

Press release: Badger vaccination scheme relaunched in fight against bovine TB

A government-backed badger vaccination scheme has been relaunched today by Farming Minister George Eustice to help stop the spread of bovine TB (bTB) in England.

The relaunched Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme, which was suspended for two years following a global vaccine shortage, opens for expressions of interest today, with projects set to start in spring 2018. Successful applicants will receive a government grant for 50% of their costs from a fund worth £700,000 over four years.

The government also announced a contract has been awarded to deliver a new bTB advisory service which will offer clear, practical advice to help farmers protect their herds from the disease and manage the impacts of a TB breakdown on their farm.

Both measures are key parts of the government's [strategy to eradicate bTB in England](#), which includes one of the most rigorous cattle surveillance programmes in the world, strong movement controls, promoting good biosecurity, and badger control where the disease is rife.

Bovine TB costs taxpayers over £100m every year and England has the highest incidence of the disease in Europe. In 2016 more than 29,000 cattle had to be slaughtered in England to control the disease, causing devastation and distress for farmers and rural communities.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

Bovine TB not only has a devastating impact on our beef and dairy farms, but causes harm and distress to infected cattle. We have a clear plan to eradicate the disease over the next 20 years and this year we are restarting the government-backed Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme to stop the disease spreading to new areas.

Vaccination is just one part of our comprehensive strategy, which also includes tighter cattle controls, improved biosecurity and badger control in areas where bTB is rife to tackle the reservoir of disease in wildlife.

While our eventual aim is to eradicate the disease completely, farmers are facing the reality of bTB on their farms every day, which is why we are also launching a new bTB Advisory Service to offer advice to all farmers on limiting on-farm disease risk.

New measures

New measures outlined today include:

- Eleven additional licences for badger control covering parts of Devon, Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset and Cheshire. Licences have been granted for supplementary badger control in areas of Gloucestershire and Somerset which have completed their original four-year licences.
- The relaunch of the Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme following suspension due to a global shortage of TB vaccine, with groups invited to submit expressions of interest and feedback on the criteria for the scheme.
- A new bTB Advisory Service for farmers to provide advice on-farm and by phone or email to farmers in High Risk and Edge Areas on bTB biosecurity and risk-based trading, set to launch this autumn.
- Tighter control of Inconclusive Reactors (IRs) in the High Risk and Edge Area, to come into force from 1 November.

Chief Vet Nigel Gibbens said:

Taking action to prevent bovine TB infection of cattle from the reservoir of disease in local badger populations is an essential part of the government's 25-year strategy to eradicate the disease in England. Proactive badger control is currently the best available option and the licensing of further areas is necessary to realise disease control benefits across the High Risk Area of England, rather than at local levels.

In 2016 badger control operations in Somerset, Gloucestershire, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Herefordshire and Wiltshire were all successful in meeting their targets, and the government is committed to introducing badger control over a wider number of areas in line with plans set out in the bTB strategy.

Background

1. Expressions of interest in the BEVS scheme should be emailed to: BEVS@defra.gsi.gov.uk
2. The TB Advisory Service will launch next month, delivered by the Origin Group. Farmers can pre-register their interest by email: info@tbas.org.uk
3. [Information on Natural England's licensing for badger control operations](#)
4. New rules on Inconclusive Reactors will come into force following a [public consultation](#)
5. For information, advice and guidance on bTB, visit the [TB Hub](#)

6. For more information about this press release, contact the Defra press office: 020 8225 7318.

[News story: Hurricane Irma: Foreign Secretary interview on BBC Today Programme](#)

I sympathise with the distress of all the families in the Caribbean, but I must point out we have had half a million British nationals in the path of this hurricane. In St Martin in particular, this is controlled with the Dutch and the French, who have been evacuating people but in priority depending on their medical needs. This is a very big consular crisis and I am confident we are doing everything we can to help British nationals, but there are half a million affected.

We've been able to get 700 troops into the region, and police officers coming in. I think there are now more than 50 UK police arriving in the area. I've talked to the governor, Gus Jaspert, and he has told me of the psychological benefits of seeing UK service personnel helping and restoring a sense of order.

No, we were there as soon as the crisis broke. It doesn't make any sense when a hurricane is impending to send in aircraft or ships that are not going to be capable of withstanding the storm. If you look at what is happening now, there is an unprecedented British effort to deal with what has been an unprecedented catastrophe.

The emergency hotline is there – 44 (0) 207 008 0000 – we instantly set up a system for people to donate via the Red Cross. I must respectfully dissent from the critics of the Government. Gus Jaspert is being hailed as a hero and that is right. We have responded in a timely and highly organised fashion. These are British overseas territories and we are going to be there for the long-term. We will come with a recovery plan for these islands and help them restore their financial services and tourism industries.

Taxpayers money is already being deployed. £28 million has already been spent and we will be announcing further support over the next few days. This is an absolute priority for our Government and we understand the huge economic blow that has been dealt in these islands. The Government is working together at all levels to restore confidence and I pay tribute to the local administrations.

Read more about the [government's response to Hurricane Irma](#).

News story: Dstl opens graduate recruitment scheme for 2017

At the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), we work to harness science and technology (S&T) to protect our nation – bringing together the best ideas in sometimes unexpected ways. Our graduate recruitment scheme for 2017 is now open for applications and we are looking for people to help us do this.

Because we provide the UK government with specialist S&T research, advice and analysis, our work is often sensitive or international in nature. Much is operationally critical and has the potential to save many lives. All of it is fascinating.

Crucially, we work with other brilliant people – collaborating with everyone from small companies and world-class universities to large defence companies and other nations. Together, we develop battle-winning technologies, based on deep and widespread research, to support UK military operations now and into the future.

For ambitious, motivated and curious graduates, we offer the chance to work on mind-blowing projects in a truly unique environment. It's an inspiring setting where you can develop wide-ranging skills and experience, while learning from some of the brightest minds in the UK.

We have amazing graduate opportunities available in the following areas. Do something unexpected today: join us.

Counter Terrorism and Security

From working with forensics and radars to animal behaviour and explosives, we've an exciting range of opportunities for you.

Our Counter Terrorism and Security Division is looking for graduates who want to develop their expertise while delivering high-risk, high-reward research to help protect the UK from current and future threats. Quite simply, this is work that you cannot do anywhere else.

If your degree is in Chemistry, Animal Behaviour, Electronic or Electrical Engineering, Systems Engineering, Communications Engineering, Software Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Maths, Physics, Machine Intelligence, Forensic Science or Information Science then we'd like to hear from you.

[Find out more about becoming a Counter Terrorism and Security Graduate](#)

Cyber and Information Systems

Are you finishing your Engineering or Computer Science degree and looking for an exciting and unusual first role?

This is not a stereotypical 'computer hacker' role – it takes an incredible variety of people to achieve our goals. Here you'll use your computer skills to advance the tools, techniques and tradecrafts required to ensure the UK is able to establish a world-class cyber capability, including the ability to counter-attack in cyberspace.

[Find out more about being a Cyber and Information Systems Graduate](#)

Defence and Security Analysis

We develop innovative analytical tools and techniques to take advantage of new advances in science and technology, and provide experienced human and social science advice to maximise the performance of whole systems across the Ministry of Defence and government.

Our Defence and Security Analysis Division supports the Ministry of Defence and other government departments to ensure intelligent decision making is at the heart of the UK Defence and Security. We work with partners in industry, academia and internationally to develop and provide a broad range of impartial, innovative, evidence-based analysis and human science advice to support high-priority decision making on critical policies and capabilities.

We're seeking graduates with a background in psychology, ergonomics, human and social sciences, sociology, maths or data science.

[Find out more about becoming a Defence and Security Analysis Graduate](#)

Platform Systems

Are you interested in delivering highly rewarding research to help protect the UK and our armed forces from real world threats?

Our Platform Systems Division supports the Ministry of Defence and other government departments in a broad range of groundbreaking technical research areas. We respond to current and future demands ensuring that the UK retains a battle-winning advantage.

We strengthen and protect our armed forces through groundbreaking technical research. It means safeguarding armoured vehicles, warships and aircraft against the harshest combat environments and providing the most advanced weapon capabilities. Crucially, we ensure that all of this technology and equipment across the military operates together seamlessly.

If you have or are working towards a degree in Engineering, Maths, Physics or Computer Science then this is the role for you.

[Find out more about becoming a Platform Systems Graduate](#)

Student Placement Opportunities

Interested in doing a summer placement with Dstl? Our summer and industrial placement vacancies will be available from 9 October 2017 and you'll be able to find them all on [Civil Service Jobs](#).

[Press release: Man sent down for supplying shady ED medicines](#)

Gurinder Bharaj, of Southall, West London, was sentenced on Friday at Isleworth Crown Court on eight counts of possession and supply of significant quantities of unauthorised and unlicensed medication.

Investigators from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) raided a property belonging to Mr Bharaj in Ealing where more than 100,000 individual doses of unlicensed erectile dysfunction medicines worth more than £30,000 were uncovered and seized. A smaller quantity of prescription medication was also seized.

Following an initial hearing Mr Bharaj pleaded guilty to all charges and was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment with immediate effect (concurrent to all counts). He was also ordered to pay a £75 victim surcharge.

MHRA Head of Enforcement, Alastair Jeffrey, said:

Selling unlicensed medicines is illegal and can pose a serious risk to health.

The fact that a medicine is unauthorised means that it has not been subjected to the regulatory scrutiny and quality assurances required to get a license.

These products can be dangerous as their contents are unknown and untested and the consequences for your health can be devastating.

MHRA will continue to track down and prosecute those who put the public's health at risk.

MHRA is currently running the #FakeMeds campaign to warn people against buying potentially dangerous or useless unlicensed medicines sold by illegal online suppliers.

Visit www.gov.uk/fakemeds for [tips on buying medicines safely online](#) and how to avoid unscrupulous sites.

Press release: Prime Minister's Special Representative on Internet Safety: Joanna Shields

Baroness Joanna Shields OBE has been appointed as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Internet Safety.

Baroness Shields to serve as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Internet Safety.

The Special Representative will support the delivery of the government's objective to make the UK the safest place to use the internet without fear of abuse, criminality or exposure to harmful content. In this role, she will support the Prime Minister, Home Secretary and Culture Secretary at home and abroad.

The Special Representative will:

- support the government's work on internet safety representing the UK in the US, EU and international forums, conferences and events. This includes on-going programmes of work and commitments with internet companies internationally (for example, through the EU, US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other international partner[s]).
- encourage the development of new company-led interventions to improve internet safety and to address abuse, criminality and harmful content online
- engage with established internet platform providers and facilitate their support of smaller companies with less established practices to combat internet abuse and harms.
- continue serving on the [WePROTECT Board](#) and supporting the WePROTECT international agenda and expansion.

The Special Representative will be based in the Cabinet Office and be unpaid.