



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

Avian influenza is a highly infectious viral disease affecting many species of birds. The risk of Avian influenza is greater over the winter months with wild birds migrating to the UK from mainland Europe. Whilst humans and other animals can be infected through close contact with live infected birds the risk to human health is normally negligible.

Public Health Wales Health Protection Team lead on the local public health response working with the Animal and Plant Health Agency and local NHS partners and their focus is purely on those who work directly on infected sites whose risk whilst, slightly higher than for the general public is still considered low when appropriate interventions are implemented, such as use of full PPE and antiviral prophylaxis.

Following confirmation by the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales of confirmed Avian Influenza A(H5N1) in Wales an all-Wales Avian Influenza Prevention Zone came into force on 3 November 2021 introducing a range of biosecurity measures which was then extended on the 29 November 2021 making it mandatory to house birds or keep them separated from wild birds.

Cases of confirmed Avian Influenza are listed on the Welsh Government webpage [Avian influenza \(bird flu\): latest update | GOV.WALES](#) identifying the Declaration made by the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales of the Protection Zones (3km radius) and Surveillance Zones(10km radius) which are put in place around the site Prescriptive measures and restrictions are required within these zones to prevent the spread.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) take primary responsibility for the management of outbreaks visiting infected premises, suspect premises, and direct contact premises in line with the Notifiable Avian Diseases Control Strategy for Great Britain. They also take the lead in terms of any communications plans.

Once a case has been confirmed the Local Authority Animal Health Team in Trading Standards are notified and invited into daily National APHA planning meetings.

The Trading Standards Animal Health team have an Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Contingency Plan, developed by the National Animal Health and Welfare Panel and the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) and adopted locally which they refer to and follow in terms of their actions and responses in such instances.

The principal local authority roles from an Animal Health perspective include the following:

- Assisting APHA with foot patrols to identify and maintain a list of poultry keepers.
- Providing advice and where necessary enforcement of movement restrictions, biosecurity controls and potential housing of domestic poultry rules.
- Enforcement of controls on restricted meat and where necessary designation of treatment centres.
- Assistance to APHA on identifying and maintaining a list of poultry keepers.
- Assistance with signage if required for roads, footpaths etc.
- Assistance with seeking the local infrastructure to support the APHA team on the ground.

APHA provide mapping of properties in a grid form which is shared with our Animal Health team who then assist APHA by carrying out foot patrols. Each property within the 3km protection zone is visited with a proforma being completed and the appropriate advice provided. The purpose of this is to identify all poultry keepers, domestic as well as commercial so this is quite a task due to zones sometime covering residential areas. The vets then carry out surveillance visits to any keepers identified to assess the health and welfare of any birds they have on site.

The work is resource intensive and of course dropped on the team at extremely short notice. The team have to date been involved in the following zones which have impacted on Powys and are to be commended for working out of normal working hours and over weekends. They have supported with foot patrols, closure of footpaths and other associated support. Their rapid deployment contributes to ensuring the control of spread of the disease and supports local businesses in ensuring restrictions can be lifted at the earliest opportunity.

This season there have been 5 cases confirmed across Wales to date, three of which have unfortunately been in Powys, with another in England where the 3km protection zone crossed over into Powys in the Clyro area.

- Avian influenza was confirmed at a premises near Crickhowell, Powys on 3 December 2021. Following successful completion of disease control activities and surveillance within the zone, on 10 January 2022 the Surveillance Zone and the Restricted Zone were revoked.
- Avian influenza was confirmed at a premises in Clifford, England on 9 December 2021. The 3km protection zone extended into Powys and foot patrols were undertaken to support DEFRA England who led on this outbreak. Following successful completion of disease control activities and surveillance within the zone, on 25th January 2022 the Surveillance Zone and the Restricted Zone were revoked.
- On 21 February, Avian Influenza was confirmed at a further two premises in Powys, one near Aberhafesp, Newtown, and the other at Pool Quay, Welshpool Powys and 3km Protection Zone, 10km Surveillance Zone and 10km Restricted Zone have been put in place around the infected premises.