – BASC/CA	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>5.2 Encourage the use of Best Practice Guidance and adherence to the Hygiene Regulations relating to the supply of wild game.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver Best Practice events. 	FSA	NRW/DIP and WDF	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>5.3 Continue to support and encourage ways to add value to Welsh wild venison, including appropriate grant schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote grant availability to WDF and others with an interest in deer management. 	WG	WG/DIP and WDF	For the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 6: Minimise the number and severity of deer-vehicle collisions (DVCs) in Wales.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>6.1 Encourage the use of the Deer Aware website for reporting incidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run media campaign. • Awareness raising with WDF, DIP, Highways Authorities and Police Forces. 	DI Ltd	DIP /WDF / Highways Authorities	Annual social media campaign. Awareness raising by Autumn 2017.
<p>6.2 Evaluate the number of DVCs in Wales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a formal mechanism to allow evaluation. • Produce an annual report for WG Transport to identify numbers of DVCs and any problem areas requiring action. 	DI Ltd	DI Ltd	Develop formal mechanism by Summer 2017. Produce annual report by Dec each year.

6.3 Implement a targeted approach to deal with any problems identified in 6.2.	WG Transport	WG Transport/ Highways Authorities	As problem areas are identified.
6.4 Encourage local coordinated DVC response schemes involving police and local stakeholders to assist with DVCs.	WDF	WDF/ Highways Authorities/ Police Forces	For the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 7: Monitor animal health and disease issues in wild deer and address where appropriate.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>7.1 Where appropriate support monitoring and research into bovine TB in wild deer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the agreements for provision of samples for monitoring. • Maintain a protocol for evaluation, reporting and feedback of monitoring data. 	WG-OCVO	NRW/WDF / DIP	For the duration of the Action Plan.
<p>7.2 To comply with the Animal Health Act 1981, ensuring all notifiable diseases under the order are reported to the relevant authority. Ensure feedback of results. Continue to deliver best practice events.</p>	WG-OCVO	NRW/DIO	For the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 8: Minimise illegal activities related to wild deer in Wales.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
<p>8.1 Increase availability of intelligence by encouraging reporting of deer related crime including incidents involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the illegal and unlawful use of firearms. • the illegal taking, transport and release of wild deer in Wales. 	WBP Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group (WCEG)	WBP WCEG	For the duration of the Action Plan.

8.2 Maintain identification of deer poaching as a wildlife crime priority in Wales.	WBP WCEG	WBP WCEG	For the duration of the Action Plan.
8.3 Respond to the evidence of deer related crime in Wales in a proportionate manner, making best use of intelligence and available resources.	WBP WCEG	WBP WCEG	As incidents occur.
8.4 To actively discourage the deliberate movement or spread of INNS.	WBP WCEG	WBP WCEG	For the duration of the Action Plan.
8.5 Raise awareness of the laws surrounding the release of INNS and why this is an important issue.	WBP WCEG	WBP WCEG	For the duration of the Action Plan.

Outcome 9: Monitoring and review.

Action	Lead Body	Delivery Agent	Timing
9.1 Monitor, review and report on progress against the action plan.	WDSG	DI Ltd	Annual report to WDF and DIP in Autumn of each year.
9.2 Undertake a comprehensive review of the strategy every 10 years and action plan every 5 years.	WG	NRW	Initiate next review(s) in April 2022 and complete by Dec 2022.
9.3 Review the governance of the Welsh Government's Strategy for Wild Deer Management in Wales. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm ownership of the Strategy and Action Plan. • Confirm the role and title of the groups working in support of the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan, including membership and terms of reference. 	WG	NRW	By Autumn 2017.

7. GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

The delivery of our Strategy and Action Plan is dependent on the Wales Deer Forum, comprised of partners of the Deer Initiative based in Wales, and other stakeholders. The Wales Deer Steering Group (WDSG) oversees the delivery of the action plan, with secretariat support provided by the Deer Initiative Ltd.

Progress against the actions will be monitored by the WDSG and a report presented annually to the Wales Deer Forum and Deer Initiative Partnership. A full review of the Action Plan will be undertaken at the end of the five-year period and the results will be used to inform the preparation of the next five-year plan.

Membership of the above bodies is at Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1 – WALES DEER FORUM

The Deer Initiative is a broad partnership of public, private and voluntary sector organisations dedicated to ensuring the achievement and maintenance of a sustainable and healthy population of wild deer in England and Wales. In Wales, the Deer Initiative partners and other stakeholders form the Wales Deer Forum, which meets annually and works collaboratively to deliver the action plan and the objectives of the wider Strategy.

The Wales Deer Forum members are:

British Association for Shooting and Conservation

British Deer Society

Confor

Country Land and Business Association

Countryside Alliance

Forest Research

Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust

Ministry of Defence

National Farmers' Union Wales

National Gamekeepers' Organisation

National Police Chiefs Council

National Trust

Natural Resources Wales

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts

St Hubert Club of Great Britain

Veterinary Deer Society

Woodland Trust

Welsh Government

WALES DEER STEERING GROUP

The Wales Deer Steering Group oversees and reports on the delivery of the action plan, is chaired by an independent member of the Wales Deer Forum. The Wales Deer Steering Group is supported by the Deer Initiative executive arm – Deer Initiative Ltd and is comprised of:

Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, Deer Initiative Ltd,

For further information contact The Deer Initiative; Tel: 01691 887113
www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk

APPENDIX 2 – GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Biodiversity: The variety of ecosystems and living organisms (species), including genetic variations between species.

Best Practice: Recognised standards for deer management in Wales as defined in the published Best Practice Guides (BPG) which can be downloaded free of charge from: www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/best_practice/

Deer Stalking Certificate DSC: An industry standard for the training and competence assessment of deer stalkers. DSC 1 includes identification, a written examination and shooting test; DSC 2 includes shooting three deer and preparing them for the food chain in the presence of an assessor. More information available at: www.dmq.org.uk

DI Ltd: Deer Initiative Ltd - a charitable company limited by guarantee, supporting the DIP and providing a co-ordination point for communication and advice on deer to Government and other partners.

DIO: Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

DIP: Deer Initiative Partnership – a broad partnership of public, private and voluntary sector organisations dedicated to the achievement and maintenance of a sustainable and healthy population of wild deer in England and Wales.

DIP BPWG: Deer Initiative Partnership – Best Practice Working Group.

DSC: The DSC standard and National Occupational Standards (NOS) exist for practitioners who are involved in managing deer, whether it is an occupation or recreation. The NOS are a description of what practitioners are expected to know and be able to do. They are developed and maintained by the Lantra Sector Skills Council's Game and Wildlife Management Industry Group which is comprised of a wide spectrum of employers and representational organisations from the wild deer sector. They are, thus, industry derived and approved standards.

Practitioners may test their knowledge and skills in a controlled environment against the NOS through the medium of awards, which are in some cases required by employers, land managers and owners. Awarding bodies have processes which provide assessment of knowledge and performance against the standards, in part or in whole, depending on what the award offers. The most common awards in the wild deer sector are the national Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) and Scottish VQs (SVQ), and the Deer Stalking Certificate (DSC) awarded by Deer Management Qualifications (DMQ). All of these qualifications use the NOS as their performance and assessment criteria.

There are a number of changes which have been suggested to how the DSC standard is delivered and assessed which are currently under review by DMQ, as yet this has not been finalized.

FSA: Food Standards Agency.
www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/farmingfood/wildgameguidance

INNS: Invasive Non-Native Species.

NRW: Natural Resources Wales.

Stakeholders: In relation to deer, persons or organisations with an interest in deer and deer management or land where deer are present.

Stalking: The process of selecting and culling wild deer.

Sustainable Management of Deer: The management of wild deer now and in the future is in balance with social, economic and ecological functions of the Welsh countryside. Management should be undertaken in a collaborative way following best practice.

Venison: Meat prepared from the carcass of a deer.

WBP – INNS: Wales Biodiversity Partnership – Invasive Non-Native Species Group.

WBP WCEG: Wales Biodiversity Partnership Wildlife Crime Enforcement Group.

WDF: Wales Deer Forum – Partners of the Deer Initiative based in Wales and other interested parties.

WDSG: Wales Deer Steering Group – oversees the delivery of the action plan.

WG: Welsh Government.

Woodlands for Wales: The Welsh Government’s strategy for woodlands and trees available free of charge from: www.gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/forestry/our-strategy/?lang=en