

# Animal Disease



## Introduction

What do we think of when we hear the word animal disease? For most of us it is probably Bird Flu, Foot and Mouth or maybe a sick animal. None of the above would be wrong, but hopefully we can give you a bit more information that helps to explain it in a local context.

## Interesting Facts

To understand animal disease one of the first things you need to know is the difference between zoonotic and non-zoonotic

**Zoonotic diseases** = Diseases that are naturally transmissible from animals to humans

**Non-Zoonotic** = Diseases that are not naturally transmissible from animals to humans

It can be hard to remember which way round these are, but some people like to consider that zoos have humans and animals present, therefore remembering that zoonotic passes from animals to humans.

## Local Risk Rating


Animal Disease is rated as '**High**' on our Community Risk Register.

Impact	Moderate (3)	Likelihood	Medium (3)	Rating	High
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## What is it?

Some examples of Zoonotic and non-Zoonotic diseases can be seen below. It is important to remember that different diseases will transmit through different animals and via different pathways, with no one disease the same as another.



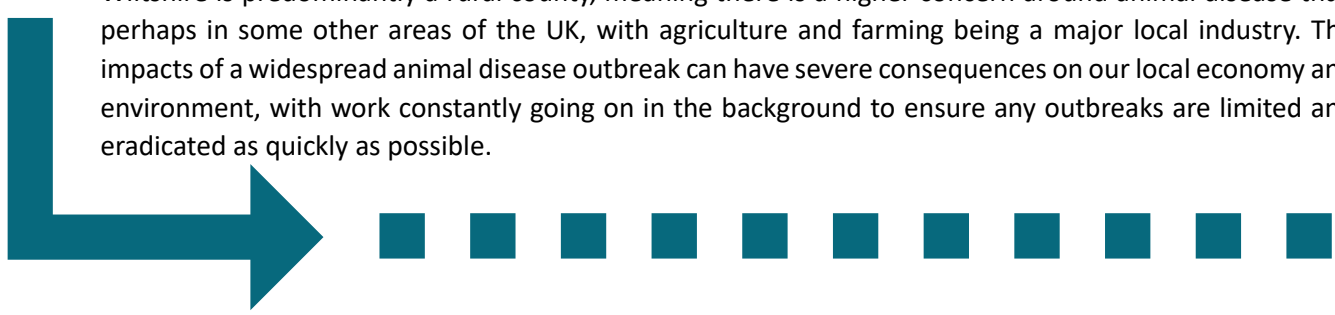
Zoonotic Disease	Non Zoonotic
Anthrax	Blue Tongue
Bird Flu	Foot and Mouth
Bovine TB	Lumpy Skin Disease
Ebola	Warble Fly
Rabies	
West Nile Fever	
Zika Virus	

In addition, we have diseases that are endemic or exotic:

**Endemic** = Already present in the UK

**Exotic** = Not normally present in the UK

Finally, we have diseases known as notifiable – this basically means they are animal diseases that you are legally obliged to officially report to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), even if you only suspect an animal may be affected (more information on this can be found here; [Notifiable diseases in animals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)).



Wiltshire is predominantly a rural county, meaning there is a higher concern around animal disease than perhaps in some other areas of the UK, with agriculture and farming being a major local industry. The impacts of a widespread animal disease outbreak can have severe consequences on our local economy and environment, with work constantly going on in the background to ensure any outbreaks are limited and eradicated as quickly as possible.



## History

Reading over the diseases above, you may remember a few of them, be that Swine Flu from 2009, Foot and Mouth from 2001 or even Anthrax from 2015. What this shows us is that animal disease will always be present and that we are likely to see further outbreaks in the future.

Some detail on a past example can be seen below:

### Foot and Mouth 2001

Foot and mouth affects cattle and causes blisters under the hooves and inside the mouth alongside possible lameness and problems feeding. It is very infectious, and this prompted the massive cull across the country. Some key points can be seen below:

- First case discovered in an abattoir in Essex in February 2001 with further cases discovered across the country in the same week
- Officially 2000 cases reported
- Each case meant a farm having to cull their cattle and burn the carcasses
- By the last case in September 2001 over 6 million sheep, cattle and pigs had been slaughtered
- Still unknown exactly how the disease entered the UK
- Before 2001 the last major outbreak in the UK was in 1967

### Impact

In addition to the farm animals culled when a case was discovered, animals in the surrounding areas were also affected. Exclusion zones caused large areas of the countryside to be effectively closed off which then had a huge detrimental effect on tourism and many livelihoods. Many who worked in the farming industry had their way of life completely turned upside down notwithstanding the emotional stress of losing animals.

Reforms have been made to reduce the likelihood of Foot and Mouth returning again, such as banning animal feeding on catering waste and increased monitoring of disease outbreaks across the world. In 2007, a further case was confirmed but lessons had been learnt and the impact was greatly reduced due to timely actions on culling and exclusion zones.

It is always said we learn from real life experience and the farming sector has advanced in the following years with improved identification and tracking of animals, contingency planning and advances in disease control. In addition, multi-agency partners now work with animal health experts to plan and exercise outbreak management to make sure we are as ready as we possibly can be.

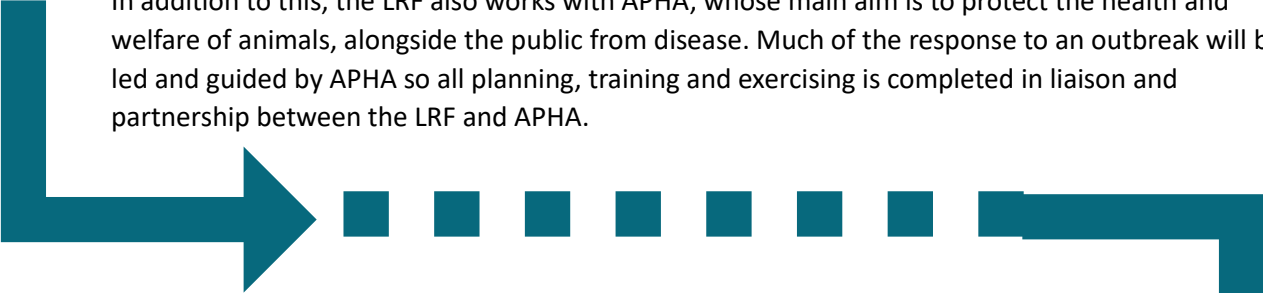
Reference Source: [When foot-and-mouth disease stopped the UK in its tracks - BBC News](#)





## What are we doing about it in the LRF?

As seen above, the LRF works with the Local Authority Animal Health teams on planning, training and exercising around possible outbreaks. Different scenarios are tested depending on the local risks and then recommendations are made to ensure learning is always captured and changes made to procedure. Exercises can take the form of tabletop (paper based) scenario or occasionally larger scale 'live' exercises where a scenario is played out in person with equipment, animals and people.



In addition to this, the LRF also works with APHA, whose main aim is to protect the health and welfare of animals, alongside the public from disease. Much of the response to an outbreak will be led and guided by APHA so all planning, training and exercising is completed in liaison and partnership between the LRF and APHA.

## What can you do?

There's a number of things you could do, these include:

- Be prepared have the telephone number of you power provider easy to hand so you can make that call. All Utilities have a 24-hour operation call line. Look at your local Utility providers website, these are the companies that provide your water, gas and electric. It's much easier to take these new things in when we are not impacted. You will be able to search on your post code and see if there is anything going on in your area.
  - Notifications will show on the website of what is going on in your area.
  - A handheld wind-up torch is inexpensive and during a dark winter night gives you confidence to move around your home.
  - Keep blankets, warm jumpers, and warm clothes easy to hand. Remember your heating may go off and we quite often have winter storms when we have our heating on.
  - If the power outage is prolonged, then a wind-up radio is also a good purchase. Often these have a point where you can plug your mobile phone in to keep the battery topped up.
  - Remember the people around you in your community, it's worth checking on
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