

News Release

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Page 1 of 2

Badger vaccination scheme launched to curb bovine TB spread

2 September 2014

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has today launched an ambitious appeal to help fund a major badger vaccination programme.

The Trust, which is opposed to culling as a means of controlling the bovine TB, believes badger vaccination can play a crucial role in preventing the spread of the disease in both badgers and cattle. The charity will vaccinate badgers in an area of almost fifty square kilometres on the Nottinghamshire/Leicestershire border between Tithby and Long Clawson – one of the most important areas for dairy farming in the county. Villages included in the vaccination programme include Cropwell Bishop, Owthorpe, Kinoulton, Hickling Pastures, Upper Broughton and Nether Broughton.

The four-year programme will be supported by the Badger Edge Vaccination Scheme (BEVS) which provides support for badger vaccination projects in areas outside bovine TB high risk areas. The edge area covers counties in the middle of the country such as Cheshire, Oxfordshire and Nottinghamshire. These edge areas are most at risk of the disease spreading from areas already badly affected such as the South West and West Midlands.

Vaccinating badgers in this way is intended to help create a buffer zone of bTB free badger populations to prevent the spread of TB from badgers to cattle. Badger vaccination forms part of the government's comprehensive strategy to make England bovine TB free.

Whilst the Wildlife Trust will receive 50% of the funding required for the programme from DEFRA through the BEVS scheme, the charity must raise the remaining funding, in the region of £75,000, from participating farms and public donations.

Speaking about the vaccination programme Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's Gaynor Jones Jenkins, who will manage the project, said:

“As a landowner with our own cattle herds we know that bovine TB can have a devastating effect on farmers and the farming community but we don't believe that culling is the solution. Culling is a hugely emotive and divisive issue and we do not believe it offers an effective or acceptable solution. We have long believed that vaccination of badgers, alongside measures to improve biosecurity in cattle herds, is a vital tool in both limiting the impacts on farming and safeguarding the future of badger populations. We are excited at the prospect of playing an active role in eradicating this disease but we need the public's backing to succeed.”

The Wildlife Trust currently has a team of staff and volunteers undertaking training as lay vaccinators and is currently surveying the project area to build up knowledge of local badger setts.

Mrs Jones-Jenkins added:

“We are delighted that our project will form part of the BEVS programme and we have had a very positive reaction from local farmers. The BEVS funding has been essential to getting the local vaccination project off the ground but we will need the support of wildlife lovers from across the county to help us raise the funding needed to protect Nottinghamshire's badger population and prevent bovine TB getting a foothold in our county.”

Anyone wishing to donate towards the vaccination of badgers in Nottinghamshire can donate from their mobile phone by texting BADG20 £5 to 70070 or by telephoning 0115 958 8242

This vaccination scheme is just one element of our comprehensive strategy to achieve bovine TB free status in England by 2038. This includes strict cattle movement controls.

Other measure's designed to eradicate bovine TB include:

- tighter cattle controls to reduce bovine TB spread between herds
- research and field trials to develop a cattle vaccine
- a better and more reliable TB test for cattle

Ends

For further details about this news release or the wider work of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust contact Erin McDaid on 0115 958 8242 or 07734 573862 or email emcdaid@nottswt.co.uk

Notes to editors

1. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, a registered charity, manages over 70 Nature Reserves throughout the county of Nottinghamshire. It advises local authorities, community groups and landowners on nature conservation issues, and makes a major input into decision-making on planning matters and other issues. For more information please see our website: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org

2. The Trust is part of a nation-wide network of local Trusts which work to protect wildlife in town and country - The Wildlife Trusts. The Wildlife Trusts now boast almost 800,000.

3. Read more about the [government's TB strategy](#) including [BEVS](#)