Veterinary Policy Research Foundation

Annual Report October 2025 – September 2026

Martha Rushbrooke, Lord Trees

Veterinary Policy Research Foundation
Published September 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A FOREWORD 3

ACRONYMS 4

INTRODUCTION TO THE VETERINARY POLICY RESEARCH FOUNDATION 6

VPRF AIMS 7

PARLIAMENTARY VETERINARY INTERNS 8

VPRF DIRECTORS 9

THE VETERINARY POLICY RESEARCH FOUNDATION OVERVIEW 10

Objectives 10

Current Priorities 10

Sponsorship 11

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 13

Attendance 13

House of Lords Business 14

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business - Direct Contributions to the Chamber and Written Questions (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026) 14

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business – Significant Parliamentary Meetings and Correspondence (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026) 15

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business – Select Committee Meetings Attended and reports produced (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026) 16

PUBLICATIONS AND EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES 18

Publications 18

Veterinary EMS 19

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES IN 2025-2026 20

Bovine Tuberculosis 20

New Veterinary Legislation 20

VPRF's Vet industry project 20

Puppy Smuggling Bill 20

Methane Papers 21

Sheep Dip 21

Cambridge Vet School 21

Extreme Canine Confromation and the Innate Health Assessment Tool 22

Animals in science 22

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS 23

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) 23

APPG for Animal Welfare (APGAW) 23

APPG for Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases 26

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR 31

Recent Animal Welfare Legislation 31

Cambridge Vet School – Threatened Closure 33

Sheep Dip Innovation 34

Pet Smuggling Bill 37

Endemic Disease – Bovine Tuberculosis 39

Non-Stun Slaughter 40

The Veterinary Industry Project 43

Veterinary Legislation 45

80th Birthday Celebrations 46

COMPANY INFORMATION **47**

CONTACT INFORMATION **47**

PARLIAMENTARY VETERINARY INTERN BIOGRAPHY **48**

Martha Rushbrooke **48**

THE VPRF WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA **48**

APPENDIX I **49**

Other Business (Oct 2025 -Sep 2026) **49**

Non-Parliamentary Committees and Other Roles October 2025-September 2026 ..... **54**

APPENDIX II **55**

Letter from Baroness Hayman, 24th JuLY **55**

A FOREWORD

The following oral question was asked by Baroness Tyler of Enfield on 23rd June 2026:

'To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of legal protections for ancient trees, and whether further measures, including stronger penalties, are needed in order to prevent their unlawful destruction.'

'My Lords, having just turned 80, I declare an interest in the preservation of ancient trees...'

Lord Trees, Supplementary Oral Question, 23rd June 2026

ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AHDB	Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
AJT	Alexander John Trees (Lord Trees)
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
AMS	Academy of Medical Sciences
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
APGAW	All-Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare
APPG	All-Party Parliamentary Group
APPMG	All-Party Parliamentary Group on Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases
AR	Anthony Ridge
ASC	Animal Sentience Committee
ASPA	Animals in Scientific Procedures Act
ASRU	Animals in Science Regulation Unit
AWC	Animal Welfare Council
BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BSAVA	British Small Animal Veterinary Association
BVA	British Veterinary Association
CASC	Companion Animal Sector Council
CAWF	Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation
CMA	Competition and Markets Authority
CP	Catrina Prince
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer
Defra	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DIT	Department for International Trade
DNDi	Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative
DoL	Demonstration of Life
EA	Environment Agency
ECC	Environment and Climate Change Select Committee
ELHF	Establishment Licence Holders Forum
EMS	Extra-Mural Studies
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FS	Fiona Shuttleworth
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FST	Foundation for Science and Technology
FVE	Federation of Veterinarians Europe
GAVI	GAVI Vaccine Alliance
GL	Gabrielle Laing
HD	Harriet Davenport

HJ	Hannah Jordan
HoL	House of Lords
IHA	Innate Health Assessment Tool
LSTM	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
MP	Member of Parliament
NFA-VPS	Non-Food Animal-Veterinarian, Pharmacist or Suitably Qualified Person
NFU	National Farmers Union
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NOAH	National Office of Animal Health
NTD	Neglected Tropical Disease
NZ	New Zealand
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OV	Official Veterinarian
P4P	Peers for the Planet
PEP	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
PPM	Pet Parasiticide Medication
PSTIF	Parliamentary Science and Technology Information Foundation
PVI	Parliamentary Veterinary Intern
QSD	Question for Short Debate
RCVS	Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals Regulations
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SCIF	Schistosomiasis Control Initiative Foundation
SoS	Secretary of State
TB	Tuberculosis
UAR	United Against Rabies
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
VMA	Veterinary Marketing Association
VMD	Veterinary Medicines Directorate
VPHA	Veterinary Public Health Association
VPRF	Veterinary Policy Research Foundation
VSA	Veterinary Surgeons Act
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WOAH	World Organisation for Animal Health
ZELS	Zoonoses and Emerging Livestock Systems

INTRODUCTION TO THE VETERINARY POLICY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

To be effective, contributions to House of Lords' business must be well researched and supported by evidence. Peers appointed to the House of Lords are not provided with research assistance nor allowances to employ a researcher. The Veterinary Policy Research Foundation (VPRF) was set up by Lord Trees to provide a legal and financial vehicle which was transparent, subject to good governance and independent of Lord Trees's finances, with the purpose of employing an intern/researcher. It appears to be a novel if not unique initiative in the House of Lords. The Parliamentary Veterinary Intern's output is invaluable, and the impact of Lord Trees's speeches, questions and publications attests to their worth.

Through the activities of Lord Trees in Parliament, the VPRF aims to inform, advise, revise, and perhaps initiate, UK policy and legislation relevant to the veterinary profession.

The VPRF is a not-for-profit company registered with Companies House and is funded entirely by donations. In addition to providing research and administrative support to Lord Trees, it is intended that the internship provides a career development opportunity for vets, as well as providing EMS opportunities for veterinary students.

In October 2025, the Parliamentary Veterinary Internship entered its 13th year. Funding for the internship is gratefully received from seventeen sponsors, and spending is overseen by the Board of Directors. The internship pays over the London Living Wage on a pro-rata basis and runs for one year from October to September with a possibility of a renewal for one further year. The role was most recently advertised in April 2025. Thirty-two candidates applied, of whom eight were interviewed and one was selected. Martha Rushbrooke started in October 2025 and following mutual agreement will continue for a two-year term, ending in October 2027.

The work of the VPRF focuses on areas relevant to Lord Trees's expertise and interests, including animal health and welfare; veterinary matters; agriculture, food and rural affairs; higher

education; climate change mitigation in the veterinary industry; international development; professional regulation; science and technology; One Health and tropical medicine.

VPRF AIMS

To support Lord Trees to:

i) scrutinise, revise, and improve legislation,

ii) raise awareness and inform discussions amongst Members of Parliament and Peers of issues relating to Lord Trees's registered interests in an objective, evidence-based way through oral and written questions, debates, All-Party Parliamentary Groups, committees and directly contacting Ministers, and

iii) enhance the profile of the veterinary profession, veterinary science and veterinary industry in Parliament and the public arena.

And to:

iv) ensure the VPRF website and its communications are available for parliamentarians, stakeholders and the wider public and to produce 'FactFiles' and information on aspects of public and animal health and welfare, veterinary science and related industries better to inform opinion and debate,

v) document and disseminate the activities of the VPRF,

vi) provide feedback to the veterinary profession on the development of policy and the importance and means of influencing it, and

vii) create work experience opportunities and outreach work, to contribute to leadership training and widening participation across all levels of the profession and its related industries.

PARLIAMENTARY VETERINARY INTERNS

Hannah Haque née Jordan	October 2013 – October 2015
Anthony Ridge	October 2015 – October 2017
Gabrielle Laing	October 2017 – October 2019
Catrina Prince	October 2019 – October 2021
Harriet Davenport	October 2021 – October 2023
Fiona Shuttleworth	October 2023 – October 2025
Martha Rushbrooke	October 2025 – October 2027

Following mutual agreement Martha Rushbrooke will complete a two-year term in the internship, ending in October 2027. Applications for the next Parliamentary Veterinary Intern will therefore open in April 2027.

Picture 1: Fiona, Lord Trees and Martha during the handover period before Martha formally took over as Parliamentary Veterinary Intern

Following their internships, the PVIs have gone on to a range of roles, as detailed below:

- **Hannah Haque née Jordan** worked as a Policy Officer for the BVA for two years before becoming Assistant Private Secretary to the Special Advisors of the Defra Secretary of State (Michael Gove) in July 2017. She then worked as Defra Policy Team Lead in Future Farming and Animal Welfare and in September 2020 accepted a job as Strategic Policy Advisor to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (George Eustice MP). After a period

of maternity leave, she returned to serve Steve Barclay in that capacity. She joined the FCDO on secondment and is now Joint Head of Exotic Disease Control policy at Defra.

- **Anthony Ridge** joined the civil service in 2017 as a Senior Veterinary Inspector for the Animal and Plant Health Agency. In 2019 he moved to work on international trade and is currently deputy head of veterinary trade facilitation at Defra.
- **Gabrielle Laing** joined SCIF (now Unlimit Health) as their One Health Policy Advisor. Unlimit Health is an international NGO working to end parasitic diseases in humans.
- **Catrina Prince** joined the Veterinary Medicines Directorate as an Antimicrobial Use, Stewardship and Stakeholder Engagement Manager. Following her maternity leave, Catrina then moved to the Office of the Welsh CVO where she acts as Lead Veterinary Advisor.
- **Harriet Davenport** recently completed a Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care internship at Advanced Vetcare in Melbourne, Australia and then worked as a poultry veterinarian and regulatory assistant for Scolexia Pty – a veterinary consultancy business specialising in the intensive livestock sector. She recently returned to Bristol to complete a Masters in Epidemiology.
- **Fiona Shuttleworth** has joined the team at Zelp, a start-up specialising in agricultural technology and specifically methane mitigation.

VPRF DIRECTORS

NAME	ORGANISATION	ROLE
Professor the Lord Trees	HoL Crossbenches	Chair
Mr. D Calpin	BVA	Director
Dr. W Harrison	Unlimit Health (formerly SCIF)	Director
Ms. D Howard	NOAH	Director
Ms. E Lockett	RCVS	Director
Mr. B Pound	Independent	Director

THE VETERINARY POLICY RESEARCH FOUNDATION OVERVIEW

Objectives

In order to operate most effectively we are required to respond to new political or professional developments that arise throughout the year. As such, most of our work is reactive and the extent to which we are able to plan the year's activities in detail is limited.

The work of the VPRF aims:

i. to prepare research briefings and provide administrative support to aid Lord Trees's contributions to parliamentary business
ii. to raise awareness of, and engagement with, veterinary political issues, including in a semi-regular column in the Vet Record
iii. to update social media and outreach within the veterinary community
iv. to update current, and create new FactFiles and briefings and post them on the VPRF's website
v. to help support the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare (APGAW)
vi. to host and facilitate Parliamentary events on behalf of veterinary organisations and other relevant bodies and interests
vii. to provide EMS opportunities in veterinary policy for veterinary undergraduates

Current Priorities

In the coming year we will continue to seek opportunities to contribute to parliamentary business on matters relevant to animal health, animal welfare, the veterinary profession and One Health. Current work includes but is not limited to:

i. reform of the Veterinary Surgeons Act
ii. welfare at slaughter, including fish
iii. antimicrobial resistance
iv. veterinary aspects of environmental sustainability, biodiversity and climate change
v. the future of food and farming in the UK, including technological advances
vi. global health, health security issues and One Health, neglected tropical diseases and pandemic prevention
vii. trade, trade agreements, implications for animal health and welfare, the environment and biosecurity
viii. animal welfare and legislation, animals in science
ix. significant animal disease including bTB and avian influenza
x. vet workforce issues

SPONSORSHIP

Donor	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total Donated
BSAVA	5000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	16,000
BVA	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	48,000
CVS UK Ltd	2500	2500	2500	2500	n/a	n/a	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	25,000
Glasgow Veterinary School	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	1000	1000	n/a	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	8,000
Goddard Veterinary Group	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	3000	3000	3000	3000	20,000
Hird and Partners Ltd	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	5,000
IVC Evidensia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	30,000
Liverpool Veterinary School	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	500	500	21,000
Professor the Lord Trees	1000	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	17,500
Medivet	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	2500	30,000
NOAH	5000	5000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	50,000
Nottingham Veterinary School	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	12,000
Pets at Home Vet Group	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000	40,000
RCVS	10000	10000	10000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	102,000
Royal Veterinary College	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	19,000
VetPartners	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	12,000
XLVet UK Ltd	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	1000	1000	1000	2000	2000	2000	2000	12,000
Total recieved (£)	36,000	32,500	31,500	30,500	34,000	35,000	41,500	43,500	46,500	46,500	45,000	45,000	467,500

Table 1: VPRF's sponsors and their contributions from 2013 to September 2025

Lord Trees would like to express his gratitude to all of the sponsors and directors who have made the work of the Veterinary Policy Research Foundation and the Parliamentary Veterinary Internship possible. Since the initial launch of VPRF we have not solicited further sponsors but are delighted to say that others have made kind offers to join as sponsors. These include the BSAVA in 2013, XL Vets and Pets at Home in 2017, IVC Evidensia in 2020 and Hird and Partners in 2021. We are also very grateful for CVS UK Ltd recommitting their sponsorship in 2020, and for Goddard Veterinary Group and XL Vets for increasing their sponsorship in 2021/22. In addition, Lord Trees would like to thank Douglas and Pippa Hutchison for their very kind and generous help to publish this year's Annual Report.

Picture 2: Photo of Lord Trees, Fiona, Martha and all the sponsors who attended the VPRF's 2025 annual dinner.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

ATTENDANCE

October 2025 was the beginning of Lord Trees's thirteenth year in the House of Lords and the start of the twelfth year of the Internship. Lord Trees usually attends Parliament from Tuesday to Thursday when the House is sitting (the House does not normally sit on Friday). Attendances below are from October to September (unless otherwise specified) as a proportion of total possible attendances.

AJT attended:	79/142 (56%)	2012-2013
	76/139 (55%)	2013-2014
	73/136 (54%)	2014-2015*
	75/146 (51%)	2015- 2016
	48/100 (48%)	2016-2017*
	86/160 (54%)	2017-2018
	98/151 (65%)	2018- July 2019
	81/124 (65%)	2019 - July 2020*
	58/149 (39%)[1]	2020 -2021
	93/153 (61%)	2021 – 2022
	95/153 (62%)	2022 - 2023
	81/134 (60%)	2023 - 2024*
	112/161(70%)	2024 - 2025
	110/165 (67%)	2025 – 2026

PVI attended:
103 working days over 39 weeks 2013 - 2014 (HJ)
102 working days over 31 weeks 2014 - 2015 (HJ)*
117 working days over 37 weeks 2015 - 2016[2] (AR)
116 working days over 35 weeks 2016 - 2017 (AR)*
135 working days over 38 weeks 2017 - 2018 (GL)
142 working days over 37 weeks 2018 - July 2018 (GL)
120 working days over 30 weeks 2019 - July 2020 (CP)*
151 working days over 38 weeks 2020 - 2021 (CP)
135 working days over 35 weeks 2021 - 2022 (HD)
137 working days over 36 weeks 2022 – July 2023 (HD)
108 working days over 33 weeks 2023 –2024 (FS)*
142 working days over 36 weeks 2024 – 2025 (FS)
147 working days over 37 weeks 2025 – 2026 (MR)

[1] This appears low as during COVID attendance was registered only for debate contributions, but PVI and AJT continued to work online.

[2] PVI working week changed from three to four days per week in May 2016.

* Election year

HOUSE OF LORDS BUSINESS

There are several ways in which a member of the House of Lords can exert influence on Government and legislation. These include speaking in debates; initiating debates; tabling written questions; asking oral questions and participating in committee business. In addition, there are informal means of influence such as private meetings with Ministers, participating in All-Party Parliamentary Groups, writing articles in appropriate publications, and writing letters to Ministers. Parliamentary bills pass through five stages – 1st and 2nd reading, Committee stage, Report stage and 3rd reading before they are granted Royal Assent by the King. Debates fall into three main types: debates on Government legislation, Questions for Short Debate (QSDs) and debates on Select Committee reports. Only QSDs can be initiated by individual Peers. In addition, secondary legislation, in the form of Statutory Instruments, are subject to debate but are not amendable or put to a vote. At the start of official business each day in the House of Lords there are four Oral Questions, submitted by Peers a month in advance, on various topics. These questions are used to hold the Government to account and for a ten-minute period Peers have the opportunity to stand up and contribute short supplementary questions on the topic, should they so wish. Below is a summary list of Lord Trees's parliamentary contributions to the chamber but see Appendix I for the full list of Lord Trees's and the PVI's other meetings, events, and non-parliamentary roles this year.

A new parliamentary session began with the King's Speech on 13th May 2026. This included reference to 27 Bills, but none was of direct relevance to veterinary matters. We are optimistic that there will be a Bill on new veterinary legislation in the next King's Speech, expected in late spring/early summer 2027 (see p. 45 *et seq*.).

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business - Direct Contributions to the Chamber and Written Questions (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026)

DATE	CATEGORY	DETAILS
21/10/2025	Second Reading	Animal Welfare (Import of dogs, cats and ferrets) Bill
21/11/2025	Third Reading of Bill/the Bill do now pass	Animal Welfare (Import of dogs, cats and ferrets) Bill
02/12/2025	Royal Assent	Animal Welfare (Import of dogs, cats and ferrets) Bill
04/12/2025	Oral Question	Extreme conformations: extending LAIAR to cats, the IHA
06/01/2026	Grand Committee debate	Nitrogen: reuse, reduce, recycle
13/01/2026	Oral Question	Non-stun slaughter and mandatory labelling

04/02/2026	Debate on a fatal motion by Baroness Bennett	Public Order Act 2023 (Key National Infrastructure) – contribution against the fatal motion
12/02/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Close season for hares
16/04/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Fertiliser - specifically nitrogen fertiliser and the circular economy
18/05/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Precision breeding and safeguarding this practice
10/06/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	The new bTB strategy
23/06/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Preserving ancient trees - protecting oaks
02/07/2026	Crossbench Debate	Debate on the future affordability and quality of higher education
02/09/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Strategic building of data centres in areas less at risk of water shortage
17/09/2026	Supplementary Oral Question	Food security in the face of extreme weather and the Land Use Framework

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business – Significant Parliamentary Meetings and Correspondence (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026)

DATE	CATEGORY	DETAILS
25/09/2025	Letter	To Rt Hon. Yvette Cooper MP about advancing universal health coverage - APPG Global Health & Security
15/10/2025	Meeting	Veterinary Medicines Working Group for Northern Ireland
15/10/2025	Peer Meeting	Discussion of Veterinary Surgeons Act reform with Baroness Hayman, Defra Minister, Danny Chambers MP and Neil Hudson MP
09/12/2025	Meeting	Veterinary Medicines Working Group for Northern Ireland
09/12/2025	Hustings	Lord Speaker Hustings
09/12/2025	Peers for the Planet meeting	P4P meeting with NFU and others on the future of farming
16/12/2025	Meeting	Meeting about the future of the Cambridge vet school with Mark Holmes and other senior staff, with Neil Hudson MP
18/12/2025	Letter	Letter to Lord Chris Smith, University of Cambridge Chancellor, regarding potential closure of the Cambridge Vet School
18/12/2025	Letter	Letter to The Times with Danny Chambers and Neil Hudson re potential closure of Cambridge Vet School
22/01/2026	Letter	Letter to Professor Prentice, University of Cambridge Vice Chancellor, regarding potential closure of the Cambridge Vet School
06/02/2026	Written question	Question about dogs on leads near highways/green spaces - Baroness Hayman answered
11/02/2026	Meeting	Veterinary Medicines Working Group for Northern Ireland
11/03/2026	Meeting	With Baroness Hayman on the SPS agreement with the EU

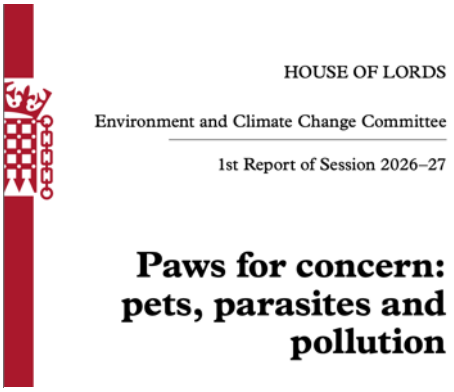
24/03/2026	Meeting	On non-compliance in animal testing with Lord Hanson, Home Office Minister
25/03/2026	Meeting	Discussion with Earl Kinnoull on various matters related to crossbench peers
25/03/2026	Meeting	Briefing Baroness Hayman on the Halal Export Accreditation scheme
20/04/2026	Meeting	Vets in Parliament meeting re VSA reform with Danny Chambers, Neil Hudson
28/04/2026	Letter	Letter to the Vet Record about the LRO 2013
19/05/2026	Meeting	Veterinary Medicines Working Group for Northern Ireland
03/06/2026	Drop-in session	Regarding trail hunting ban with Baroness Hayman
18/06/2026	Written piece	Statement for PetPlan regarding the benefits of investing in comparative medicine
18/06/2026	Letter	Letter to Rt Hon Baroness Chapman of Darlington regarding United Nations Human Rights Commission Resolution on Neglected Tropical Diseases - APPG for Malaria and NTDs
22/06/2026	Written question	Question about day zero sexing techniques to end culling of day-old male chicks
22/06/2026	Written question	Question about financing egg sexing techniques
25/06/2026	Meeting	Discussion with Baroness Hayman, Danny Chambers about VSA reform, amongst other things (bTB, Halal export accreditation scheme, sheep dip)
07/07/2026	Expert briefing	P4P expert briefing session - Building a resilient and secure food system
23/07/2026	Letter	Letter to Rt Hon Baroness Chapman thanking her for her work as Minister for International Development and Africa
17/09/2026	Meeting	With Christine Middlemiss, Chief Veterinary Officer

Lord Trees's Parliamentary Business – Select Committee Meetings Attended and reports produced (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026)

DATE	CATEGORY	DETAILS
03/09/2025	Environment and Climate Change	Every Wednesday ongoing
04/09/2026	Environment and Climate Change	Discussion of whether to appoint special advisor for next inquiry

Select Committees in the House of Lords consist of a cross party group of appointed peers who meet weekly in both private and public meetings to investigate and produce a report or letter on a particular topic.

Lord Trees has served on the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Select Committee since January 2024 as a crossbench nominee and has contributed to four full report publications, the first in December 2024 titled '*Methane: keep up*


HOUSE OF LORDS

Environment and Climate Change Committee

1st Report of Session 2026–27

Paws for concern: pets, parasites and pollution

Figure 1: the cover page for the most recent report on pet parasiticide use.

the momentum' the second in July 2025 titled '*Nitrogen: time to reduce, recycle, reuse*' and a third in May 2026 titled *'Surviving drought: reclaim the rain'*.

Most recently, and pleasingly aligned with Lord Trees's interests, the committee completed an inquiry on pet parasiticide medications (PPMs). This inquiry included evidence sessions from various stakeholders including scientists, the Environment Agency, private vets, veterinary bodies, drug companies and the regulators. On 5th August the committee published their report on this topic, the main conclusions of which were: the VMD should mandate the extension of Phase II Environmental Risk Assessments for all existing and future PPMs, the Government should restrict access to all parasiticides through, at minimum, NFA-VPS channels with appropriate training given to Suitably Qualified People, the Government should ensure UKRI fund clear research gaps and the VMD should update guidance on product packaging.

The Government must formally respond to these published reports within 2 months. Both the reports and the Government response are made publicly available online on the select committee website. The Committee also recently completed an inquiry into waste crime, following which they produced a letter to the Secretary of State for Defra, sent in October 2025.

The select committee reports and letters are not only impactful through direct channels to the Government but are also often picked up in mainstream news channels and subject to significant and prolonged media attention. While the waste inquiry was shorter and culminated in a letter, this has been quoted in many news articles related to illegal waste dumping. The recent publication of the report on parasiticide use was also widely publicized.

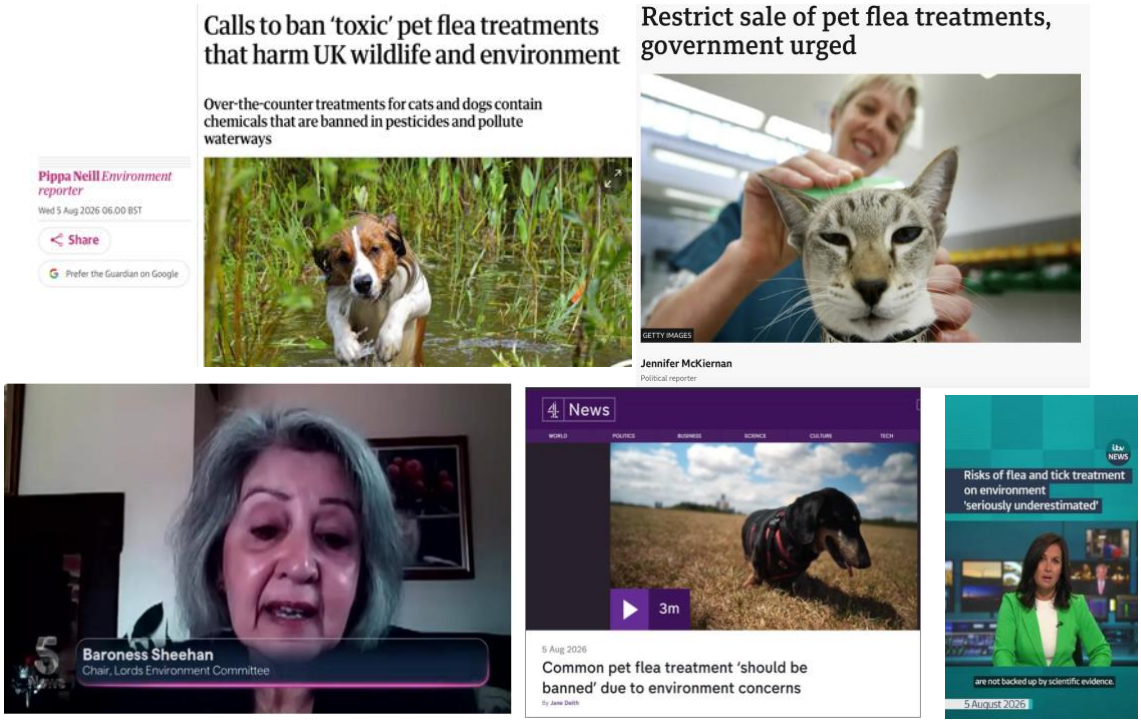


Figure 2: examples of news sites picking up select committee work on pet parasiticides.

PUBLICATIONS AND EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES

Publications

In 2025, Fiona and Lord Trees's second article on methane and net zero was published. Both Martha and Lord Trees have submitted articles and a letter to the Vet Record. Links to these articles can be found below:

Vet Record – regular column, 'View from Vetsminster' by Martha Rushbrooke

- **When a Bill becomes an Act** – Veterinary Record, Volume 198, Issue 1, Published 2nd January 2026
- **Ascertaining the value of the vet industry** – Veterinary Record, Volume 198, Issue 5, Published 27th February 2026
- **Putting the spotlight on spot-on treatments** – Veterinary Record, Volume 199, Issue 1, Published 3rd July 2026

Vet Record – letter by Lord Trees

- **Veterinary governance and the RCVS** – Veterinary Record, Volume 198, Issue 10, published in May 2026. *This draws attention to the Legislative Reform Order of 2013, which clearly separated disciplinary and professional functions of the RCVS.*

In Practice

- **Shuttleworth, F. and Trees, A. J., Methane and Net Zero Part II - A Review of Ruminant Methane Mitigation Strategies and their Contextualisation –** In Practice, Volume 47, Issue 8, published 3rd October 2025
- **Comments on: Breeding from a dog with brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome -** Everyday Ethics – In Practice, Volume 47, Issue 10, published December 2025.

VIEW FROM VETSMINSTER

When a bill becomes an act

Martha Rushbrooke, the new parliamentary veterinary intern to **Lord Trees**, discusses recent Royal Assent for the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill.

VIEW FROM VETSMINSTER

Putting the spotlight on spot-on treatments

Martha Rushbrooke, parliamentary veterinary intern to **Lord Trees**, discusses the House of Lords select committee investigating the environmental impact of veterinary parasiticides.

VIEW FROM VETSMINSTER

Ascertaining the value of the vet industry

Martha Rushbrooke, parliamentary veterinary intern to **Lord Trees**, discusses the Veterinary Industry Project report and the near £20 billion in gross value added to the UK Economy.

Vet Record

Legislation | Full Access

Veterinary governance and the RCVS

Alexander Trees

Veterinary EMS

The VPRF continues to run a joint Policy EMS stream with the RCVS, which gives students a one-week placement (3 days at the VPRF and 2 with the RCVS) to give an insight into the role that vets play in policy and leadership positions. The policy week is advertised on both the RCVS and VPRF websites, and circulated within the vet schools, and the applicants are blinded and then carefully scored to ensure fair selection from what is a very impressive pool. The RCVS provide financial support for successful applicants.

This continues to be met with positive feedback from students. Students who have undertaken placements thus far in 2026 are:

- **Lilly Pinkerton**, University of Bristol – January 2026
- **Carlotta Rosemary Clare**, Royal Veterinary College – March 2026
- **Rebecca Scott,** University of Cambridge – May 2026
- **Francesca Haldane**, University of Cambridge – July 2025

Picture 3: From left, Martha Rushbrooke, Lord Trees, and Carlotta Rosemary Clare (EMS student) at the Animals (Low-Welfare Activities Abroad) Act event in the House of Commons.

'My experience with members of the VPRF is something I shall never forget! It was such a privilege to be involved in relevant policy discussions, as well as having an insight into how the veterinary profession is governed.'

EMS Student feedback

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES IN 2025-2026

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

In September 2025 the Government published a second review by Sir Charles Godfray, which put increased emphasis on farmer-led control and the use of private tests to allow farmers to manage out the disease themselves. A positive development came in June 2026 when the bovine TB Steering Group produced a new control strategy for England, further supporting recommendations made in the updated Godfray report and echoing conversations we've had with private vets like Dick Sibley for many years now. In a letter from Baroness Hayman responding to Lord Trees bringing up this topic in the chamber, we received confirmation that the Government are looking to make a serious, positive step-change in policy. See more on page 39 *et seq*.

NEW VETERINARY LEGISLATION

We have been supportive of the RCVS and the BVA to engage the Government in prioritizing veterinary legislative reform, including through conversations with both bodies and by attending events including a parliamentary reception in June 2026. These efforts have culminated in a Government white paper published on the 9th July 2026, with the possibility that new veterinary legislation will be included within the next King's speech (likely mid-2027). See more on page 45 *et seq*.

VPRF'S VET INDUSTRY PROJECT

As mentioned in last year's report, we commissioned BiGGAR Economics to assess the economic contribution of the veterinary sector in terms of Gross Value Added to the UK economy, the number of people employed in the sector and wellbeing benefits. The final report constitutes the first ever economic assessment of the value of the veterinary industry in its entirety. It was published in January 2026 and launched in an event in the House of Lords on 19th January 2026. See more on page 43 *et seq*.

PUPPY SMUGGLING BILL

Lord Trees sponsored the Puppy Smuggling Bill through the Lords, which cleared 2nd reading on the 5th September with full support and unanimity that no amendments shall be brought to

imperil its passage. It passed through third reading on 21st November 2025 and received Royal Assent on 2nd December 2025 to become law. See more on page 37 *et seq*.

METHANE PAPERS

In spite of the huge importance of climate change, and within this methane emissions from ruminants, there is a remarkable lack of involvement of the veterinary profession. Following publication of a first paper in In Practice in summer 2025, a second paper was published on 3rd October 2025. The articles aim to help veterinarians understand the climate impacts of, and the methane mitigation methods available within, agriculture. Given the role of vets in herd health management and their crucial relationship with farmers, understanding the role of ruminants in global warming and the mitigation tools which can be implemented on farm will help farmers reduce emissions whilst providing possible financial, animal health and welfare benefits, and help safeguard UK food security.

SHEEP DIP

Sheep scab remains one of the most pressing welfare issues facing the sheep sector in the UK. The current control methods rely on dipping sheep with diazinon, for which there remains very limited legal disposal facilities, risking illegal dumping in the environment. In June 2026 we were approached by a group who have produced a novel solution to this issue. We were able to facilitate a meeting to get the group into a room with environmental agencies to discuss next steps and are hoping to see positive progress being made in this area in the coming year. See more on page 34 *et seq*.

CAMBRIDGE VET SCHOOL

On Thursday 4th December 2025, the Council of the School of the Biological Sciences in Cambridge recommended that the University of Cambridge cease veterinary education. Concerned about this, we wrote to or met with various key figures to lobby for the re-evaluation of this decision, alongside lobbying from many others in the veterinary community and beyond. Subsequently the decision has been taken that the vet school will, at least for now, remain operative. See more on page 33 *et seq*.

EXTREME CANINE CONFROMATION AND THE INNATE HEALTH ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Innate Health Assessment (IHA) tool has been developed and recently launched by the Brachycephalic Working Group, APGAW, Dan O'Neill from the RVC and others, to address the serious health issues caused by extreme breed conformations. It was launched formally in the House of Lords on 18th November 2025. The voluntary assessment tool will allow breeders as well as enforcement officers to select healthier animals for breeding in order to reverse extreme phenotypic characteristics back to more healthy conformations. See more on page 23 *et seq*.

ANIMALS IN SCIENCE

The issue of the use of animals in scientific research is long-standing and highly contentious. In their policy paper published in November 2025, entitled 'replacing animals in science: a strategy to support the development, validation and uptake of alternative methods', the Labour Government laid out their intentions to phase out much of the current use of animals. However, it is also accepted by those in power that we are not yet in a place where we can cease all use. Currently, life science and animal breeding sites are subject to protests and acts of vandalism that cross the line from peaceful into unacceptable. For this reason, the Government brought forward a Statutory Instrument to designate life science facilities as 'Key National Infrastructure' under the Public Order Act 2023, making it an offence to interfere with work being carried out on these sites. A fatal motion was brought in the Lords to try to stop the passage of the SI, which Lord Trees spoke against, and which did not pass.

'I cannot see that peaceful protest is in any way prevented [by this Statutory Instrument], but I am aware that protest actions in relation to for example Camp Beagle, outside the MBR Acres Animal Breeding Facility, have included spike devices to damage vehicles and puncture tyres, spray painting homes of animal care staff, other harassments, personal threats and criminal damage, which go way beyond peaceful protest, and are clearly designed to close down the facility.

That particular operation, and other life science, medical science and vet science labs and the facilities which support those labs, are highly regulated and carry out legal activities of incredible value to human and animal health and welfare.'

Lord Trees's speech against the fatal motion, 4th February 2026

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)

APPG for Animal Welfare (APGAW)

After a busy start to 2025 for APGAW, and building on the roundtable meeting on enforcement in June 2025 with the Minister, Baroness Hayman, early November 2025 saw a further meeting in anticipation of the publication of Part 2 of APGAW's Animal Welfare Enforcement report, entitled: *'The Four Stages to Better Enforcement'*. The meeting included a discussion of enforcement in the farm animal sector and was attended by local authorities, vets, and other stakeholders. The report was published on 4th December 2025, before publication of the Government's Animal Welfare Strategy. Indeed, one of the requests made by the APPG to Baroness Hayman at the June roundtable was 'that enforcement be placed front and centre in Defra's upcoming Animal Welfare Strategy', and it seems that this was taken on board.

Mid-November 2025 also saw the launch of the Innate Health Assessment tool. This was developed by the Brachycephalic Working Group, chaired by Dr Dan O'Neill from the RVC, in collaboration with APGAW. The tool is designed to shift canine breeding practices toward healthy norms and reassure prospective pet owners that their future pet's welfare has not been compromised by its conformation and poor breeding. The model primarily assists breeders and local authority inspectors to make decisions on licensing for dog breeding by assessing whether dogs submitted as potential breeding animals meet the requirements of Schedule 6 (6)(5) of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Regulations 2018 (LAIA). This results from concerns that the Schedule 6 LAIA Regulations are difficult to enforce/prosecute for local authorities. However, a recent Naturewatch Foundation report suggests there have been at least

> *'No dog may be kept for breeding if it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of its genotype, phenotype or state of health, that breeding from it could have a detrimental effect on its health and welfare or the health and welfare of its offspring.'*
>
> *Schedule 6 (6)(5) of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Regulations 2018*

two successful prosecutions under these regulations[3]. Aided by the IHA, hopefully this number will increase.

The IHA is designed to generate an overall score based on the number of 'pass' decisions from 10 conformation criteria for each dog, including craniofacial ratio, skin folds, tail appearance and presence of merle colouring, to list a few. The local authority inspector assesses these criteria visually from a distance or with the assistance of the licence applicant for those criteria that require some handling of the dog. Assessment of each of the 10 criteria leads to a pass/fail decision on each. Adding the number of pass criteria then generates an overall Innate Health Assessment score for that dog.

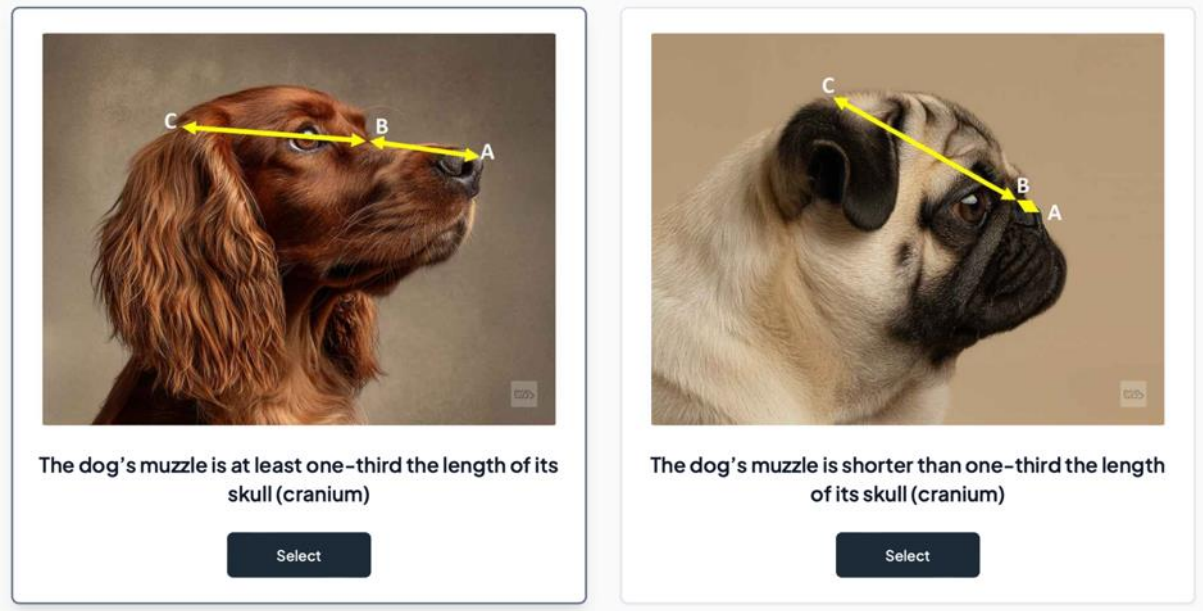


Figure 3: an example of one of the 10 criteria included in the IHA.

The launch of the IHA was hosted in the Cholmondeley Room and was a resounding success, with a bustling room filled with stakeholders with an interest in championing animal welfare. Lord Trees made an address, where he emotively suggested that the "*fashion for extreme conformation is the biggest welfare issue of dogs in UK, occurring in plain sight, paradoxically in a nation of*

[3] Harney, N., & Howe, H. (2026). *Protecting dogs from genetic and conformational suffering: Are we using the legal rules effectively?* Naturewatch Foundation, Legal Advisory Group on Extreme Conformation in Dogs, & UK Centre for Animal Law.

animal lovers". This was also quoted in a New Yorker article published in March 2026 entitled "*Oodles of Doodles: how so-called designer dogs have upended the purebred world*".

Picture 4: from left to right: Danny Chambers MP, Vanessa Barnes, Marisa Heath, Lord Trees and Neil Hudson MP at the APGAW launch event.

Further to this, Lord Trees brought up the issue of extreme conformations, particularly in cats, and the IHA, as a Supplementary Oral Question in the chamber.

'My Lords, the breeding of dogs with extreme conformations for purely fashionable reasons causes significant, and potentially lifelong, ill health. It is illegal under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Regulations. A new initiative—the innate health assessment tool—has been lodged to help owners, breeders, trading standards officers, vets and others to avoid this practice in dogs. However, we are now increasingly seeing cats bred with conformations that are seriously deleterious to their health and that of their offspring. Will His Majesty's Government amend the current regulations to include cats and to encourage the development of innate health assessment tools, or similar tools, to help reduce and avoid these abhorrent breeding practices in cats?'

Lord Trees, Supplementary Oral Question, Thursday 4th December 2025

Following the APGAW AGM in January 2026 there was a fascinating talk from Professor Richard Bennett, Professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of Reading, about a tool he has developed to assess the economic benefits of farm animal welfare policy changes. Later in the spring there was a joint meeting with the APPG for Zoos and Aquariums to discuss enforcement in a zoo context, following Defra's publication of '*Standards of modern zoo practice for Great Britain'* in May 2025.

Summer saw an exciting double-bill meeting. The first hour focused on new recommendations from the RSPB not to feed birds between March and October owing to the risk of trichomonosis spreading, particularly in finches. We were joined by representatives from the RSPB, UK Pet Food and researchers in this area for a very interesting discussion on the relative merits and shortfalls of such a policy. This was followed by short discussions of three animal welfare issues: improving food labelling based on welfare at production, the issues surrounding fast-growing chicken and implementation of the Animals (Low-Welfare Activities Abroad) Act 2023. The aim of these short 'pitches' was to guide future APGAW action for the coming year and provide a basis for actions that could be taken in each of these highly relevant areas. Despite the clash with an England World Cup football game, turn-out was good and discussions carried on over the allotted time.

APPG for Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases

In 2025, Lord Trees was re-appointed as co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases (APPMG), a forum dedicated to addressing the challenges and advancing solutions in the fight against malaria and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Initially, Lord Trees was re-elected alongside co-chair Dr Lauren Sullivan MP. However, following Lauren's appointment as parliamentary private secretary to the Department of Innovation, Science and Technology in May 2026, she had to stand down and an EGM was called. Catherine West MP subsequently took up the post as co-chair. Throughout the year the APPG has been most ably administered by Martha Varney and Malaria No More UK, and funded by Medicines for Malaria Venture and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative.

Picture 5: EGM for the APPG, with Lauren Sullivan (centre left) stepping down as co-chair to be replaced by Catherine West (centre right), alongside other members of the secretariat.

NTDs are a group of 21 diseases, which affect over 1.65 billion people in the most impoverished communities in the world. These conditions lead to significant suffering, often life-long disability and disfigurement, and even death. They include zoonoses such as rabies and leishmaniasis, blood and liver flukes, nematodes causing river blindness and elephantiasis, and snake bite. Apart from the world-leading research done on these agents in the UK, many are treated with repurposed veterinary drugs or involve vectors of veterinary as well as human importance and are exemplars of One Health. Moreover, as a result of globalisation and climate change, a number now threaten human and/or animal health in the UK.

The APPMG brings together parliamentarians, academics, and sector professionals to discuss these diseases and their control. In an increasingly unstable world with climate change, heightened geopolitical volatility and major reductions in aid from major donors such as the US, the significant progress in combating malaria and NTDs is under threat.

This is not to negate the remarkable progress that has been made against NTDs. Indeed, as of July 2026, 64 countries have eliminated at least one NTD[4] and 843 million people received treatment for an NTD in 2022. However, in the case of malaria – a disease which disproportionally affects children and pregnant women – a child still dies every minute from contracting the disease, despite it being entirely preventable and treatable. It places undue burden on developing countries healthcare systems – accounting for up to 40% of hospital admissions in some regions. UK research and development has been critical in the fight against malaria – with two vaccines now developed under British scientists – as well as aiding the development of novel diagnostics and treatments.

These so-called 'tropical' diseases are no longer confined to tropical regions. Climate change has expanded the range of disease vectors into more northern latitudes, as seen in 2023 with three autochthonous cases of dengue fever, transmitted by *Aedes aegypti*, near Paris and most recently the discovery of *Aedes aegypti* breeding in London. Additionally, the speed and interconnectedness of global travel enables infectious diseases to spread vast distances before symptoms emerge. Continued investment and raised awareness of malaria and NTDs are essential not only for controlling these diseases in endemically infected countries, but also for preventing their establishment in new regions as vector habitats and human movement expand.

Over the past year, the APPG has continued to raise awareness of malaria and NTDs within Parliament, while emphasising the economic return on UK aid investments, relevant given the further reduction of the UK official development assistance (ODA) budget from 0.5% to 0.3% of GDP by 2027/28.

March 2026 saw the return of students from the University of Oxford International Health and Tropical Medicine MSc to give briefings to parliamentarians on topics of political relevance. Lord Trees and Martha heard impressive policy briefings under chairmanship of Lord Trees covering topics such as global health funding contraction, the Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS) annex (part of the WHO Pandemic Agreement) and antimalarial drug resistance and the response to this.

[4] https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/neglected-tropical-diseases

Picture 6: Lord Trees, Martha R and Martha V, alongside students and members of staff from the University of Oxford MSc.

Later in June, the APPG for Malaria and NTDs, alongside the APPG on disability, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the FCDO and the Bond Disability and Inclusion Group, co-hosted an event on disabilities inclusion in global development. At a moment of heightened risk to disability rights globally, the event aimed to reinforce the UK's leadership in disability inclusion, and that of its partners in the Commonwealth and beyond. The event involved short speeches from Marsha de Cordova MP (APPG for Disability) and Lord Trees, as well as Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms, Minister for Disability.

Picture 7: Lord Trees with Dan Izzett and his wife, Babs.

The event also featured presentations from disabled survivors of various NTDs, including Dan Izzett, former leprosy sufferer and now active advocate for Leprosy mission Great Britain.

'The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reminds us that disability does not arise only from a medical condition. It arises from the interaction between an impairment and the barriers society places in people's way: physical barriers, legal barriers, economic barriers, and perhaps most painfully, attitudinal barriers.

For people affected by NTDs, those barriers can be severe. A person may lose mobility or sight, but they may also lose work, schooling, family acceptance, or the confidence to participate in community life. Stigma can disable as surely as disease.

So, I am delighted that we are here today raising the importance of disability inclusion in global development. I am looking forward to the discussion and hope that, as we look ahead to the UK's hosting of the G20 next year, the UK seizes the opportunity to demonstrate real leadership on disability inclusion.'

Lord Trees, Tuesday 23rd June 2026

This year saw some exciting news from the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) in the form of a new oral treatment for trypanosomiasis, or 'sleeping sickness'. When the organisation started work on sleeping sickness more than twenty years ago, doctors had just one treatment option: an arsenic-based medicine so toxic it killed one in twenty patients. However, the European Medicines Agency in early 2026 recognised acoziborole as a new treatment for *T.b. gambiense* sleeping sickness. This was developed by DNDi, Sanofi, and partners. Safe, simple, and effective, it brings the WHO's target of eliminating the disease by 2030 within reach. In June 2026, we met with Laurent Fraisse, Research & Development Director from the DNDi and discussed this positive development, alongside other R&D priorities of the DNDi.

Picture 8: Martha R, Laurent Fraisse (DNDi), Lord Trees and Martha V, following the June meeting in the House of Lords

Following a new Government in July 2026, sad farewells were made to Baroness Chapman as Minister for International Development. Lord Trees sent a letter on behalf of the APPG, expressing his gratitude for her hard work in this role. We look forward to working with the new Minister, Kirsty McNeill, and wish her the best in this role.

'I wanted to thank you, especially, for your commitment to NTDs, which are so often neglected in global health investment, policy, and research. Your most recent correspondence confirming the UK will co-sponsor the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on NTDs was incredibly welcome, as have been your announcements on support for the Eliminating Lymphatic Filariasis in Africa (ELFA) programme; new funding for research into Female Genital Schistosomiasis (FGS); new support to the World Mosquito Programme and to the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine's ENDPOINT programme to advance solutions to lymphatic filariasis and other parasitic diseases spread by insects; and, additional funding for Product Development Partnerships, including DNDi and MMV..'

Extract from letter of thanks to Baroness Chapman, July 2026

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

RECENT ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATION

Keeping track of animal welfare legislation is very important for our work and guides much of our work-streams. In order to streamline this process, Martha has built a table to follow the progression of different pieces of legislation, to Royal Assent and beyond to implementation. Overleaf is a snapshot of the table from 2012 to the time of writing.

Name of legislation	Primary or Secondary	What is it about?	Royal assent granted	Date of implementation	Additional info
Wild Animals in Circuses Act 2019	Primary	Banned wild animals in travelling circuses.	24th July 2019	20th January 2020	
Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022	Primary	Increased sanctions for offences related to animals and animal products.	28th April 2022	1st January 2024	
Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022	Primary	Inclusion of cephalopods and decapod crustaceans as recognised as sentient beings.	28th April 2022	In May 2023	
Glue Traps (Offences) Act 2022	Primary	Banned the use of glue traps.	28th April 2022	31st July 2024	
Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022	Primary	Tougher sentences and improved powers to tackle hare coursing.	28th April 2022	Immediately in force	
Shark Fins Act 2023	Primary	Banned the import and export of shark fins and make provisions relating to the removal of fins from sharks.	29th June 2023	Immediately in force	
Animals (Low Welfare Activities Abroad) Act 2023	Primary	Banned the sale and advertising of activities abroad which involve low standards of animal welfare.	18th September 2023	Largely unimplemented	Has received significant attention due to lack of implementation - this may be due to lack of unified demands.
Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Act 2024	Primary	Banned the export of certain livestock from Great Britain for fattening or slaughter	20th May 2024	22nd July 2024	
Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025	Primary	Restricted the importation and non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets to tighten up loop-holes	2nd December 2024	Not yet implemented	Hopefully work on secondary legislation to commence soon.
Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025	Primary	Changed the law about the offence of livestock worrying, including changes to what constitutes an offence and increased powers for investigation of suspected offences.	18th December 2025	18th March 2026	
Crime and Policing Bill 2026 - Amendment 301	Primary	Amendment replaces the existing offence of intercourse with an animal with a wider offence of sexual activity with an animal.	Not yet	NA	Additional, more extreme, amendment to make a register for anyone guilty of animal abuse was tabled but then withdrawn.
The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 Amendment Regulations 2012	Secondary - Amended ASPA	Amendment to protect "all living vertebrates (other than man) and living cephalopods"		In January 2013	
Control of Horses Act 2015	Secondary - Amended the Animals Act 1971	Gave landowners and local authorities of England the power to detain horses under certain circumstances.		In May 2015	
Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015	Secondary	Updated rules on humane slaughter, implementing retained EU standards into national law.		5th November 2015	
Licensing of Activities Involving Animals (England) Regulations 2018	Secondary	Banned third-party puppy and kitten sales among other measures and put restrictions in place on breeding.		1st October 2018	Breeding restrictions remain largely unenforced
The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018	Secondary	Mandatory CCTV in Slaughterhouses in England.		In November 2018	
Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Act 2019	Secondary - Amended section 4 and 61 of Animal Welfare Act 2006	Protection of the unnecessary suffering of service animals.		In June 2019	
Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021	Secondary - (Amended section 32 of Animal Welfare Act 2006)	Increased maximum sentences for animal cruelty offences from 6 months to 5 years imprisonment.		Implemented June 2021	
Ivory Act 2018 Regulations 2022	Secondary	Increased sanctions regarding elephant ivory trade and extended ivory bans to include 5 other species (hippopotamus, walrus, narwhal, orca whale and sperm whale).		In June 2022	
The Microchipping of Cats and Dogs (England) Regulations 2023	Secondary	Mandatory microchipping for dogs and cats.		Implemented 2015 (dogs) and March 2023 (cats)	All cats must be microchipped by June 10th, 2024
Animal Welfare (Primate License) Regulations 2024	Secondary (under AWA 2006)	Made a step towards banning the private keeping of primates in the UK by enforcing primate licencing.		6th April 2026	

CAMBRIDGE VET SCHOOL – THREATENED CLOSURE

On Thursday 4th December 2025, the Council of the School of the Biological Sciences in Cambridge voted (11-0, with 2 abstentions) to recommend that the University of Cambridge cease veterinary education, with the final cohort graduating in 2032. This vote was made public on 11th December 2025. This sparked widespread shock and anger amongst the veterinary community and beyond. A 'Save the Vet School' campaign was launched by students and staff at the vet school and protests were organised. This was also an issue that Lord Trees and Martha felt passionately about and therefore wanted to take their own action on, in any way they could.

Concerned about this, we wrote to or met key individuals to lobby against this closure. In mid-December we met online with senior staff at the vet school alongside Dr Neil Hudson MP to discuss the situation. In January, we wrote to the Professor Deborah Prentice, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cambridge, as well as Lord Chris Smith, the Chancellor.

'It is very concerning that the University of Cambridge is contemplating closing its vet school. Whilst the number of veterinary graduates from Cambridge each year is relatively small, I hold the quality of graduates in great respect and would suggest that they are statistically over-represented in the upper echelons of our profession.'

Lord Trees, letter to Cambridge Chancellor and Vice Chancellor, 22nd January 2026

' I entirely agree about the quality and uniqueness of the veterinary school'

Lord Smith, reply to letter

Three out of four of the Heads of Colleges on the University Council are known to Lord Trees, two because they are members of the House of Lords (Lord Simon McDonald and Baroness Sally Morgan) and one because she used to be head of the FSA (Heather Hancock) and we were able to meet each to argue the case of keeping the vet school open.

On 23rd February 2026 the university announced that the Vet School would remain open. However, there is some way to go yet before the Vet School's future can be guaranteed. We will continue to support it as best we can, whilst staff at the Cambridge Vet School build a strong and sustainable case for the future of the school.

SHEEP DIP INNOVATION

Sheep scab, caused by the mite *Psoroptes ovis*, remains a major welfare issue in the UK. There are an estimated 8000-10,000 outbreaks every year in the UK, with the national prevalence estimated at approximately 9%[5]. In addition to being a serious welfare issue, sheep scab is estimated to cost the UK sheep industry £78 to £202 million annually[5].

Figure 4: *Psoroptes Ovis*, the mite causing sheep scab

The cornerstone of treatment for sheep scab remains organophosphate dipping (especially with increasing resistance to the injectable macrocyclic lactones), with diazinon being the main organophosphate used. However, disposal of the large volumes – more than 27.5 million litres annually[6] – of spent dip generated by this practice poses a large problem. Various methods are currently in use, including farmers diluting the dip and then spreading it on their land, requiring expensive permits and with risks of pollution of surface water, or using spent dip disposal schemes, whereby a registered waste carrier must be employed to dispose of the used dip in a certified waste processing facility. In Wales, this is now the only method permitted following a ban on any new permits granting farmers to spread on their land[7].

Figure 5: sheep affected by sheep scab.

In early 2025, the VPRF was alerted to a critical situation whereby only one waste facility accepting spent sheep dip remained across England and Wales, falling to zero in April 2025. This presented an urgent threat to both the environment and animal welfare, with farmers being forced to

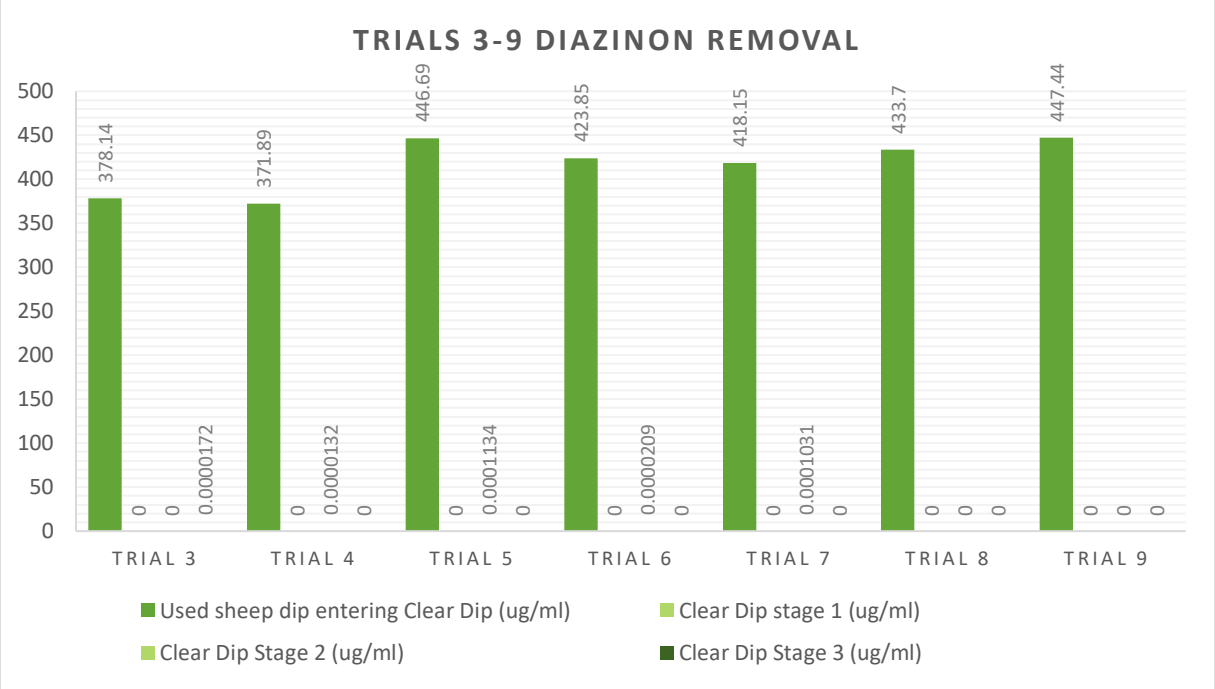
[5] https://www.fas.scot/downloads/technical-note-tn636-control-of-sheep-scab/

[6] https://farmpep.net/adopt/case-study/clear-dip-solution-sustainable-disposal-sheep-dip-waste

[7] https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-blogs/news/2025-news-releases/nrw-changes-waste-sheep-dip-disposal-methods-for-cleaner-rivers/?lang=en

choose to either dip sheep and then dispose of the spent dip in an unregulated manner or not dip sheep at all, leaving them vulnerable to this horrifying disease.

Fortunately, this year has seen exciting developments in this area, involving a collaboration between Clear Dip solutions, involving Ruth Clements and Roland Bonney, and Bimeda, a manufacturer, marketer and distributor of veterinary pharmaceuticals and including Rachel Mallet and Lesley Stubbings. Funded by Defra and Innovate UK via the ADOPT pathway, the team have designed an innovative way to remove diazinon from spent dip using carbon filters at point of use to avoid environmental contamination while also making the process cheaper and more convenient for farmers.



Graph 1: levels of Diazinon pre and post using the Clear Dip system. Stage 3 represents water exiting the system.

The project has now undergone 18 treatment trials (see Graph 1), with results showing consistent and highly effective removal of diazinon (to an average of >99.9% removed), with an auditable and repeatable treatment process. However, there remained uncertainty from the developers

about what regulatory hurdles need to be cleared and what is required to satisfy requirements from the Environment Agency (EA) and its devolved equivalents.

Picture 9: a selection of stakeholders, including developers of Clear Dip Ruth Clements (far right) and Roland Bonney (second from right) following the sheep dip roundtable.

To facilitate progress and collaboration between the Clear Dip team and the Environment Agency (and its devolved bodies), we convened and hosted 19 stakeholders at an event in Committee Room G in the House of Lords on Tuesday 21st July, including Chief Scientific Advisor from the EA, Dr Bradburne, representation from Natural Resources Wales, as well as Defra and VMD representation.

The roundtable involved a short summary of the novel technology followed by a discussion of what is needed now to overcome regulatory barriers and enable deployment of the technology. The result by the end of the meeting was a roadmap with clearer actions and next steps for both

the developers and the regulators. We now await further developments and hopefully deployment of the new technology in the not-too-distant future.

PET SMUGGLING BILL

The 'Pet Smuggling Bill', now formally the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025, was a Private Members' Bill originating in the House of Commons in October 2024. The Bill was drafted amidst growing concerns about the unregulated movement of dogs and cats into the country to then be sold commercially, under the guise of 'non-commercial' movement. To demonstrate the scale of such illegal trade, in 2023 over 500 landings of dogs and cats were intercepted at the Port of Dover and found to be non-compliant with import requirements (116 of which were found to be too young). These figures likely capture a small proportion of animals being smuggled into the country.

Therefore, the Bill was drafted to essentially crack-down on these illegal movements by introducing an enabling power to prohibit import of puppies and kittens under 6 months and heavily pregnant or mutilated dogs and cats. It also amends the rules that govern non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets to prevent the exploitation of non-commercial routes for commercial purposes. The Bill was taken through the Commons by Dr Danny Chambers MP, a Liverpool graduate vet whom Lord Trees taught, and through the Lords by Lord Trees. The passage of the Bill was an uncomplicated one, with no tabled amendments in either House, the Bill had its 3rd reading on 21st November 2025 and received Royal Assent on 2nd December 2025. If only it was always that easy!

Picture 10: Lord Trees and Danny Chambers after the Second Reading of the Bill in the Lords

Following Royal Assent and the enactment of the Bill, the next stage will be secondary legislation to bring in the intended restrictions on imports. This is now in the hands of Defra officials and parliamentary time. Hopefully it remains a priority for this Labour Government, especially given its specific mention in the Animal Welfare Strategy that was published in late December, with the following actions listed in relation to the Act:

Picture 11: Lord Trees and Baroness Hayman before the Third Reading of the Bill in the Lords

- Deliver the measures in the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Act 2025 to close loopholes in our pet travel rules.
- Develop secondary legislation to tackle low-welfare imports. As part of this, we will work closely with enforcement bodies and stakeholders to develop appropriate exemptions and robust enforcement processes.
- Work with enforcement agencies to strengthen existing enforcement of our pet travel rules and facilitate improved intelligence sharing between agencies.

When quarantine was replaced by rabies vaccinations in 2000, there were fewer than 8,000 dogs moving non-commercially into the UK; by 2024, there were 368,000 dogs moving. Many of them were not day trippers but one-way trippers: illegally imported dogs that were poorly bred, poorly kept, unsocialised and vulnerable to ill health. In 2025, the PDSA estimated that 21,000 dogs were imported with cropped ears, a mutilation that is illegal in this country. In 2023, Cats Protection estimated that 65,000 cats had been imported, many of which had been declawed—another illegal process in the UK.

This Bill will bring these practices to an end. It closes a loophole in pet travel rules that have been exploited for profit and introduces a proportionate limit on the number of pets that can be brought in during a single non-commercial movement. It makes it harder for unscrupulous individuals to abuse the system. The Bill also grants the Government powers to introduce secondary legislation to restrict low-welfare imports, by prohibiting the import of puppies and kittens under six months of age and restricting the import of heavily pregnant animals and of pets that have been subject to mutilation, such as ear cropping in dogs and declawing in cats.

Lord Trees, 3rd Reading of the Puppy Smuggling Bill, 21st November 2025

ENDEMIC DISEASE – BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

The Labour party remains committed to fulfilling the previous Government's aim of achieving Officially Tuberculosis Free (OTF) status for England by 2038. The approach to tackling this endemic disease has so far involved ending the badger cull and moving towards badger vaccination, alongside supporting efforts to have a deployable cattle vaccination alongside a DIVA test.

In September 2025, Defra published an update to the 2018 Godfray report. The report discussed the evidence coming from novel whole genome sequencing techniques that further highlighted cattle-cattle transmission as the predominant route of transmission, with some role for badger-cattle transmission (supporting the need for badger vaccination efforts). The updated review also strongly emphasised the need to allow farmers to take ownership of disease control and to use more sensitive tests, in addition to interferon gamma, such as antibody detection assays like the IDEXX and the Enferplex tests, to manage out persistently infected cows from their herd. This could be done at the end of a milking cycle without mandated culling, minimising disruptions to farmers who are trying to meet a milk contract. The review also gave a roadmap for cattle vaccine deployment that would make it available in 2029.

The Government didn't formally respond to this review. However, mid-June 2026 saw the publication of a new Bovine TB control strategy for England by the Steering Group of the Bovine TB Partnership for England. The steering group is composed of a variety of experts and important stakeholders including farming representatives, academics, sector representatives and Government officials from Defra and the APHA.

The new control strategy marks a significant step-change in the battle against bTB in this country. The strategy emphasises the need to focus control efforts on cattle, use proportionate and evidence-based measures and empower farmers to take ownership of bTB control.

The main areas of action largely reflect many of those in the Godfray review, as well as areas that for many years private vets and farmers have been calling for. These include strengthening cattle-focused disease control, by permitting use of ancillary tests, as well as by increasing use of herd-level risk scores and making TB data more accessible, amongst various other measures. The introduction of cattle vaccination by 2030 remains part of the strategy. The strategy also discusses action beyond cattle, including increased surveillance in wildlife, increased biosecurity measures

and badger vaccination use in high-priority areas, with impacts and cost-effectiveness measured to assess whether this is indeed an effective method of disease control. The strategy calls for a new governance model with the creation of a joint industry-Government Strategy Board to ensure action at multiple levels is joined up.

The VPRF were delighted to see many of these recommendations and hope that they are taken on by His Majesty's Government in a timely fashion. Following publication of the strategy, Lord Trees had a phone call with Professor James Wood, an epidemiologist, and a meeting with Dr Gwen Reece (President elect of the BVA), both in the Steering Group and heavily involved in the new strategy. Following these meetings, he formulated a Supplementary Oral Question intended to press Defra on the uptake of the strategy.

'My Lords, bovine TB is one of the most serious challenges facing our cattle farmers in England, so I very much welcome the control strategy announced this morning by the Government, which makes a positive step change in the approach to that control. I have not seen the details yet, but will the Minister confirm that it will enable farmers and vets to use new antibody-based sensitivity tests to indicate which of their animals are infected, no matter what the official TB status is? Will they be able to have easier access to data from Defra and will they have the freedom to manage out infection in their herds? If these changes and others that are mentioned are followed, they should help improve animal health and welfare, reduce the stress on farmers from having to cull their cattle at regular intervals, and provide farmers with some welcome light at the end of a very dark tunnel.'

Lord Trees, Supplementary Oral Question, 10th June 2026

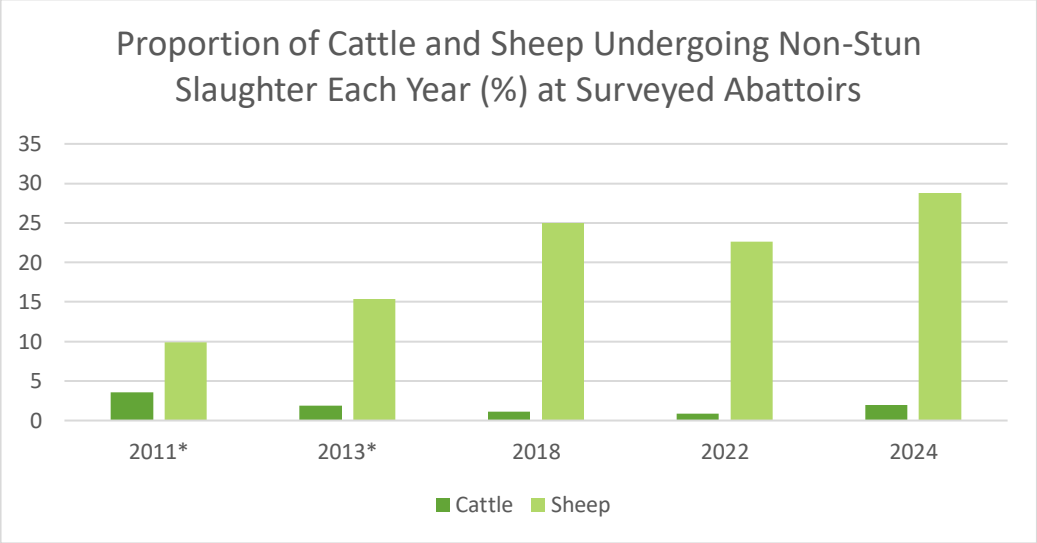
In Minister Baroness Hayman's response, she promised to follow-up on the points raised, and replied in detail to specific questions. The letter summarises the steering group's proposals and whilst it does not commit to implementing them all, it does state that 'the government is now considering the… proposals carefully and at pace'. Because of the letter's significance, we append a full copy in Appendix II.

NON-STUN SLAUGHTER

Non-stun slaughter has been an issue concerning Lord Trees and the VPRF since the first debate under Lord Trees's name in the House of Lords in 2014, through to the development of the

Demonstration of Life (DoL) Protocol launched in 2021. The DoL protocol provides assurance to Muslim consumers that electrical head-only stunning of sheep and goats is compatible with Halal slaughter requirements by showing in a small sample of animals that such stunning does not cause death and is reversible.

Since the launch of the DoL there has been some uptake amongst Halal certifiers, however this remains disappointingly low, with currently only five slaughterhouses thought to be using the DoL, even after the FSA waiving the demonstration fee to remove all barriers to entry. The most recent FSA slaughter survey (carried out for one week across all major slaughterhouse registered in England and Wales in February of that year) was November 2024. It showed an increase in the proportion of sheep killed without stunning in the UK since 2011 and a slight decrease in cattle killed without stunning over the same period (graph 2).



Graph 2: Proportion of sheep and cattle undergoing non-stun slaughter in England and Wales (*denotes sheep and goat data combined)

More recently there has been progress in developing a new initiative, a Halal Export Accreditation Scheme. The scheme, the brainchild of George Eustice, former Defra Secretary of State, aims to promote stunned and Halal-certified British sheep meat to international markets, based on a pre-existing model used in New Zealand. The scheme will incorporate the DoL and be backed by UKAS, a UK-based accreditation body respected globally. The BVA, particularly Ben O'Halloran, have been actively involved in coordinating and bringing together the necessary people.

Following an in-person meeting between Lord Trees and George Eustice and Defra Minister Baroness Hayman and her officials, in which Defra welcomed the scheme, a larger meeting was convened in the House of Lords on the 19th May, 2026, attended by some 19 stakeholders. These included representatives from four Halal certifiers, meat processors in the UK including the British Meat Processing Association (BMPA) and the Association of Independent Meat Suppliers (AIMS), the Humane Slaughter Association, NFU, Awal Fuseini (Halal Sector Senior Manager at the AHDB and an expert on the Halal market), Ben O'Halloran of the BVA, as well as George Eustice and Lord Trees. George Eustice introduced the scheme, which met with a positive response and a decision that BMPA would own the program, in collaboration with other meat processors, and UKAS would provide accreditation. Currently the BMPA and UKAS, with Defra approval, are carrying forward this initiative.

Picture 12: attendees at the Halal Export Accreditation meeting

With respect to Shechita, involving ritual slaughter of certified Kosher meat for Jewish consumers, a particularly publicized paper was published in July 2025 which suggests that onset of unconsciousness occurs rapidly for both stun and non-stun slaughter. The paper is a systematic review of the literature on time to loss of consciousness following stun and non-stun slaughter, concluding that it occurs within 10 seconds for non-stun slaughter. But its authors are not without conflicts of interest. The review has been criticized by experienced UK public health vets such as Lewis Grant. He wrote in the Vet Record how 'many mature bovids [he has] …seen slaughtered without stunning have taken some considerable time to lose consciousness, spending time in observable distress.' Moreover, Professor Troy Gibson (now at the RVC, formerly at Massey University, New Zealand) has done pioneering neurophysiological studies in cattle which suggest that loss of consciousness and insensibility takes much longer for non-stun than pre-stun slaughter. Interestingly, many of Troy's studies were not included in the systematic review.

The Humane Slaughter Association facilitated a discussion with Shechita UK on July 1st, 2026, which Martha attended. It brought together prominent scientists from across the world (the USA and Canada) as well as the UK, to present their work, including multiple authors on the paper mentioned above, such as first author Dr Jacob Hascalovici, as well as Professor Troy Gibson.

THE VETERINARY INDUSTRY PROJECT

As described in last year's report, In July 2025 the economic consultancy, BiGGAR Economics, was commissioned to determine estimates of the economic contribution of the veterinary sector in its widest sense, in terms of Gross Value Added to the UK economy. The number of people employed through the industry, estimates of the value to human wellbeing, and other economic benefits were also estimated.

The study was funded by VPRF surplus funds accrued over 12 years and cost a total of £54,000. The report was received in January 2026 and launched in an event in the House of Lords on 20th January 2026, attended by some 50 guests representing key stakeholders in the vet industry. In an address welcoming the report, Defra Minister Baroness Hayman said: "We support your report and its findings, I think it's very interesting and will help me, as the Minister, as we move forward.".

Picture 13: the Attlee Room with attendees of the launch of the value of the veterinary industry report

Picture 14: Baroness Hayman speaking at the veterinary industry report launch

Whilst figures for the turnover of vet practices have been available, e.g. an Office for National Statistics figure of £6.7 billion for 2024, to our knowledge our report is the first ever estimate of the full economic contribution of the full veterinary sector to the UK economy. It is timely and

useful in the light of both the CMA review and of the consideration and necessity of new legislation for the vet sector, outlined in the Government white paper, published in July 2026. The report also highlights the wide range of veterinary activities which exist and will be useful to inform career opportunities for vets and allied veterinary professionals.

A summary of the report's key results is shown in Figure 4. The report is freely available on the VPRF website.

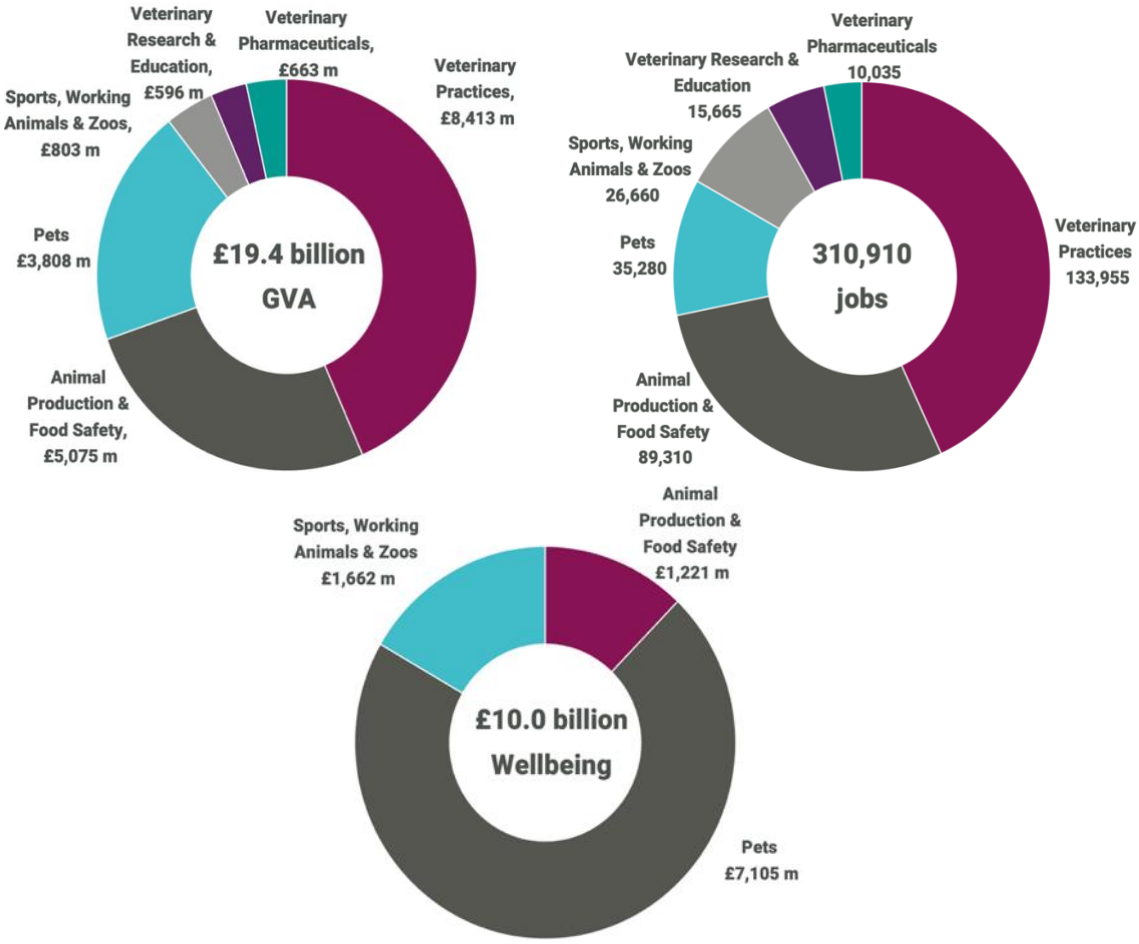


Figure 6: the headline figures from the report

Contingency values:

In addition, the sector also prevents epidemic outbreaks of disease, which could have devastating economic costs, potentially leading to culling of 1.9 million animals* and resulting in £1.6 billion in losses* and also potentially huge negative economic impacts from infectious human diseases.

*From the National Risk Register, 2025

VETERINARY LEGISLATION

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 is arguably one of the most significant pieces of animal welfare legislation in UK history. Although it has served the veterinary profession well, it is now badly out of date and does not reflect or regulate the wider veterinary sector with the growth of allied professions, the widespread ownership of veterinary practices by non-MRCVSs, and modern regulatory practices.

Following years of active campaigning and lobbying by the RCVS, BVA, parliamentarians and others, and with the enthusiastic support of the Defra Minister since the Labour Government came to power in 2024, His Majesty's Government mounted a public consultation on new legislative reform which closed in March 2026 and subsequently published its white paper in July 2026.

The draft recommendations include areas that will have universal support, such as the regulation of all veterinary professionals including protection of the title veterinary nurse, and regulation of some allied veterinary professionals; the regulation of all veterinary and animal healthcare businesses; a modernised fitness to practice system; and support for consumers.

However, some areas remain to be determined. The white paper states that 'having reviewed the consultation responses and had extensive discussions with the RCVS, the CMA and other stakeholders… there are benefits to keeping professional leadership and regulation within one

Picture 15: the three vets in Parliament (Danny Chambers MP, centre left, Neil Hudson MP, centre, and Lord Trees, centre right) and other attendees at a parliamentary drop-in in support of VSA reform.

organisation'. But they go on to state that if it becomes apparent that this scope is not manageable for one organisation, separating the professional leadership function from the regulator will be considered.

In order for the regulator to have a name that truly represents its activities, the white paper also suggests that the RCVS considers asking for a name change when working with the Privy Council on a renewed Royal Charter. With reference to the scope of the regulator, the white paper allows for the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to provide '*strategic steers'* to the regulator. It goes on to say this will '*support the regulator to, where appropriate, take account of government priorities*'.

Clearly there needs to be considerable further discussion within the veterinary profession and between the RCVS and the BVA, both with each other and with Defra. It will be crucial that the profession reaches a mutually aligned position that Defra can support. Notwithstanding that we now have a new Prime Minister, doubtless with his own heavy legislative program, we hope that legislation will feature in the next King's Speech in the summer of 2027. We have already had, and will continue to have, frequent ad hoc meetings with Baroness Hayman and other stakeholders to assist and help ensure the new legislation not only reaches the statute book, but that it is fair, not unduly burdensome, free from unintended consequences, and which safeguards animal welfare, protects consumers and enhances the status of not only vets but the whole veterinary team.

80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

12th June 2026 marked a cause for celebration – eight decades of Sandy, Professor the Lord Trees. To celebrate, we held a dinner in the Peers Dining Room and invited all seven of the interns, alongside Frances, Lady Trees and Danny Chambers MP. Amazingly, all of the interns were able to attend, with journeys made from far-flung corners of the UK and also, in the case of Harriet, from Australia! We celebrated appropriately with dinner, drinks, and even a post-dinner private tour of the Commons chamber.

Picture 16: Lord and Lady Trees and the previous PVIs, as well as Danny Chambers MP, celebrating the Lord Trees's 80th with a pre-dinner drink.

COMPANY INFORMATION

Name - Veterinary Policy Research Foundation

Correspondence Address - Office of Lord Trees, House of Lords, London, SW1A 0PW

Registered Company Address – VPRF, 7 Mansfield Street, London, W1G 9NQ

Company Number - 8680372

Telephone - 0207 219 7294

Website - www.vprf.co.uk

Twitter - @vet_policy

CONTACT INFORMATION

Martha Rushbrooke
Tel 020 7219 7294
Email rushbrookem@parliament.uk

Lord Trees
Tel 020 7219 7278
Email treesa@parliament.uk

PARLIAMENTARY VETERINARY INTERN BIOGRAPHY

Martha Rushbrooke

Martha graduated from the University of Cambridge with a degree in Psychology in 2022 and Veterinary Medicine in 2025. Before starting at vet school, Martha worked as a researcher in the Institute of Zoology, in ZSL London Zoo, researching the IUCN conservation status of various species of swallowtail butterfly. As a veterinary student, Martha had a keen interest in veterinary public health and the One Health concept. She was on the University One Health Committee for two consecutive years, with responsibilities including reaching out to different speakers and running and regularly updating the social media page. Martha also played tennis for the university, captaining the second team before earning a blue in her fourth year, then subsequently taking up real tennis and playing for the university first team to secure a comfortable varsity win in her final year. Martha also contributed to college life through her role on the JCR Committee and by regularly playing for the college in netball and women's football. After graduating, Martha travelled in South America for three months (including hiking to Machu Picchu) before starting the role as Parliamentary Veterinary Intern. Alongside the internship, Martha has been volunteering with the Blue Cross and Streetvet as well as tutoring.

THE VPRF WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Another responsibility of the VPRF intern involves keeping the VPRF website and X up to date. The website is regularly updated to include new or revised publications, including articles, such as the Vetsminster column in the Vet Record, briefings, fact files and the annual reports. The Vet Industry report was also posted onto the website.

Wix, the web development platform used for the website, gives insights into engagement with and traffic on the site. In the year running from September 2025-26, the VPRF website had 1910 visitors, up 27% from the previous period. Hopefully we can continue to increase engagement. We also regularly receive enquiries via our website into opportunities with the VPRF, whether that be EMS opportunities or enquiries into the role of intern.

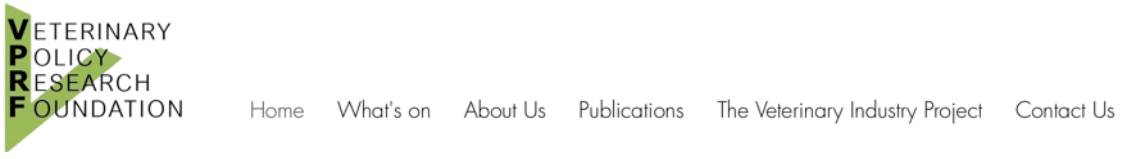


Figure 7: the VPRF website - main banner

APPENDIX I

OTHER BUSINESS (OCT 2025 -SEP 2026)

KEYNOTES, PRESENTATIONS, CHAIRING, PANELS AND EVENTS HOSTED

AJT unless initials indicate otherwise

DATE	ORGANISATION	DETAILS
20/10/2025	BVA	Vet Record Senior Clinical Research Fellow editor interview
21/10/2025	LSTM Lunch	Campaign discussion
04/11/2025	APGAW	Enforcement report meeting
18/11/2025	IHA Tool launch (APGAW)	Launch of new innate health assessment tool to tackle extreme conformation
17/12/2025	APPG for food security and biosecurity	Meeting on 'the state of the UK's biosecurity'
20/01/2026	Launch of Vet Industry project	Launch of report: 'The Value of the Veterinary Industry to the UK Economy' (BIGGAR Economics) - over 50 attendees
20/01/2026	Vet Industry launch dinner	Dinner in Peers Dining Room following launch
28/01/2026	APGAW AGM	AGM and talk from Professor Richard Bennett on welfare policy assessment tool
04/02/2026	Malaria & NTDs AGM	AGM
18/03/2026	Oxford MSc in International Health and Tropical Medicine	Student presentations
20/04/2026	Vet Sustain Parliamentary reception	Reception to celebrate the recently launched roundtable
19/05/2026	Various stakeholders related to Halal meat	Meeting regarding the Halal Export Accreditation Scheme
20/05/2026	APGAW	Joint with APPG for Zoos and Aquariums - meeting on enforcement* PVI attended
20/05/2026	Vet Record	Editorial Board meeting - chair
04/06/2026	AMTRA	Summer event and awards ceremony for SQPs
23/06/2026	20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Speech about disability and its relation to NTDs
30/06/2026	Ruminant Responsible Antibiotic Stewardship Roadmap	Welcome speech at the RCVS
01/07/2026	APPGAW	Presentations and roundtable discussion on summer feeding wild birds and trichomonosis risk
01/07/2026	APPGAW	Magazine-type presentations on three different welfare issues (labelling, fast-growing chicken, animals abroad act)
02/07/2026	Companion Animal Sector Council annual forum	Welcome speech
15/07/2026	APPG for Malaria and NTDs	EGM
16/07/2026	Veterinary Marketing Association	Debate day on sustainability
21/07/2026	Clear Dip UK	Roundtable to discuss innovation in sheep dip disposal

AD HOC MEETINGS

AJT unless initials indicate otherwise

DATE	ORGANISATION	DETAILS
13/10/2025	APGAW	Catch up with Marisa Heath
14/10/2025	PSTIF	Meeting with William Duncan to discuss website and grants
16/10/2025	BiGGAR	Discussion of BiGGAR report with Graeme Blackett
23/10/2025	BiGGAR	Discussion of BiGGAR report with Graeme Blackett
28/10/2025	BVA	Meeting new BVA Junior Vice President Gwen Rees
30/10/2025	BiGGAR	Discussing report with FS
03/11/2025	APGAW	Pre-enforcement meeting catch-up with Marisa Heath
10/11/2025	BiGGAR	Discussion of BiGGAR report with Graeme Blackett
11/11/2025	Assistance Dogs UK	Meeting to discuss current position & issues facing ADUK (Vicky Worthington)
13/11/2025	APGAW	Catch up with Marisa Heath
17/11/2025	Vet Record	Editorial board meeting
18/11/2025	BiGGAR	Discussing current draft of report with FS
19/11/2025	Unlimit Health	Meeting Professor Samba Sow
25/11/2025	AMS Mentorship	Jake Thompson mentor meeting
25/11/2025	Paul Higgs, CVS	Meeting about the CMA
26/11/2025	Dick Sibley	Update on bTB policy
02/12/2025	Debbie Archer UoL	Discussion of veterinary research
02/12/2025	Douglas & Pippa Hutchison	Annual report discussion
03/12/2025	APPG for NTDs and Malaria	Update with other co-chairs
03/12/2025	NALA Foundation	Discussion regarding tackling NTDs through behavioural change
03/12/2025	PSTIF	Grant applications update
04/12/2025	AMS mentorship programme	Mentor meeting with Luigi Sedda
10/12/2025	PSTIF trustees meeting	Major focus on grant approvals
16/12/2025	BiGGAR	Meet Graeme to discuss timeline for report
18/12/2025	BiGGAR	Meeting about finalising dates and details of final draft
27/01/2026	RCVS - Ben Myring	Meeting regarding VSA reform briefing pre-consultation launch
28/01/2026	Lord Simon McDonald	Meeting with Master of Christ's College & member of University Council regarding potential closure of Cambridge Vet School
03/02/2026	Baroness Sally Morgan	Meeting with Master of Fitzwilliam College & member of University Council regarding potential closure of Cambridge Vet School
04/02/2026	Val Summers and Helmut Ehall	Discussion of protest action outside life sciences facilities
05/02/2026	Marisa Heath	Discussion of potential upcoming work-streams for APGAW
05/02/2026	Heather Hancock	Meeting with Master of St John's College & member of University Council regarding potential closure of Cambridge Vet School
05/02/2026	Vet Record	Judging for Vet Record Impact Award
10/02/2026	Awal Fuseini, AHDB	Discussion of novel stunning methods
11/02/2026	Troy Gibson, RVC	Discussion of non-stun slaughter and recent publications

12/02/2026	Jim Connolly	Meeting with BBC journalist to discuss Value of the Vet Industry project
23/02/2026	BVA, HFA, George Eustice	Halal Export Accreditation Scheme Discussion
24/02/2026	William Duncan, PSTIF	Discussion of grant awarding
25/02/2026	Dr Fiona Shuttleworth	Discussion of CMA issue regarding insurance and direct payment schemes
25/02/2026	Rob Williams, BVA President	Discussion of CMA issue regarding insurance and direct payment schemes
25/02/2026	George Eustice	Discussion of Halal Export Accreditation Scheme
04/03/2026	Amanda Boag and Katie Mantell, RCVS Knowledge	Discussion of VSA reform
05/03/2026	David Simpson, PetPlan	Discussion of funding opportunities
17/03/2026	Malcolm Morley and Kim Ayling, World Horse Welfare	Discussion of issues surrounding seizure and enforcement
19/03/2026	Val Summers and Helmut Ehall	Discussion of the transparency gap and its implications
24/03/2026	APGAW	Meeting to discuss work stream
26/03/2026	AVTRW representatives	Meeting regarding AVTRW history prior to conference in September
16/04/2026	Laura Higham, David Black (Vet Sustain)	Planning for Vet Sustain event next Tuesday
16/04/2026	Jieun Lee, Helena Legido-Quigley - Imperial	Meeting regarding UK's contribution to health globally
20/04/2026	AMS Mentorship	Jake Thompson mentor meeting
22/04/2026	RCVS Vice President - Tim Hutchinson	Meeting regarding VSA reform and the future structure of the RCVS
28/04/2026	Helen McNally and Ben Parker - Battersea	Cost of Cute campaign and further ideas
28/04/2026	Hereditary peers inc Lord Manscroft, Lord Ashcombe	Leaving drinks
28/04/2026	Lord Don Curry of Kirkhale	Post dinner drink
29/04/2026	Martha Varney co-chair of APPG	Malaria/NTDs workstream
29/04/2026	AMS mentorship programme	Meet Luigi Sedda to discuss progress
30/04/2026	APGAW	Meet Marisa to discuss work stream
30/04/2026	Ben Myring RCVS	Vet legislation informal discussion
30/04/2026	Gary England University of Nottingham	Discussion re issues raised by Jake Thompson, mentee
18/05/2026	AMS Mentorship	Jake Thompson mentor meeting

19/05/2026	VMD (Francine Fernandez & Jodie Perrett)	Meeting to discuss VMD's work on parasiticides
19/05/2026	Veterinary Medicines Working Group	Meeting to discuss progress
19/05/2026	NOAH representatives	Meeting to discuss parasiticides
09/06/2026	bTB steering group - Gwen Rees	Meeting to discuss possible oral q
09/06/2026	APGAW	Meeting Marisa Heath to discuss future plans
09/06/2026	James Wood	Telephone call to discuss bTB strategy
09/06/2026	Dick Sibley	Telephone call to discuss bTB strategy
10/06/2026	Martha Varney - APPG for NTDs and Malaria	Meeting to discuss work stream and replacing chair
16/06/2026	Alistair Taylor ECC Clerk	Phone call to discuss parasiticide inquiry and clarify a few points
18/06/2026	Laurent Fraisse, DNDi, Research and Development Director	Meeting to discuss recent DNDi work and success stories
24/06/2026	Simon King, Over the Counter	Interview with journalist about the role of SQPs
25/06/2026	Ruth Clements, Roland Bonney, Bimeda, LSSC	Briefing regarding clear dip - new disposal method
25/06/2026	George Eustice	Phone call to discuss Halal Export Accreditation scheme
07/07/2026	John Mackinnon, Mike Wijnberg	Meeting about pig stunning and farrowing crates
08/07/2026	VMA	Briefing before debate day and lunch
09/07/2026	Jolyon Medlock, Rachel Pudney	Meeting about ticks on Dartmoor and other public health threats from vector-borne disease
23/07/2026	Martha Varney, James LaCourse	Meeting to discuss potential visit of students from the LSTM
03/09/2026	Earl of Kinnoull	Meeting to discuss crossbench matters
08/09/2026	APGAW	Meeting to discuss work stream
08/09/2026	Paul Higgs, Gudrun Ravetz	Meeting to discuss the VSA reform
09/09/2026	Stuart Reid	Meeting
15/09/2026	Martha Varney	Meeting to discuss work-stream for APPG for Malaria and NTDs

DINNERS/LUNCHES/RECEPTIONS ATTENDED

AJT unless initials indicate otherwise

DATE	EVENT
14/10/2025	LSTM Dinner
21/10/2025	Intern handover dinner
22/10/2025	Annual dinner, VPRF
28/10/2025	Showcasing Scotland drinks

05/11/2025	RCVS reception and dinner
18/11/2025	RCVS President for dinner (Tim Parkin)
19/11/2025	RCVS Past Presidents lunch
08/12/2025	Crossbench party
09/12/2025	Christmas Parliamentary Science event
09/12/2025	Parliamentary Farmer's Club dinner
16/12/2025	BVA President for dinner (Rob Williams)
04/02/2026	BVA Dinner
11/02/2026	Dinner with Stuart Reid, principal of the RVC
18/03/2026	MMV dinner
24/03/2026	Dinner with Neil Watt - bTB discussion
25/03/2026	RVC Dinner
20/04/2026	Parliamentary Farmer's Club dinner
29/04/2026	Lunch with Dr Jonathan Statham (AHWB)
20/05/2026	Dinner after Vet Record editorial board meeting
10/06/2026	AJT birthday dinner with past interns
17/06/2026	Dinner with Dick Sibley (private vet)
19/06/2026	Royal Highland Show, including visit to Moredun tent
30/06/2026	Parliamentary and Scientific Committee Annual Lunch
30/06/2026	Drinks with Martha's parents and dinner at the Farmers Club
03/07/2026	RCVS day
14/07/2026	Scottish Peers drinks
14/07/2026	Dinner with Danny Chambers MP
15/07/2026	Dinner with Charles Kinnoull
16/07/2026	Lunch following VMA debate day
21/07/2026	Dinner with Stuart Reid, principal of the RVC
22/07/2026	Dinner with Lord Best
02/09/2026	Dinner with Danielle Greenberg (vet and RCVS Council member)
08/09/2026	BVA President for dinner (Gwen Rees)
09/09/2026	RCVS President for dinner (Tim Hutchinson)

EVENTS ATTENDED

AJT unless initials indicate otherwise

DATE	EVENT
27/11/2025	Battersea roundtable on extreme conformation *PVI attended
17/12/2025	APPG for food security and biosecurity meeting on 'the state of the UK's biosecurity'
03/03/2026	APPG for Science and Technology in Agriculture AGM and presentation from Baroness Batters
04/03/2026	Drop-in for the Animals (Low-Welfare Activities Abroad) Act and Downing Street photo opportunity
17/03/2026	Demos sustainable farming report launch
18/03/2026	Lord Curry retirement tea
24/03/2026	Four Paws reception to celebrate the Animal Welfare Strategy

24/03/2026	APPG for the UN Global Goals briefing on international development priorities
14/04/2026	Retirement reception for Lord Curry of Kirkhale
14/04/2026	Parliamentary reception on One Medicine
19/05/2026	Regenerative agriculture event
02/06/2026	FSA's Summer Parliamentary reception
09/06/2026	Science Media Centre News Briefing (Martha attended) on new Bovine TB strategy for England
17/06/2026	Parliamentary Drop-In on the huge economic potential of moving away from animal testing, toward modern non-animal research
24/06/2026	VSA reform event
01/07/2026	Shechita UK discussion roundtable *PVI attended
15/09/2026	Pangolin Project Reception

Non-Parliamentary Committees and Other Roles October 2025-September 2026

ORGANISATION	ROLE (AJT unless otherwise indicated)
Foundation for Science and Technology	Council Member
PSTIF	Chair - a charitable body which funds the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and potentially other activities to promote, communicate and stimulate scientific research in a range of activities informing policy.
The Blue Cross	Goodwill Ambassador
The Veterinary Record and In Practice (BMJ Publications)	Chief Veterinary Advisor, Editorial Board Chair
Vet Sustain	Ambassador

Picture 17: Lord Trees and others outside Downing Street supporting the Animals (Low Welfare Activities Abroad) Act 2023

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM BARONESS HAYMAN, 24TH JULY

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Baroness Hayman of Ullock
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: +44 (0) 3459 335577
E: correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk
W: gov.uk/defra

Lord Trees
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW
contactholmember@parliament.uk

Our ref: PO2026/13364/EG

24 July 2026

Dear Sandy,

Thank you for your thoughtful contribution on 10 June in the House of Lords during the farming and food production debate, and for your welcome support for the bovine Tuberculosis (TB) control strategy, as recommended by the Steering Group of the Bovine TB Partnership and published recently on the government industry bovine TB Hub website.

You asked for confirmation on two specific points, to which I promised to write to you with further information. In particular, you sought clarification as to whether:

- this will enable farmers and veterinarians to use new antibody-based sensitivity tests to indicate which animals may be infected, regardless of the herd's official TB status; and
- farmers and their veterinarians will have easier access to data from Defra, alongside greater freedom to manage infection within their herds.

To answer your questions in turn, the strategy recommends allowing access to privately funded ancillary TB antibody diagnostic tests in cattle – not only during TB breakdowns (where this is already possible subject to prior permission from the Animal and Plant Health Agency), but also in Officially Bovine TB-Free (OTF) herds to help identify infection earlier or support risk-based decision-making.

On access to data, the strategy recognises that the farming industry requires stronger support to take greater ownership of disease management, including improved access to TB data as well as ancillary testing. It therefore makes a number of recommendations in this area, including:

- delivering a plan for an interactive platform where farmers and vets can see their TB data;
- making sure farmers and other buyers have access to relevant TB data at the point of sale; and
- to inform all farmers of their APHA herd-level risk score for TB, and to eventually make this information available at point of sale to help inform buying decisions by displaying the herd risk status of all the farms a particular animal has been part of.

Importantly, it also recommends that cattle identified as having a higher likelihood of TB should be subject to movement restrictions and a managed exit from the herd, including those positive to validated non-statutory tests. It proposes that cattle in this category should be restricted to the farm until sent directly to slaughter and should be managed out of the herd within an appropriate length of time (for example 12 months). It also recommends wider use of the blood gamma interferon test in breakdown herds, again with the aim of increasing testing sensitivity.

Taken together, the recommended strategy sets out a clear direction for delivery: reducing TB in cattle, improving early detection, empowering farmers and veterinarians to manage disease risk, strengthening biosecurity, and maintaining a firm focus on the long-term prize of achieving Officially Bovine TB-Free status for England by 2038.

Like you, I believe this approach will provide welcome light and help to lift the shadow that this devastating disease has cast over farming families. The government is now considering the Steering Group's proposals carefully and at pace.

Should it be helpful, I would also be very pleased to facilitate a meeting with the UK Chief Veterinary Officer or Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, so that you may discuss the recommendations of the strategy in greater detail.

Yours sincerely,

BARONESS HAYMAN OF ULLOCK