

Update on African Horse Sickness Round Table and West Nile Virus

On AHS, we held an on line table top exercise (Ex Ferdinand) to explore our stakeholder network and comms plans in the event of an AHS outbreak. We had a very impressive turn out and even included some sectors who we don't regularly contact, such as the New Forest, Exmoor and Dartmoor horse societies, and the equine press. We are finalising a report on the outcomes but we now have some specific actions to take forward including some pre-canned comms around disease control measures to reassure equine keepers. We are now planning a second exercise in September to consider traceability in the event of an outbreak.

On WNV, to follow up on Richard Newton's useful report about the finding in Nottinghamshire of WNV RNA in mosquitos present in a flood area, we confirmed that we have now a One Health control strategy where we have determined our risk level and actions to be taken for animal, environmental and human health agencies. The site itself does not present a risk anymore as the land has been managed to prevent large numbers of mosquitos but we want to emphasise the importance of reporting clinical signs, of using the testing to exclude system and of vaccinating horses against WNV.

Report by Helen Roberts