

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-333
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/00440/15

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

8 July 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your e-mail of 10 June, which was forwarded to me via the Committee Business Manager, in respect of petition P-04-333 'Stop neglect and abandonment of horses and ponies by enforcement of micro-chipping laws'.

As you have identified, the introduction of the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 has provided enforcement authorities with additional tools to address the issues of abandonment of horses and ponies across Wales. There was, as part of the Bill process, a public consultation on the legal framework available to enforcement authorities tasked with dealing with fly grazing and abandonment issues. A copy of the summary of responses is enclosed for information and it may be accessed from the Welsh Government website at:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/environmentandcountryside/fly-grazing-consultation/>

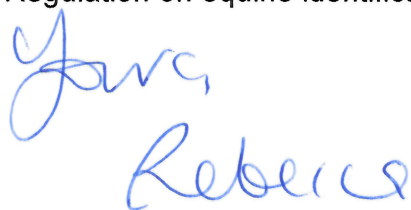
Many of the consultation responses included suggestions on how fly grazing and abandonment could be tackled, enforcement of the equine identification regulations being one such suggestion. In capturing the helpful ideas we received an equine action plan was developed to sit alongside the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014. The action plan provides a holistic approach to many of the issues raised and, when used alongside the Act, aims to provide enforcement authorities and all those involved in equine management with the relevant tools to deal with the issue of fly grazing and abandonment. A copy may be found at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/horses/control-horses-wales-act/>

The petition also sought greater enforcement of the micro-chipping laws to deal with the issues of neglect and abandonment. Equine identification is an issue that came to the fore in 2013 when the European Commission issued a 5 point plan in response to horse meat contamination within the human food chain. The plan included actions to tighten the requirements on equine identification and place a mandatory requirement for all Member States to record horse passports in a central national database.

A vote by EU Member States on 11 September 2014 resulted in the European Commission Regulation 504/2008 on equine identification being repealed and replaced. The new regulation will come into force on 1 January 2016 with the exception of the requirement for Member States to operate a central equine database which comes into force on 1 July 2016 for those Member States who do not currently have a database in place.

The Welsh Government will be holding a public consultation on transposing the EU Regulation on equine identification into domestic legislation later this year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the name 'Rebecca' written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food