# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26** |
| **DATE**  | **04 November 2021** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths, The Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd** |

I am pleased to announce today the publication of our [Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26](https://gov.wales/animal-welfare-plan-wales-2021-26). Animal welfare features prominently in our recently published Programme for Government and this ambitious plan sets out how we will build on the significant progress made in Wales on animal welfare since powers were devolved to Wales in 2006.

During this Government’s term of office, we will introduce a broad range of policies to maintain the momentum of reform in animal welfare established since devolution of the relevant powers. Our ambition is for all animals in Wales to have a good quality life. This is a strategic objective of our Animal Health and Welfare Framework and a golden thread woven through our policy agenda.

Our plan includes the realisation of four Programme for Government commitments in relation to animal welfare, and also outlines how we will integrate a broad range of ongoing animal welfare policy work, including statutory guidance for existing Regulations, licensing of animal exhibits, welfare of animals in transport, and Codes of Practice. The need for review of existing animal welfare legislation is recognised, along with maintaining some flexibility should new policy actions be required. Finally, the plan addresses how, and where appropriate, we will work in collaboration with other UK administrations to achieve our objectives in the best interests of animal welfare in Wales, and beyond.

In pursuit of this ambition, our plan has been developed in alignment with other landmark policy initiatives, notably the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the principles of One Welfare. Partnership working is key to the success of our plan and I am grateful for our strong and long-standing relationships with the farming industry, Third Sector organisations, Welsh Local Authorities, enforcement agencies, the veterinary profession, scientific communities and our counterparts in the other UK administrations. Of equal importance, is our direct engagement with the people of Wales, through their correspondence with us, their responses to public consultations and, more fundamentally, through their recognition of the key role they each must play as responsible owners of animals.

Our ambition is for animal welfare in Wales to be recognised for its exemplary standards, its adoption and sharing of best practice, its engagement with key stakeholders, its development of effective, supportive and sustainable mechanisms for enforcement, its contribution to research, and its championing of education and responsible ownership for the benefit of our own and future generations.

Wales may be a small country, but we have high and far-reaching expectations. We warmly invite all agencies, stakeholder groups and the citizens of Wales to embrace and support our Animal Welfare Plan for Wales.