

British Horse Council Meeting

Welsh Government Update – Animal Welfare

Our priorities for animal welfare are set out in our [Animal Welfare Plan for Wales](#). It includes a framework for the realisation of four animal welfare [Programme for Government](#) commitments. The aims of our plan are strategically aligned to the [Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework \(WAHWF\)](#) which seeks to maintain and improve standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals, protect public health, and contribute to the economy and the environment. Progress of the plan will be reviewed annually by the [Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group \(WAHWFG\)](#). The WAHWFG published a new [Implementation Plan for 2022-24](#) in January 2022.

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 are engaging with key stakeholders to undertake a review of existing animal welfare-focused licensing/registration legislation, with a view to identifying where updates are required, and if there are gaps, whether new legislation is required.

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

- The Welsh Government-funded Local Authority Enforcement Project is developing a process for extending and strengthening training for Local Authority licensing enforcement officers. Training materials are bespoke for Wales and include a practical aspect to evidence competency. A single set of paperwork has been developed for inspections and reports to ensure a consistent approach. This includes a standard non-compliance report highlighting areas that need to be actioned by businesses. Practical training sessions have been delivered by industry experts to upskill officers in dog behaviour to identify areas of welfare concern and also for officers' safety. Whilst this was specific to dogs the principles of the training are transferable to other species.

Local Authority Enforcement Project (2020-23):

- The project tackles barriers to enforcement, provides enhanced training and guidance for inspectors, and maximises the use of existing resources within individual Local Authorities.

Licensing of Animal Exhibits & Animal Establishments:

- We are working to establish options and timelines to regulate animal welfare establishments and animal exhibits. The results of the aforementioned licensing review will play a key part in these deliberations.

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill:

- 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 for slaughter and provisions to address dogs attacking/worrying livestock and equines.

Welfare during transport reform:

- We are working with Defra on introducing a ban on the export of livestock and equines for slaughter through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, and with Defra and the Scottish Government to consider how the protection of animal welfare during transport can be strengthened.