

New targets for Wales to be officially TB Free

Interim targets, covering 6-year periods, will be set for each of the TB Areas. These targets will specify overall reductions in herd incidence as well as the transfer of Spatial Units from higher incidence areas to lower incidence areas.

This means, for example, the Low TB Area will expand over time, to cover land currently classified as Intermediate, and High TB Areas will shrink as their Spatial Units are reclassified to the Intermediate areas. At the end of each 6-year period, progress will be assessed and milestones set for the following period.

Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths said:

“We have made good progress in recent years towards eradicating TB in Wales. There has been a significant reduction in incidence across Wales and I am determined we continue that improvement.

“The 6-year regional milestones I am announcing today are key to delivering this. If achieved, Wales will become Officially TB free between 2036 and 2041.

“These milestones stress the urgency of the task at hand and reflect my ambition to see important progress in each region during each period. They will help convey the need for immediate action, to focus minds and to drive the progress necessary to achieve our collective goals.

“We have enhanced our TB Eradication Programme this autumn and the regional approach to TB eradication is intended to help us achieve our targets. We now need to focus on protecting the Low TB Area from disease incursion and driving down disease in the Intermediate and High TB Areas. We will continue to build our programme as we progress towards our goal of a TB free Wales.

“Meeting our targets will not be easy. They are intended to be ambitious and to stretch us. Achieving them will require the cooperation and dedication of everyone involved. I am challenging us all, in Government, APHA, industry and our veterinary colleagues, to commit everything to ensure we eradicate this dreadful disease as soon as possible.”

More work to be done despite Brexit progress – Mark Drakeford

Speaking ahead of a meeting of the devolved governments and UK government, Mark Drakeford has outlined the significant issues the Welsh Government want addressed as the 2nd phase of talks begin.

Mark Drakeford said:

“The progress we saw last week is to be welcomed but there is a huge amount of hard work to be done if we are to achieve the right sort of Brexit. This is just the green light for more talks, talks that will get to the heart of what our relationship with the EU will look like after Brexit.

“As the talks move on to discuss detailed issues related to the transition and to the long-term relationship, it is vital that the devolved administrations are fully involved with the negotiations in a way we have not been to date.

“These negotiations will involve questions such as agriculture support during and after the transition period, the sort of environmental regulation we will have in future and whether the UK will continue to be part of important European programmes for education and research, such as Erasmus Plus and Horizon 2020 – all issues which are firmly within the remit of the devolved institutions.

“It’s essential that the UK government agrees a common approach to these and many other issues – not least our future access to the Single Market – with the devolved administrations in advance of the negotiations, based on a proper consideration of the evidence.”

The Finance Secretary will be at the JMC (EN) meeting with First Secretary of State, Rt Hon Damian Green MP, who will chair the meeting, and other cabinet ministers.

“We also need firm proposals from the UK government on amendments to the EU Withdrawal Bill if a major constitutional battle – wasting time and energy on the part of all concerned – is to be avoided. The government needs to bring forward amendments before the bill leaves the House of Commons, as it has suggested is likely. If it does not, while we are clear that a UK-wide approach that respects devolution is the best approach, we are ready and able to put in place our own legislation: work on this has been underway for many months and everything will be in position, should it be needed.”

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Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's role to be expanded – Kirsty Williams

The [announcement](#) was made as the Cabinet Secretary formally accepted the recommendations made by the review of the activities of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol which was published earlier this year. The review concluded the Coleg makes a key contribution to Welsh-medium provision in the higher education sector and its remit should be expanded.

The establishment of the review was a key part of the Progressive Agreement between the First Minister and Kirsty Williams.

The Coleg will now be tasked with working with the Welsh Government to create a formal action plan to develop Welsh-medium post-16 provision over the next three years and establishing a post-16 advisory board made up of experts in the field to advise on the development of the plan and any future interventions.

Making the announcement, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“Our Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers strategy, launched in the summer, aims to develop post-compulsory education provision to support everyone, whatever their command of the language, to develop Welsh language skills for use socially and in the workplace.

“This is an important step forward to develop opportunities for all learners to study through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. I'm pleased that the Coleg will be able to take these recommendations forward and that is already engaging with the post-16 sector and developing its activities for the future.”

Delyth Evans, who chaired the task and finish group that carried out the review, said:

“I am pleased the report has been welcomed and the recommendations have all been accepted. The future for the Coleg is exciting and I am delighted the task and finish group has been able to contribute to its development and lay the foundation for future development.”

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