

Additional contiguous testing in Intermediate TB Area North to be implemented

Last year there was a 75% increase in TB incidents on the previous 12 months in the Intermediate TB Area North.

In response to the spike, from 13 November 2018 there will be an extension in the use of additional contiguous testing around [Officially TB Free Withdrawn \(OTFW\)](#) breakdown herds in the Intermediate TB Area North.

This additional testing in herds with increased risk of becoming infected will result in a doubling of the effort to identify the disease in the area, adding a further two contiguous tests at six months intervals into the regime.

To support farmers in the Intermediate TB Area North during this difficult time, there will be an introduction of Government subsidised “keep it out” veterinary visits for herds which have tested negative to contiguous testing.

These visits will be delivered by the farmer’s own local practice via specially trained vets and will look at the local disease picture, biosecurity and the farms cattle trading policy and informed purchasing, mirroring the approach used in TB breakdown Cymorth TB visits.

Announcing the changes, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“The introduction of TB Areas as part of our refreshed TB Eradication Programme, allows us to introduce measures quickly, flexibly and at a local level to drive down the disease and react to any localised increases in disease.

“It is clear from the unprecedented increase in new incidents over the last year in the Intermediate TB Area North that this is not a short term trend and the rate will not reduce unaided. That is why I am today announcing that we will redouble our efforts and introduce additional contiguous testing in the Area. On top of this we will support farmers during this difficult time by providing ‘keep it out’ visits for herds which have tested negative.

“We have made good progress toward achieving our goal of eradicating bovine TB from Wales. The introduction of additional contiguous testing within the Intermediate TB Area North will put us in a stronger position to ensure we continue to make progress towards a TB Free Wales.”