EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL  
(AND BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL)  
ANIMAL DISEASES PLAN  
(PART 2 - Actions within East Sussex County Council)  

Version Control

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Appendices

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1 This part 2 plan has been adapted from the ESCC part of the Animal Diseases Plan 2007, which combined Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) and ESCC actions in one document. The SRF part 1 was reviewed separately and is published at http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/emergencyplanningandcommunitysafety/emergencyplanning/howweplan/plans/animaldiseasesplan.htm

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0 Other relevant documents:

Sussex Resilience Forum Animal Diseases Plan (Part 1)
ESCC Generic Emergency Plan
Sussex Emergency Response and Recovery (SERR) Document
Sussex Resilience Forum Recovery Plan
LACORS Plan http://www.lacors.gov.uk/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?id=20317&authCode= – including the following annexes:

Annex A – Avian Influenza
Annex B – Foot & Mouth
Annex C – Classical Swine Fever
Annex D – Rabies
Annex (draft) – African Horse Sickness

1 Introduction & Scope

1.1 The objective of this part of the plan is to outline the actions needed within East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to support the agreed inter-agency arrangements for an animal disease outbreak.

1.2 These arrangements form part 2 of the multi-agency Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) Animal Diseases Plan and are to be read in conjunction with that plan and with the Defra Plan, the LACORS Plan and any relevant service-specific arrangements of the ESCC Trading Standards Department. The described actions are designed mainly to contain and limit the spread and impact of the disease on communities and businesses in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

1.3 For its actions in terms of responding to a disease outbreak the Trading Standards Department’s actions will be guided by the response structure and strategy put in place by Defra and its Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) and by the accepted local authority response arrangements detailed in the LACORS Plan.

1.4 Wider impacts on communities in Sussex will be addressed through the multi-agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group as detailed in the SRF Animal Diseases Plan (part 1) and the Sussex Emergency Response and Recovery (SERR) Document.

1.5 ESCC Trading Standards provides an animal health service to Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) under a service level agreement. This service includes appropriate response in support of BHCC Trading Standards Officers during an animal disease outbreak in and outside of office hours. Therefore the provisions in this plan extend to an animal disease outbreak affecting Brighton & Hove.

1.6 Business Continuity arrangements for the Trading Standards Department for the duration of the response to an outbreak are not covered in this plan.

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2 LACORS were formerly the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services. LACORS has been replaced by Local Government Regulation.
Consider implications and whether to activate the plan:

Yes

ESCC Emergency Planning (EP) Manager / Duty Officer

No

Out-of-hours: First available of Head of Trading Standards, Deputy Head of Trading Standards, Team Manager Blue, Team Manager Green

ESCC Head of Trading Standards

Defra / AHVLA

Brighton & Hove Trading Standards receive notification

ESCC Head of Trading Standards notifies
- ESCC Animal Health Officers
- Other TS Officers as appropriate
- Brighton & Hove Head of Trading Standards
- Other authorities for mutual aid as required

In office hours: ESCC Trading Standards (TS) Admin. Team

ESCC TS Animal Health Officer

ESCC Emergency Planning support relevant plan actions and notify:

Externally:
- Sussex Police
- Relevant Borough / District Councils and bordering councils emergency planning lead (incl. Brighton & Hove and Kent CC as required)
- East Sussex Fire & Rescue
- Environment Agency
- South East Coast Ambulance Service

Internally:
- Director ETE
- (DEM)s
- Head of Communications

Animal Health Officers
- liaise with AHVLA / LDCC
- implement relevant actions
- notify NFU

Standby / Readiness:
- Emergency Planning inform Director ETE & Departmental Emergency Managers (DEMs)
- TS informs relevant TS Officers and Brighton & Hove City Council Trading Standards
- TS & EP continue to monitor situation

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3 Plan Activation  (see flowchart above – page 3)

3.1 An overview of actions when a disease is suspected are described in the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) Part One of this plan, at section 4 (page 5). The general rule will be that an inter-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) meeting will be called if:
- the suspected disease is zoonotic i.e. can be passed to a human, and
- the Defra view is that the test is likely to be positive.

3.2 Defra will be able to give a good indication as to whether, from their experience and the circumstances at the site, the test is likely to be positive.  

3.3 If it is decided appropriate to call for a meeting of an SCG the Emergency Planning Manager will liaise with the Director of Economy, Transport & Environment (ETE) as corporate resilience lead. If so agreed the actions listed in paragraph 3.7 below will be carried out.

3.4 The Head of Trading Standards will consider the actions at paragraph 4.1 and implement those felt appropriate.

3.5 The timing of the actions below will be dependent upon the circumstances of the incident and as agreed between the Head of Trading Standards and the Emergency Planning Manager.

3.6 The Emergency Planning Manager will liaise with the Director of ETE to identify a designated Strategic Representative to attend /chair the SCG, and a designated officer to act as Emergency Coordinator should the incident escalate.

3.7 Emergency Planning will
- contact the Departmental Emergency Managers, and advise action as at Section 4 below.
- advise the Head of Communications and Democratic Services (for appropriate information of local elected members) of the suspected disease and its implications.
- contact any other county/ borough/ district which may have a border close to the infected place via their Emergency Planning Team / lead.
- If required - open the Council's Emergency Secretariat or Emergency Control Centre in support of the Trading Standards response and to facilitate an efficient ESCC response. There are detailed plans for mobilising and staffing these facilities. The Emergency Planning Manager will advise on the best location and activate the relevant plan.

4 Actions by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Departments

4.1 Economy, Transport & Environment Department (additional)

4.1.2 Trading Standards Animal Health Officers will
- liaise with AHVLA (Defra) to obtain photographs of the scene and lists of farmers with whom to make contact. They should also agree the size and location of Protection and Surveillance zones and minimum standards for their enforcement, including diversion of any footpaths and public rights of way and the impact on highways.
- Arrange with Applications Development Team (see 4.3.1 below) for those zones to be entered onto GIS.
- liaise with the T&E Signshop Coordinator (contact: see Appendix B) on the potential need to quickly construct signs for closure and/or diversion of roads and footpaths. (No templates are required. Wording, colours and sizes can be identified on the day.)

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3 In the case of avian influenza it is expected that initial results take six hours, with confirmation in 18 hours. It would take 2 further days to fully confirm negative results.
4.1.3 **The Head of Trading Standards** will also

- Determine the type of representation required at the AHVLA’s Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) if activated, and will take the following into consideration:
  - The location of the LDCC
  - The location and extent of the affected area
  - The type of disease and expected development of the situation

As a general rule:

**Where the disease outbreak is NOT centred on East Sussex or Brighton & Hove** – representation via a Trading Standards Officer when appropriate.

**Where the disease outbreak is centred on East Sussex or Brighton & Hove** – the Head of Trading Standards will designate an ESCC officer to attend the LDCC when appropriate.

**Note:** Sussex Police would usually send an officer to the LDCC, and this officer could assist with representing issues for other Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) partners including ESCC.

- Contact neighbouring authorities to establish the availability of mutual support. (Contact details are listed in the Generic Emergency Plan Part 2 Appendix B)

**Note:** It is important to avoid committing specialists into jobs that do not require their skills e.g. animal health and/or emergency planning officers. They should be reserved for what they are skilled at.4

- Determine and arrange appropriate representation at a Forward Operating Base (FOB) should this be established.

4.1.5 The **Departmental Emergency Manager (DEM)** will advise Highways, Rights of Way and Countryside Maintenance, Waste Management and the Sign Shop Coordinator of the likelihood of further action (see 4.1.2 above).

- Highways and Countryside Management will liaise with Trading Standards Animal Health Officers on the requirement for closure or diversion of highways or footpaths/rights of way. Then identify sufficient staff to be able to implement and enforce those closures and diversions if required.

- In an avian influenza scenario Waste Management to consult with Director ETE with a view to implementing the enhanced arrangements for collection and disposal of dead birds on ESCC property as detailed in Appendix A. (This will require publication via e-mail and the intranet of a contact number for schools and County Council departments to use should they find a dead bird on their property.)

4.2 **Governance & Community Services Department**

4.2.1 The **Departmental Emergency Manager (DEM)** will advise Communications, Legal Services, Library Services and the Occupational Health and Health & Safety Teams of the potential for actions as listed below:

- The Head of Communications will prepare a Communications strategy in consultation with the Gold Information Group (GIG) if activated (see section 5.1.5 of SRF Part 1). ESCC may nominate a Communications Manager to chair the GIG.

- The Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services will arrange for legal advice on disease management, including closure and/or diversion of rights of way. The designated lawyer will need to liaise with Defra on the regulations issued, and should attend the SCG meeting if called.

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4 Norfolk County Council during their bird flu outbreak in 2006 used Environmental Health Officers for foot patrols and mail drops as it suited their role as regulators.
• The Assistant DEM Library Services to arrange for use of their mobile office as an Incident Post if so required.

4.2.2 A Senior Health & Safety Adviser will (if the disease is zoonotic) assist Trading Standards, Highways and Countryside Management in risk assessments for any of their staff who may have cause to enter the Protection or Surveillance zones, or to use disinfectants.

4.3 Corporate Resources Directorate

4.3.1 The DEM will:

• task the Application Development Team to liaise with Trading Standards Animal Health Officers on the size and location of the Protection and Surveillance zones (see 4.1.2 above), and – if required – with Adult Social Care and Children’s Services (see 4.4 and 4.5 below). The team should then create maps and lists of what is situated within those areas (e.g. roads, schools, communities, farms, country parks, sheltered housing etc.). This should be passed to the nominated Strategic Representative for the information of the SCG and to the Emergency Co-ordinator (see 3.6 above).

• appoint an Incident Finance Manager to monitor all County Council expenditure.

• advise ICT that an Emergency Control Centre may be activated.

IF THE DISEASE IS ZOONOTIC, THE FOLLOWING WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED:

4.4 Adult Social Care Department

The DEM will liaise with the Application Development Team (see 3.5 above) to ascertain which registered care homes or sheltered accommodation may be in the restricted zones, and to advise them of the numbers and potential vulnerabilities of the residents and of any other vulnerable adults of which the department may be aware. DEM will stand by to receive and implement any health or other advice following the SCG meeting.

4.5 Children’s Services Department

The DEM will liaise with the Application Development Team (see 3.5 above) to ascertain which schools and similar establishments (including private schools) may be in the restricted zones, and to advise them of the numbers and potential vulnerabilities of the occupants. They will then stand by to receive and implement any health or other advice following the SCG meeting.

4.6 Public Health (PH) Directorate

The PH Directorate would in liaison with Public Health England (PHE) assess the possible effects of an animal disease, if any, on the health of the population. The Director of Public Health (DPH) will initially lead with PHE within their local authority to respond to these risks. Further escalation would be in line with implementing PHE outbreak control plans.

4.7 Additional Points

4.7.1 The LACORS Plan contains detailed advice for animal health, emergency planning, elected members, communications, highways and rights of way officers.

4.7.2 Defra has a policy for the collection of dead birds. Those that fall within their guidelines will be collected by the Meat & Livestock Commission, supported by RSPCA. Those outside of the guidelines are the responsibility of the owner of the property on which found, unless showing signs of the disease. However, an outbreak of avian influenza could result in
heightened public concern and a wave of demands for the collection of dead birds that Defra may not be able to service. To prepare for this COMT approved a policy in April 2006 for an enhanced collection service. An updated version is attached at Appendix A.

5 Confirmation of Disease

5.1 It is at this point that the Civil Contingencies Committee (COBRA) and the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC) will be activated (see Part One, Para 2.2).

5.2 The actions to be taken in East Sussex following confirmation of the disease will depend upon the decisions made by the SCG and ESCC’s Emergency Co-ordination Centre, and the actions taken prior to and immediately after it. However, the priorities will be to:-

- establish any protection and security zones
- divert any footpaths, rights of way and/or roads as necessary by the construction and erection of signs and the provision of patrols to enforce them
- if appropriate: deploy Incident Control vehicle and Incident Liaison Officer to manage the County Council response at the scene
- implement the communications strategy e.g. establish a Helpline and messages of public reassurance, mail drops etc. in consultation with the multi-agency Gold Information Group.
- establish from the LDCC their meetings schedule (known as ‘battle rhythm’) to ensure coordination with local meetings.

6 Multi-agency co-ordination

6.1 A multi-agency Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC) – including an SCG will be established for those outbreaks with wider implications for the community. This will be at Police Headquarters in Lewes or may in exceptional circumstances be co-located with the ESCC response in one of the venues identified as a County Emergency Control Centre.

6.2 It is likely that the SCG will request a Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC) to provide specialist health and technical advice to the SCG. The STAC will be located in Police HQ in Lewes.

\[5\] For further detail – see the Sussex Resilience Forum Part 1 of this plan.
7 Communications

7.1 Certain diseases – especially those which carry a risk to human health (e.g. avian flu) – will cause great public anxiety. The County Council will demonstrate leadership through a proactive campaign of positive management and regular communication.

7.2 Media demand could be potentially huge, especially with high profile diseases such as foot and mouth or avian influenza. Defra will lead on national media briefings and provide a manager at the LDCC to handle local media enquiries.

7.3 The ESCC Head of Communications will lead the multi-agency Gold Information Group on developing and delivering a local communications strategy, in close liaison with Defra and in consultation with the other agencies involved in the response. A Media Liaison Point near to the ‘Infected Place’ should be considered at an early stage.

7.4 The following points should be noted as they are valuable lessons from other areas, primarily in relation to foot and mouth and avian influenza, but they could be equally important in other diseases, particularly zoonotic.

- Where the countryside is not closed this should be emphasised in any public messages. If areas of countryside are closed alternative locations should be identified and publicised.

- Public Helpline. This should be implemented and published, in support of and in liaison with the Defra helpline. Early discussions will be needed to decide the boundaries and links between the two. The Trading Standards system could be used to provide a Helpline facility, or one of the Contact Centres, or the Emergency Control Centre system. In any case they would need prepared FAQ sheets.

- Website. Needs to be constantly updated.

- Mail drops. Example letters are contained in the LACORS plan. They should be jointly signed by the County Council and Borough/District Chief Executives and/or leaders. Either use personal delivery or through the Borough/District council tax mail system.

- Internal information. All staff (and elected members) to be regularly updated, even if not directly involved, especially those covering the work of those extracted to cover the incident.

8 (Suspected) disease outside East Sussex

8.1 If an outbreak of disease is suspected there will be heightened concern, particularly if in a neighbouring county, but care should be taken to avoid raising alarm unduly. The Head of Trading Standards and the Emergency Planning Manager will discuss and agree an appropriate approach based upon the circumstances.

8.2 The Communications Team should – where appropriate – provide reassurance that the county is unaffected and the countryside remains open for normal business and activities.
9 Post-incident Actions

9.1 As with all major emergencies the co-ordination of recovery activities should be considered at an early stage in the incident. Guidance for organising the recovery phase is available in the SRF Recovery Plan at http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/hr/rdonlyres/f9e56e85-4e52-4efb-a002-c20f7d66528a/0/srfrecoveryplan.pdf.

9.2 However, some specific issues to be considered in relation to animal diseases are:

- the Protection and Surveillance zones may eventually be merged
- the impact on the farming community may be very severe, widespread and long-lasting, and rural businesses may also be disadvantaged in those areas affected by closures and restrictions etc. Economic Development Support may be able to provide advice and assistance to minimise this.
- the Council should be prepared to receive lots of FOI requests at the conclusion of the incident.

9.3 The Head of Trading Standards and the Emergency Planning Manager will discuss and initiate a full inter-agency debrief of the incident at its conclusion, to ensure that lessons learned are captured for future use.

10 Training & Exercising

10.1 Briefing sessions will be held to make relevant staff aware of the provisions in this plan and their potential roles during an outbreak of animal disease.

10.2 It is intended to hold a table-top exercise of this plan in 2013/14, if possible in conjunction with a multi-agency element.

11 List of Acronyms

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AHVLA</td>
<td>Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency</td>
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<td>BHCC</td>
<td>Brighton &amp; Hove City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defra</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Emergency Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETE</td>
<td>ESCC Department of Economy, Transport and Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESCC</td>
<td>East Sussex County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOB</td>
<td>Forward Operating Base</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOI</td>
<td>Freedom of Information</td>
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<td>LACORS</td>
<td>Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services</td>
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<td>Local Disease Control Centre</td>
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<td>National Farmers Union</td>
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<td>Sussex Resilience Forum</td>
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APPENDIX A

Avian Flu: Recommended Policy for handling dead birds

Notes:
The provisions below are based on a policy previously agreed by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) COMT on 19.04.06 and have been updated or clarified.

They are also subject to any clarification received from Defra at the time of an incident.

District and Borough Councils have not formally adopted this policy, but it is expected that they would support the collection arrangements below should they become necessary to managing an outbreak.

If Defra regard a carcass as suspicious they will collect and dispose of it. For those carcasses not collected by them the responsibility for disposal remains, as with any other ‘waste’, with the owner of the property upon which it is found. However, as public concern is heightened, particularly with the perceived linkage to human pandemic influenza, it is likely that many people will refuse to touch carcasses, or may dispose of them improperly. For that reason local authorities should strive to allay public disquiet by adopting a positive and proactive approach.

Activation

The Emergency Planning and Trading Standards Teams of ESCC will jointly monitor developments nationally and abroad.

In the event that an outbreak is suspected in the South East Region it will be drawn to the attention of the Chief Executive of ESCC, or nominee, to consider whether to enact the protocol. A recommendation will be communicated to the Borough and District Councils with a view to following a common approach.

A two-tier approach is proposed:

1. No outbreak has been confirmed in or near East Sussex
   but there are suspected/confirmed cases elsewhere or a heightened sense of alert.

   Defra advice should be followed. Local authorities should only deal with birds that are found on their own property, or through the normal waste collection systems. To do otherwise would encourage over-reaction.

   1.1 ESCC, Borough and District Councils should:
   - Collect any dead birds found on their property. The health and safety measures [on the Defra website6] should be followed and Defra contacted7 if applicable. Current Defra advice will dictate when they will need to be contacted (i.e. if five or more birds etc).
     - If Defra wish to collect the bird(s) they should be stored in a secure environment until collected, and information should be logged as to where the birds were found.
     - If Defra do not wish to collect the bird(s) the carcass(es) should be disposed of as normal household waste. Ideally they would be double-bagged (as per the Defra advice) and placed in dustbins for normal collection.

   1.2 ESCC:
   - Waste Management will make Household Waste Sites available to members of the public if birds are double-bagged.
   - will not handle dead birds from commercial flocks.
   - Within ESCC the carcasses will be dealt with by the department occupying the property upon which the bird is found via their usual waste collector. Birds should be double bagged.

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7 Defra Helpline: 08459 33 55 77
2. When an Avian Flu (H5N1) outbreak has been confirmed in or near East Sussex

2.1 Collection and storage

2.1.1 Borough/District Councils:–

- Collect any dead birds in their area that are reported to them, or to the County Council, irrespective of where they are found (except if on County Council land, see b below). The health and safety measures identified [on the Defra website] should be followed and Defra contacted if applicable.
- If Defra wish to collect the bird(s) they should be stored by the borough/district council in a secure environment until collected, and information should be logged as to where the birds were found.
- If Defra do not wish to collect, the bird(s) should be taken by the borough/district council to a secure clinical waste facility provided by the WDA, as identified below, under existing arrangements.

Members of the public must not take dead birds to the HWRS, see 2.1.1 above and 2.1.3 for arrangements.

2.1.2 East Sussex County Council:–

- Occupants of ESCC property (incl. schools) will collect and ‘bag’ any birds found on their property, following the health and safety measures identified [on the Defra website], and advise the nominated contractor (see below) to collect. The health and safety measures identified [on the Defra website] should be followed and Defra contacted if applicable.
  - If Defra wish to collect the bird(s) they should be stored by the county council in a secure environment until collected, and information should be logged as to where the birds were found. Secure storage is provided at Pebsham WTS8.
  - If Defra do not wish to collect, the bird(s) should be taken by the nominated contractor to a secure clinical waste facility provided by the WDA, as identified below.

- A contracted service – to be arranged by the ESCC Contracts Manager Waste, Grounds and Cleaning – to collect carcasses from schools or county council properties will be provided. They will liaise with Defra and dispose/store accordingly. They will also log where the birds were found and then pass them on to Defra.

2.1.3 Occupants of private property, including Bird/wild fowl Reserves, should be advised to follow the instructions on the Defra website. If not required by Defra carcasses should be disposed of as below, without charge. ESCC will not provide a collection and will not handle dead birds from commercial flocks or business properties.

2.2 Disposal

East Sussex County Council, as WDA, will provide a secure clinical waste facility for the disposal of birds.

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8 Container to be provided by ESCC.