



The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway (AHWP) is a new government plan introduced as part of the Sustainable Farming Initiative. DEFRA states the primary aim of the scheme is to 'improve animal health and welfare across our national herds and flocks'. One of the critical principles to achieving this is encouragement of vet involvement on farm. The first strand of the Pathway is specifically designed to do this through the Health and Welfare Review which is now open for registration.

Health and Welfare Review

The review takes approximately 2-3 hours and is funded by DEFRA. During this time you and your vet will go through biosecurity, medicine usage and health status on the farm in order to highlight areas that can be improved with the Pathway grant.

The main sections of the review include:

- Biosecurity review and recommendations
- Medications review and discussion of responsible use
- Collection of benchmarking data
- Discussion of welfare points such as lameness, mastitis and pneumonia

Testing

As part of the health review the pathway requires testing for endemic disease, the results of which can be addressed during the Health Review. Which disease is tested for varies on the species in order to focus on the diseases that have the biggest impact of welfare and profitability.

In cattle DEFRA is focusing on Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) which is estimated to annually cost £14 million in loss of production across the national herd. In Dairy herds this can be done from a bulk milk sample while Beef Herds are tested using a blood sample from 6 animals for BVD Antibody.

For Sheep, the Pathway requires testing for the effectiveness of worming treatment. Anthelmintic resistance is a major concern within the national flock both from a welfare perspective and resulting significant loss of productivity. The test is carried out by taking two Faecal Worm Egg Counts before and after treatment. The levels of parasites in each sample can then be compared to determine the effectiveness of the treatment.

Meetings coming up...

Medicine Handling Course
Thursday 27th April,



11am - 1pm
at the practice



RoMS accredited mobility
scorer training, 1 day course.

Cost £250 + Vat

Date and venue TBC

If you would like more information please
contact the office on 01666 823035

Available Funding

Farm	Funding
Cattle (Beef)	£522
Cattle (Dairy)	£372
Sheep	£436

The amount of funding offered by the pathway depends on the sector. If you have multiple species on farm, you can apply separately for each sector, although they will require a separate health review.

Registration Requirements

- Cattle (both Dairy and Beef): 11 or more
- Sheep: 21 or more
- Pigs: 51 or more



Currently the scheme is only open to those eligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) but DEFRA is planning to open the scheme up further by the end of the year.

How to Apply

You can register your interest using the link below:

[Annual health and welfare review of livestock \(defra.gov.ukhttps://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest\)](https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest)

Once you've done this you will receive an agreement number from DEFRA and we can get started with the review and testing. If you have any further questions regarding the AHWP and how it might be of benefit to you and your farm please get in touch and we will be happy to help.

Future Plans for the Pathway

The Health and Welfare Review is the first step in the wider AHWP. DEFRA has set out the next steps for the pathway which will continue to roll out over the next few years leading up to 2027 and the end of BPS.

Strand 1: Annual Health and Welfare Review (open for registration)

Strand 2: Animal Health and Welfare Capital Grants

Strand 3: Disease Eradication and Control Programs

Strand 4: Payment-by-results (earliest 2025)

DEFRA has set out the next strand of the Pathway as capital investments that support health and welfare aims including housing, handling systems or technology. This next step is currently under development by DEFRA with planned roll out soon.

The third strand of the pathway involve building on the disease testing already done for the reviews into a full eradication program. These will be focused on BVD in cattle and a range of endemic diseases in sheep.

The final strand of the pathway is a Payment-by-results system which DEFRA claims will be designed to reward famers for high health and welfare outcomes. This section will start as trial process before full roll out in a few years.

Overall DEFRA seems to be promoting the pathway as a more targeted distribution of the funds currently being used for the Basic Payment scheme. While the program is going to take several years to fully develop; the annual health and welfare review can hopefully be a productive first step.



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All the best.

Jonah Dickie
BVM BVS MRCVS

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T: 01666 823035 Option "1" for visits or enquiries, "2" for medicines or shop, "3" for TB testing