

Using National Inspection Strategies to tailor proactive intervention and reduce regulatory burdens

Wakefield Council and Morrisons were one of the first primary authority partnerships in the country to take National Inspection Strategies (NIS) from an unexplored concept to a viable option for delivering risk-based regulation (to be trialled).

Their pathfinder work explored how NIS for food hygiene partnerships could be used to tailor proactive intervention and reduce regulatory burdens with a mature and legally compliant partnership. It built an evidence-base which enabled it to use business data to accurately predict independently awarded food hygiene ratings. Evaluation of the pathfinder concluded the evidence was robust and credible and the methods used were justified.

The partnership drafted an NIS to investigate how it might work in practice. This highlighted that a primary authority is well placed to generate a picture of compliance across the business and to make informed decisions about how to regulate the business nationally. They also explored how the Food Hygiene Rating System could continue to operate if NIS was implemented.

The overall benefit of NIS is that compliant, well-managed businesses are recognised and proactive intervention by regulators is more risk-based. The NIS, supported by the Food Standards Agency, is to be trialled later this year.

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