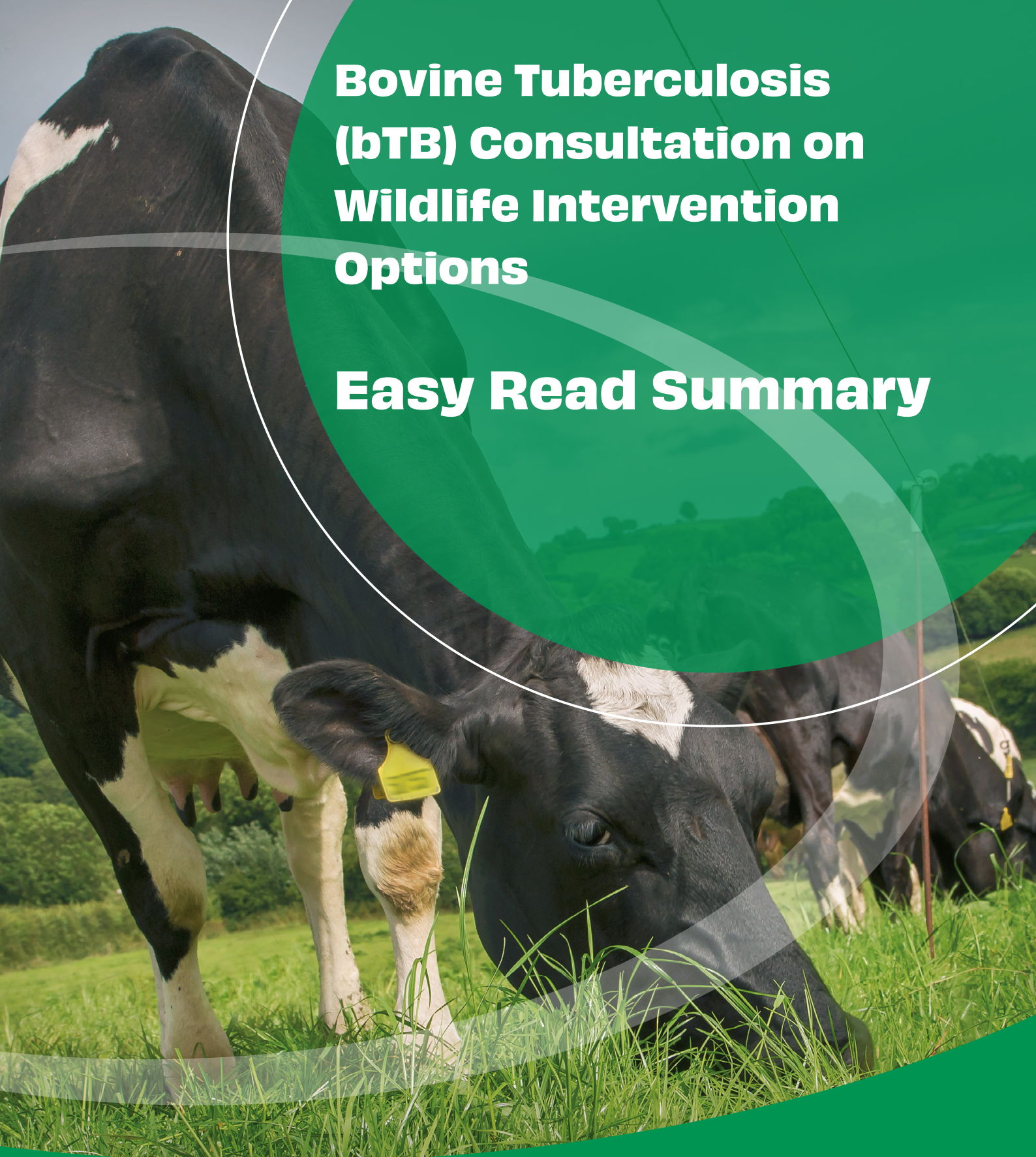




Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) Consultation on Wildlife Intervention Options

Easy Read Summary



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Easy Read Summary

Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) Consultation on Wildlife Intervention Options

This is an Easy Read Summary of a public consultation. It uses simple words and short sentences. It contains less detail than the full consultation document.

How to get this document in another format?

You can ask for this document in other formats; including

- Paper Copy
- Large Print
- Braille
- Other languages

To request another format, contact the TB/BR Policy Team.



Email: TBBR.Policybranch@daera-ni.gov.uk

What is in this summary document

- About DAERA
- About this consultation
- What is bovine tuberculosis?
- Why tackling bTB matters
- Why DAERA is consulting
- What is wildlife intervention?
- Where interventions could happen
- How long interventions could last
- Intervention Option 1: Non-selective culling
- Intervention Option 2: Test and Vaccinate or Remove
- Intervention Option 3: Vaccination only
- How badgers could be captured
- Delivery and funding
- The Blueprint for Eradication
- Lay vaccinators
- Who can respond
- What happens next
- How to respond
- Privacy
- Glossary of words and terms

About DAERA

We are the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).



DAERA looks after farming, forests, fishing, animal health, plant health, the environment and rural affairs in Northern Ireland.

DAERA is running this consultation.



About this Consultation

DAERA is asking people what they think about possible wildlife intervention options involving badgers to stop spread of the disease called bovine Tuberculosis (bTB).

It also seeks views on the wider bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) approach from DAERA – this is known as the Blueprint for Eradication. The consultation also seeks views on the use of lay vaccinators to vaccinate badgers in Northern Ireland.

No final decisions have been made.



What is bovine tuberculosis?



Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) is a disease in cattle. However, the disease can be found in other animals such as badgers.

The disease can cause illness in cattle.

It also spreads from cattle to badgers, from badgers to cattle and within the badger population.

Why tackling bTB matters

bTB is one of the biggest animal health problems in Northern Ireland.

It affects farmers and farming families.

It can cause financial burdens, movement restrictions on herds and stress.

It also costs government and farmers money to control the disease.



Why is DAERA consulting



Scientific evidence shows badgers can carry the bacteria that causes bTB.

Badgers play a role in keeping the disease circulating.



DAERA wants to hear your views before the way forward is considered.

Your views will allow you to inform what happens next.

What is wildlife intervention?



Wildlife intervention means taking action involving badgers to help reduce the spread of bTB.

This consultation asks about three different possible wildlife intervention options.

You can say if you support or oppose each option.

Where interventions could happen



If a wildlife intervention is chosen, it would be used in selected areas.

Areas would be chosen using evidence.

This could include long-term high levels of bTB in cattle, the size of the badger population in the area and evidence of infection in local badgers.

Intervention areas would be at least 100 square kilometres.

How long interventions could last



The proposed intervention period would be up to five years.

Any intervention would be reviewed using surveillance data as well as looking at disease trends and new scientific evidence.

DAERA would monitor any chosen intervention approach.

Intervention Option 1: Non-selective culling

The proposed intervention period would be up to five years.

Any intervention would be reviewed using surveillance data as well as looking at disease trends and new scientific evidence.

DAERA would monitor any chosen intervention approach.



Things to think about

This option may reduce disease pressure more quickly than vaccination only.

It involves removing badgers without testing them first.

Animal welfare, cost, delivery and public confidence are important considerations.



Intervention Option 2: Test and Vaccinate or Remove



Test and Vaccinate or Remove is known as TVR.

Badgers would be caught and tested for bTB.

Badgers that test negative would be vaccinated and released.

Badgers that test positive would be removed.

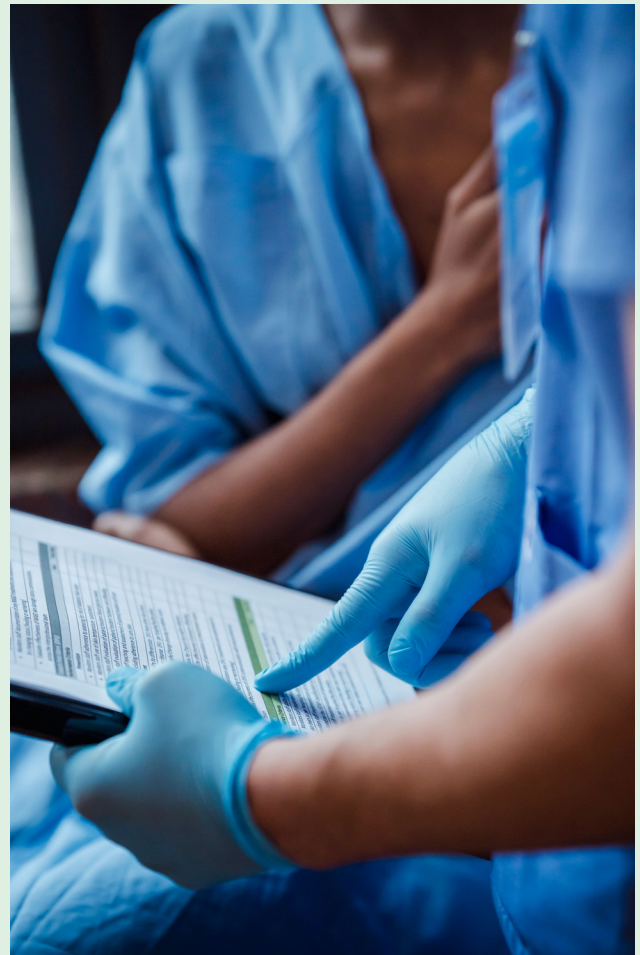
Things to think about

TVR only removes badgers that test positive.

Healthy badgers are vaccinated and released.

TVR can help to reduce disease levels in the badger population over time.

TVR is more complex and may cost more than some other options.



Intervention Option 3: Vaccination only

Under this option, badgers would be caught, vaccinated and released.

No badgers would be removed.
The aim is to increase protection against bTB in the badger population over time.

Vaccination does not treat badgers that are already infected.



Things to think about



No badgers are removed under this option.

This approach may need to continue for several years and may take a long time to reduce disease levels.

Infected badgers may remain in the population.

How badgers could be captured



This consultation seeks your views about different ways to manage or capture badgers.

The methods are cage traps, stopped restraints and controlled shooting.

Controlled shooting is only relevant to some culling options.

Cage traps

Cage traps are specially designed traps used to catch badgers.

Cages are placed near badger setts or where there are signs of badger activity.

Cages would be checked early each morning.

Captured badgers would then be handled according to the chosen intervention option.



Stopped restraints

Stopped restraints are specially designed devices used to hold a badger until it is checked.

They are checked early each morning.

They may be easier to use than cage traps.

They may not catch smaller, younger badgers as effectively.



Controlled shooting

Controlled shooting could be used for some culling options.

It would only be carried out by trained and authorised people.

It would be subject to rules, training and monitoring.

Animal welfare and public safety would be important considerations.



Delivery and funding

This consultation asks how wildlife intervention should be delivered and funded.



The complete removal of bTB is not easy and costs a lot of money.

If there was no bTB, the money spent on trying to remove it could be put towards other important work of government.



The consultation document suggests private sector / industry-led delivery, with DAERA oversight.

DAERA would have a role in regulation, monitoring and compliance.

The Blueprint for Eradication



The Blueprint is Northern Ireland's long-term plan for tackling bTB.

It includes actions about people, cattle and wildlife.

It aims to support the long-term eradication of bTB.

This consultation asks for your views on the Blueprint as a whole.

The Blueprint document can be read in full at this link:

[Bovine Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland - Blueprint for Eradication](#)

People, cattle and wildlife

The Blueprint eradication strategy has three main parts.



People: working together, communication and support.



Cattle: testing, surveillance, movement controls and biosecurity.



Wildlife: understanding and addressing disease risks involving wildlife.

Lay vaccinators

A lay vaccinator is a trained person who is not a vet.

This consultation asks whether trained lay vaccinators should be allowed to vaccinate badgers against bTB in Northern Ireland.

They would work under veterinary direction and follow strict rules.

This could help increase the use of vaccination for badgers.



Who can respond?



Anyone can respond to this consultation.

DAERA would particularly like to hear from farmers, vets, landowners, environmental groups, conservation groups and members of the public.

What happens next?

DAERA will read and analyse all responses to this consultation.

A summary of responses will be prepared and published.

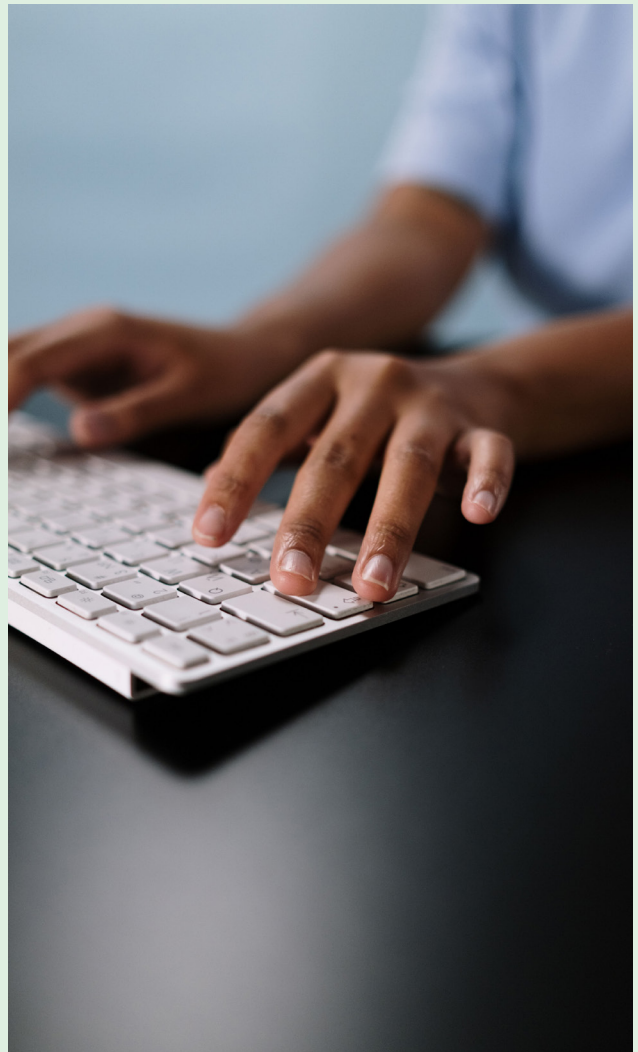
The DAERA Minister will consider the consultation responses, as well as evidence and assessments, before deciding what steps should be taken next.



How to respond

The consultation closes on Friday
25 September 2026.

You can respond online using the
Citizen Space platform at this link:
[A Consultation on potential wildlife
intervention options as part of the
Bovine Tuberculosis in NI Blueprint
for Eradication - NI Direct - Citizen
Space](#)



Email and Postal Address



You can also respond by email to:

TB.Consultation@daera-ni.gov.uk



Or you can send written replies to:

Bovine TB Consultation

TBBR Policy Team

Animal Health & Welfare Division

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural
Affairs

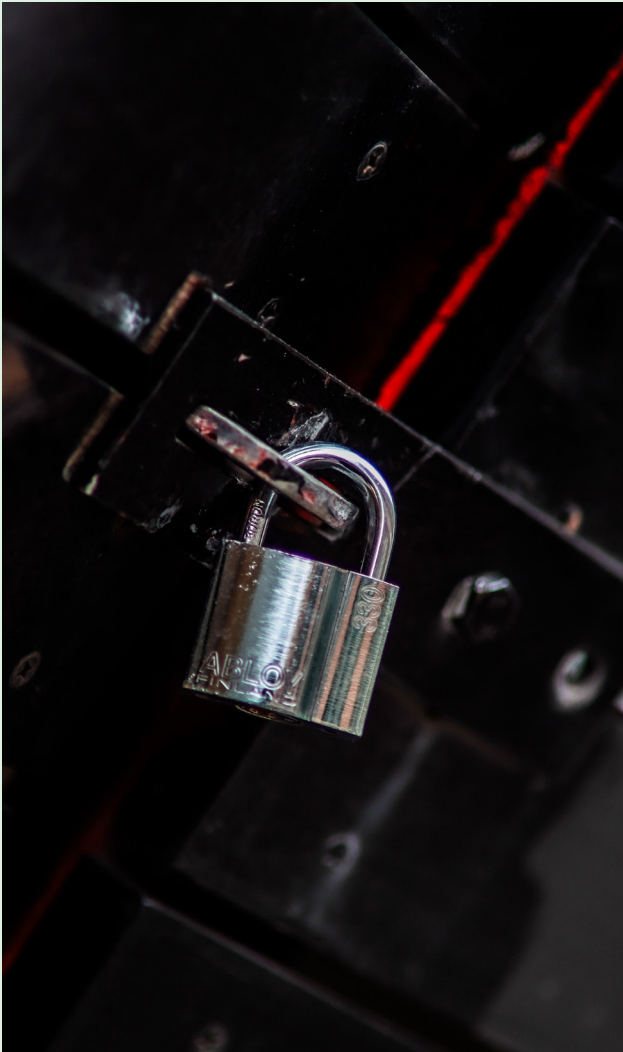
Ballykelly House,

111 Ballykelly Road,

Ballykelly, Limavady,

BT49 9HP

Privacy



DAERA will process the information you provide in line with Data Protection legislation.

DAERA's Privacy Statement is available on the DAERA website.

The full consultation document gives more information about responses and privacy, and can be viewed at this link: [26.27.043 Consultation on Potential Wildlife Options as part of the Bovine Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland Blueprint for Eradication_0.pdf](#)

Glossary of words and terms

This page explains words used in this Easy Read summary document

bTB (Bovine Tuberculosis)

An infectious disease that mainly affects cattle, but it can also be found in some wildlife, including badgers.

DAERA

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Consultation

A process used to ask people for their views before decisions are made.

Eradication

Completely removing a disease so it is no longer present.

Blueprint for Eradication

Northern Ireland's long-term plan for tackling bTB.

Wildlife intervention

Action involving badgers to help reduce the spread of bTB.

Non-selective cull

Reducing badger numbers without testing individual badgers first.

TVR

Test and Vaccinate or Remove.

Vaccination Helping an animal build protection against a disease.

Vaccination Only Catching, vaccinating and releasing badgers. No badgers are removed.

Badger BCG vaccine The vaccine used to help protect badgers against bTB.

Lay vaccinator A trained person who is not a vet.

Veterinarian or vet A qualified animal doctor.

Cage trap A specially designed trap used to safely catch badgers.

Stopped restraint A specially designed device used to hold a badger until it is checked.

Controlled shooting A method that can be used in some culling options by trained and authorised operators.

Biosecurity Steps taken to stop disease spreading between animals, farms and wildlife.

Herd

A group of cattle kept together

Stakeholder

A person or organisation with an interest in a policy or decision.