# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Animal Welfare Plan Year Two Progress Report** |
| **DATE**  | **29 February 2024** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths, The Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd** |

As the closing date of our consultation on the [licensing of animal welfare establishments, activities, and exhibits](https://www.gov.wales/licensing-animal-welfare-establishments-activities-and-exhibits) approaches, I have been reflecting more widely on what our landmark [Animal Welfare Plan for Wales](https://www.gov.wales/animal-welfare-plan-wales-2021-26) has achieved thus far. I have today published our [Year Two Update](https://www.gov.wales/animal-welfare-plan-wales-year-2-progress-report), and I am proud of the clear progress made in 2023.

Our ambition is for all animals in Wales to have a good life. Our Animal Welfare Plan champions exemplary standards, adoption and sharing of best practice, engagement with stakeholders, effective enforcement, research, and education, to embed responsible ownership and advance animal welfare. Our achievements over the past year demonstrate how this approach is helping to deliver our priorities and driving significant change.

We are strengthening our enforcement and licensing policy. Following completion of a Call for Evidence in early 2023 we launched our [licensing consultation](https://www.gov.wales/licensing-animal-welfare-establishments-activities-and-exhibits) in December. Closing on 1 March 2024, this forms the first stage of development of a National Model for the regulation of animal welfare.

The Local Authority Enforcement Project, Animal Licensing Wales, is now well established with 11 regional enforcement officers, two support officers and two system coordinators in post. Four training courses have been delivered to 58 officers across all Welsh Local Authorities.

In October 2023, I hosted a [Summit](https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-responsible-dog-ownership-summit-action-dangerous-dogs-outcomes-and-next-steps) on Responsible Dog Ownership: Action on Dangerous Dogs, bringing together Local Authority and Police Representatives, Third Sector members and experts to discuss and identify areas for action and improvement. More workshops will follow throughout 2024, to ensure momentum isn’t lost, with the first of these held on 15 February.

Our Royal Welsh Show 2023 activities also centred on responsible pet ownership. Working alongside Animal Licensing Wales, we covered a range of important subjects such as choosing the right dog breed for your circumstances, illegal dog breeding, enforcement, and responsible ownership. As part of this campaign, we also published dedicated web pages on [responsible dog ownership](https://www.gov.wales/responsible-dog-ownership) and [responsible cat ownership](https://www.gov.wales/responsible-cat-ownership), signposting to relevant material produced by our Third Sector members including Dogs Trust, Blue Cross, the RSPCA and Cat’s Protection.

Having consulted on proposals, we are on target to introduce regulations to require [CCTV in slaughterhouses](https://www.gov.wales/closed-circuit-television-cctv-slaughterhouses), in all areas where live animals are present, in the spring.

There are times when there are clear benefits to working collaboratively with the UK Government to improve animal welfare.We continue to work together on proposals to improve animal welfare during transport. The [Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Bill](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3533) was introduced to the UK Parliament in December. This is a UK Government Bill to prohibit the export of livestock and horses for slaughter. I want to see an end to live animal exports for slaughter. This is why I have laid a Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Bill, and I hope the Senedd will support this important Bill as it nears its final stages.

Livestock attacks continue to be a concern and with the lambing season well underway I would urge dog owners to engage with our [responsible ownership webpages](https://www.gov.wales/responsible-dog-ownership-vital-protect-livestock) and familiarise themselves with Natural Resources Wales’ Countryside Code. Attacks on livestock have emotional, financial and welfare ramifications and are preventable through responsible dog ownership.

Partnership working is key to success, and I am grateful to all those Stakeholders and Agencies instrumental to the progress made thus far. An excellent example of partnership working in action is demonstrated by the multi-agency attendance and subsequent actions undertaken following the Summit and workshops held on Responsible Dog Ownership. I look forward to seeing what more we can achieve together in year three.