

# Intensive Action Area (IAA) Review.

## The Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer.

### Thomas McCabe. August 2019.

The Intensive Action Area (IAA) was established as an area where increased measures would be implemented to tackle all sources of bovine TB, in both domestic and wild animal species. At that time cattle herds in the IAA had the highest TB incidence rate in Wales. Enhanced IAA specific cattle surveillance and control measures were introduced on 1 May 2010.

Detailed annual assessments have been undertaken by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to compare cattle herd TB incidence levels and other TB disease parameters within the area with historic trends and with a reference area where the disease picture is comparable. Any benefits observed need to be carefully considered as a result of the combination of disease control measures applied in the IAA.

- At the start there were 88 open cases in the IAA, in 325 herds (herd prevalence 27.1%) as at the end of March 2019 there were 38 restrictions in 269 live herds (14.1%), constituting a decrease between then and now of 48%.
- The comparable figures for the reference area are 142 open cases in 1250 herds (11.4%) at the beginning and 97 in an estimated 1130 herds (8.6%) at the end of Q1 2019, representing a 23% drop.

These are encouraging signs which support the view that over time, the range of measures applied within the IAA has had a positive impact on disease trends.

Many of the measures initially applied in the IAA have evolved to be used on a national basis. It is therefore appropriate to review and consider the future policies for the IAA which now forms part of the High TB area West.

The main recommendations resulting from the review are:

1. The additional six monthly surveillance test in the IAA is retained. Since its introduction the additional six monthly test has been responsible for disclosing an average nearly a quarter of all new breakdowns.
2. We continue to collect dead badgers within the IAA and include the results in the All Wales report. You are encouraged to continue reporting any dead badger found by contacting 08081695110. Further information is available at <https://gov.wales/report-dead-badger>
3. We do not return to complete a fifth year of badger vaccination in the IAA. The overall conclusion of a model simulation provided by APHA was that without completing a fifth year, the four years' worth of effort already undertaken had achieved the greatest benefit in reducing badger TB prevalence in the IAA. The decision not to return is based on the benefits already realised, the lapse of time since completion of the fourth year and the cost.