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Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and
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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-333
Ein cyf/Our ref AD-/05269/11

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18 October 2011

P-04-333 Stop Neglect and Abandonment of Horses and Ponies by Enforcement of Microchipping

Thank you for your letter dated 7 October 2011 regarding the petition submitted by the Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies. Your letter, addressed to the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, has been passed to me for reply as responsibility for Equine Identification sits within my portfolio.

Enforcement of the Equine Identification (Wales) Regulations 2009 falls to local authorities who are also tasked with enforcing those provisions that are in place to protect the welfare of equines. The Welsh Government does not have any enforcement powers but continues to work with both enforcement authorities and the third sector to ensure that owners and keepers of equines are aware of their responsibilities in regard to both welfare and identification.

In response to concerns raised over the numbers of abandoned and dumped equines on common land my officials have met with local authorities, commoners and welfare organisations to identify a way forward. Guidance on how to deal with stray, dumped, or abandoned ponies was developed in partnership with the organisations concerned and aims to provide a consistent approach for those involved in such cases, particularly when dealing with horses and ponies dumped on common land. The guidance sets out the procedure that needs to be followed on discovering stray or abandoned animals and those organisations that need to be contacted. In addition, the guidance also provides an Emergency Services Protocol that sets out the procedures to be followed when responding to emergency incidents that involve trapped or injured equines.

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