



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency

Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25

HC 1466

Animal and Plant Health Agency

Annual Report & Accounts 2024/25

(For the year ended 31 March 2025)

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Foreword by Jenny Stewart, former Chief Executive of APHA (interim)

August 2025

It was a privilege and honour to be interim chief executive during 2024/2025 and lead APHA during another busy 12 months responding to disease outbreaks, refreshing our business plan and working with Defra on the Government's Spending Review.



During my time as interim chief executive and chair of the Executive Board, I particularly valued the time I spent visiting APHA teams across GB and learning in more detail about the work they do, the challenges they face and where changes can help to improve processes and the delivery of services for our customers. APHA people work in so many locations, different landscapes, communities and contexts while drawing on such a broad range of specialist knowledge and skills; it was humbling to see.

October 2024 marked the 10-year anniversary of the launch of APHA as one agency dedicated to animal, plant and bee health when the former Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency merged with parts of the Food and Environment Research Agency. A few years later in 2019 the Horticultural Marketing Inspectorate joined us from the Rural Payments Agency.

The anniversary was an opportunity for colleagues across the agency to reflect on what we have achieved over the past 10 years: responding to the first confirmed



case of bluetongue, eradication of the Asian longhorn beetle, and dealing with the largest outbreak of avian influenza in the UK. We also helped with diagnostic testing during the Covid pandemic and were involved in preparations for the UK leaving the European Union.

It was also a pleasure for APHA to host the 100th anniversary event of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

at Weybridge in April 2024. The day was a celebration of APHA's work as a partner of WOAH, to improve animal and human health in the UK and around the world. The event included a series of international case study presentations by APHA scientists alongside talks and video testimonials from international partners and members of WOAH.

After the General Election in the summer of 2024, we welcomed visits to our Weybridge site by the then Secretary of State, Steve Reed, and Baroness Hayman, the Lords Minister for Defra and lead on biosecurity and APHA.

Later in the year, the new members of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee visited Weybridge to learn about the work of APHA and its scientific research. I met the Committee again early in 2025 when I was invited to attend one of their inquiry sessions on the role of APHA in protecting biosecurity and disease prevention in the UK.

This engagement is valuable to the APHA to highlight the range of work we deliver and provide updates on the National Biosecurity Centre Programme to redevelop our critical research and laboratory facilities at Weybridge.

This report shines a light on just some of our achievements during 2024/25. It's not possible to capture all our work but the following section highlights what we have delivered under each of our strategic pillars with a focus on disease control and prevention, promoting biosecurity, enhancing our digital services and investing in our people.

With the appointment of Richard Lewis as the new chief executive of APHA in June 2025, I have returned to my former role as Director of Science. I will now focus on expanding our collaboration and partnership to deliver world class research and innovation, continue my executive role on the National Biosecurity Centre (NBC) Programme. Finally, I would like to wish Richard all the best for this year and beyond.

Message from Richard Lewis, Chief Executive

September 2025

I was delighted to be appointed chief executive of APHA in June this year. I look forward to working with the APHA Executive Team, non-executive directors and colleagues across the Defra group as we work together to deliver economic and biosecurity outcomes for the UK.



Soon after my appointment I was invited to provide evidence to the Public Accounts Committee following the publication of the National Audit Office (NAO) report on resilience to animal diseases which was published in June. The NAO report, and the more recent PAC report, have come at a crucial time to shine a light on how APHA is dealing with increasing threats from known and new diseases. We will respond to the PAC report in due course.

The Spending Review secured £1 billion for the next phase of the redevelopment of its National Biosecurity Centre at APHA's research and laboratory facility at Weybridge. This will ensure the programme is funded to deliver improvements to the existing site and provide seamless capability for scientific operations to be carried out safely day to day.

Looking ahead to the next 12 months, as chief executive, I will continue to talk and listen to APHA colleagues who work across England, Wales and Scotland, work with Defra and the devolved governments to deliver our common goals and meet with our industry stakeholders and partners. I also want to progress our Delivery Sustainable Futures Programme; whether this is reducing paper usage from our current systems or developing digital delivery to enhance our customer experience.

Undoubtedly it will be another busy year for APHA delivering our strategic priorities, business plan and change projects. This is alongside ensuring we are ready to respond to the threat of disease and pests. We also welcome the opportunity to be a central part of Defra group's work on the Government's plans for realignment with the European Union.

In closing I would like to thank APHA colleagues for their dedication and hard work, and I look forward to working alongside them in the coming years.

Statement by Elizabeth Buchanan, Lead Non-Executive and Chair of Steering Board

September 2025

I was hugely honoured and excited to be appointed as the Lead Non-Executive of APHA. Being a farmer myself, I have always been aware of the vital role the Agency plays in keeping Britain's livestock safe from disease and so protecting our trade and the UK economy.



I was not nearly as aware, however, of the extraordinary work done to maintain the health of our plants and trees. I discovered very quickly that many people, including some farmers and growers, are unaware of the fabulous work done by our people although it is of crucial importance to their livelihoods and our national security.

Trust is everything, and we are working as hard as we can to build that trust with our customers – be they farmers, beekeepers, exporters, egg producers, nurseries or growers. To do this we need to improve the way we communicate and APHA has been working tirelessly to that end.

For example, we are redrafting the formal legal letters we are obliged to send following discovery of a disease (such as bovine TB, bluetongue and avian influenza), to be clearer and more empathetic. Too often our only interaction with farmers and growers is at a time of maximum stress, and we want to do all we can to reduce the impact of this where we can.

This is why we have been working particularly with the Tenant Farmers Association to see how we can respond even better to their members when they have problems. My ambition is for APHA to be seen as a trusted friend, and nothing delights me more than to hear stories from farmers and growers telling me of the great kindness and patience they have experienced from our staff.

Underpinning all our work at APHA is the brilliance of our scientists. They are world-class and unbelievably adaptable, somehow able to switch from long term research into urgent testing when outbreaks occur. This is, of course, not an ideal situation, and there was a time when outbreaks were the exception. Now they are the norm, often with more than one disease outbreak at the same time. This puts huge pressure on everyone and, with our partners in Defra, we must work harder to find ways to allow this crucial long-term research, which is protecting our futures, to continue with as little interruption as is possible.

The public information work we do is of the utmost importance, which is why we are so delighted to be involved with the Chelsea Flower Show. This year we focused on the yellow-legged hornet, which is such an enormous threat to our beekeepers, to all growers who depend on pollinators, and so also to biodiversity. We were thrilled to win a Gold Medal for the stand, but even more delighted by the huge amount of publicity which followed.

My admiration for the teams which work to protect animal welfare is boundless. It can be utterly heartbreaking for them, and I was so privileged to see our team in action at the Dover Border Control Post. Their courage and quiet determination to do the right thing for animals in distress made me very proud (as well as deeply angry). The Agency does its best to protect animals from being mistreated at our borders and on our farms.

Keeping plant pests and diseases out of this country demands extraordinary skills as I discovered when I spent time with inspectors at Heathrow and in a garden centre; both visits were fascinating and utterly riveting. The expertise and attention to detail of these impressive experts gives enormous reassurance.

Our extraordinary vets, inspectors, scientists and technical staff depend on our digital transformation programme, which is crucial to make us more efficient for our customers and for our own teams. This is a top priority for the years to come for us and Defra, as is the development of the National Biosecurity Centre at Weybridge which will keep us at the forefront of animal disease prevention, detection and treatment.

APHA is nothing without its people and that's why so much of the Steering Board's time is focused on capacity, skills and retention and, of course, how we value those who work for us. So much responsibility rests on their shoulders and it's vital we attract the best and then keep them.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my fellow non-executive directors, who are so committed to APHA and bring their invaluable skills to oversee audit and risk, finance, business planning, performance indicators and our science strategy.

I am indebted to Jenny Stewart who stepped up to be the interim chief executive until we appointed our new chief executive, Richard Lewis, who joined us in June. He brings invaluable experience, and I have every confidence he will lead APHA with vision, wisdom and thoughtfulness.

Performance report

Overview of APHA



The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). We also provide services to the Scottish and Welsh Governments, and a range of other customers including government departments.

In a fast changing and uncertain world, APHA is the early warning system that keeps the UK safe from threats to animal, plant and human health. We are part of the wider Defra group and government biosecurity system, working across organisational boundaries supporting the UK Government, Scottish Government and Welsh Government to deliver their agriculture, economic and biosecurity policies.

Our mission is to protect animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy. This is delivered via our strategic pillars Protect, Innovate and Promote, and by working as One APHA based on the principles of People and Place. The following pages highlight some of our successes for each pillar.

Performance highlights

PROTECT PILLAR

We protect the UK from animal and plant-related threats to human health, the economy and the environment



APHA has a leading role in protecting the UK against animal, plant and public health by preventing and responding to animal, bee and plant pests and diseases.

Our emergency response involves a combination of disease surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, inspections, tracing movements, epidemiology and risk analysis.

This capability is critical to protect our trade and farming industry, food security, the environment and public health from the impact of disease outbreaks.

During 2024/25, we responded to both bluetongue and avian influenza disease outbreaks, we continued our work on the surveillance and eradication of the yellow-legged hornet as well as the response plan for the Colorado beetle.

Avian influenza in poultry

The first case of HPAI H5N1, during 2024/25, was confirmed at a poultry premises in England on 17 November 2024 and in Scotland on 10 January 2025. We did not see any cases in Wales during 2024/25.

APHA responded to 57 cases of HPAI H5N1 at premises in England and two in Scotland, and one case of HPAI H5N5 in England. To help control the spread of the disease, an avian influenza prevention zone (AIPZ) was imposed in Great Britain with housing measures in England, and a ban on bird gatherings.

Avian influenza in wildlife

Our avian influenza national reference laboratory, in collaboration with our Diseases of Wildlife Scheme, tested samples from seal carcasses found at Blakeney Point along the North Norfolk coast.

This followed the initial detection of the virus in great black-backed gulls and two grey seals when they tested positive for high pathogenicity avian influenza virus (HPAI) H5N5 in February 2025.

APHA tested samples from 40 seal carcasses from the site and 15 of these tested positive for HPAIV H5N5.

The seals were tested following the observation of mortality in gulls which also tested positive for HPAIV. It is likely the animals were exposed to the same source of the virus although it is possible that other factors may have contributed.

Mammals which have had close contact with infected wild birds or contaminated environments can become infected with influenza of avian origin. The numbers involved were not above the usual mortality level at this site and this finding highlights the effectiveness of the UK's wildlife surveillance system.

In August 2024, APHA announced that it is taking part in a new wild bird sampling project with other leading ornithological organisations. This research consortium will sample and test different bird species to study avian influenza viruses in greater detail and the impact on wildlife.

Avian influenza in livestock



APHA confirmed a case of influenza of avian origin (H5N1) in a single sheep in Yorkshire in March 2025.

The case was identified following the routine surveillance of farm livestock on premises where highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) had been confirmed in captive birds. The ewe had been showing clinical signs of mastitis, and blood and milk samples from the animal were positive for evidence of the virus.

We completed further testing in the remaining flock of sheep at the premises but there was no evidence of the virus in the remaining flock. There is no evidence to suggest an increased disease risk to our livestock, but it highlights the importance of biosecurity and not mixing species.

Influenza of avian origin has been detected in livestock in other countries. Following the significant outbreak of H5N1 in dairy cows in the USA, we worked with Defra and other government organisations to assess the risk of importing the disease into the UK and ensure surveillance was in place.

Defra introduced the surveillance of livestock on infected premises with confirmed avian influenza in birds in the UK. APHA tested UK cattle and milk supply samples to provide assurance on food safety.

Working with customers on mandatory bird registration



In October 2024, a new legal requirement came into force for all bird keepers in England and Wales to register their birds, regardless of the size of their flock. Since March 2024, when the change in regulations was announced, APHA has registered over 320,000 applications.

Registering birds is important for the prevention and control of notifiable avian disease outbreaks. The register is used to communicate with keepers to inform them about measures they need to take to protect the health of their birds and to prevent the spread of disease. During the last avian influenza outbreak we were able to significantly increase our outreach to bird keepers via our mass messaging services.

Bluetongue in livestock

After new cases of the bluetongue virus serotype 3 (BTV-3) in northern Europe, the first case of the virus in the UK was confirmed in August 2024, in sheep in Norfolk. This was the start of busy months working with livestock keepers and our veterinary delivery partner, Farmcare, in response to this disease outbreak which saw 233 confirmed cases in England and two in Wales.

Our veterinary field teams completed 1,914 visits to premises with livestock to either investigate reports of animals with clinical signs of the virus, surveillance visits, disease tracings, or for licencing purposes. All these visits required blood samples and around 30,000 animals were tested for the virus; the majority by The Pirbright Institute with some also tested at APHA Weybridge.



Further samples were also taken for pre movement and post-movement testing of livestock. The launch of the Animal Disease Movement Licensing (ADMLS) enabled us to speed up our response to requests for licences which was vital during the outbreak when we received over 6,300 bluetongue applications.

We also delivered an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement and communications on BTV which included meetings with farmers and their veterinary practices, and weekly evening webinars. Our customer advice team was on hand to answer queries and they received around 4,000 telephone calls.

Being prepared for disease outbreaks

Monitoring diseases such as bluetongue and African swine fever which are close to our shores in Europe is an important part of our disease outbreak preparedness.

APHA published a risk assessment of the bluetongue virus entering Great Britain during 2024 following a previous outbreak in 2023. This highlighted the probability of the introduction of the BTV-3 virus in livestock in the UK from infected biting midges blown over from northern Europe. The risk of virus transmission was expected to increase with rising temperatures and increased infections in Europe.

We worked with our partners, The Pirbright Institute in Surrey, (the national reference laboratory for bluetongue), Defra, the National Farmers Union and industry leaders to prepare for this potential outbreak. This was essential with no approved vaccine available at the time for this strain of the virus.

APHA Weybridge is designated an Official Laboratory (OL) for BTV which means it has a primary role to deliver high volume serology testing of the virus. In early 2024, Weybridge was asked to pivot to offer pre-movement PCR testing in preparation for the anticipated outbreak. This would allow the National Reference Laboratory for BTV at The Pirbright Institute to focus on the predicted high numbers of report cases

and surveillance.

While demand for pre-movement testing was low, it was possible for the redeployed staff and facilities to complete the many post-movement tests; providing support and contingency to the NRL throughout the 2024 season.

In early 2025, the focus of disease preparedness moved to foot and mouth disease (FMD) when Germany confirmed its first case of this virus since 1988. There were also confirmed cases in Hungary and Slovakia.

With the increasing risk of the disease entering the UK, APHA worked with Defra, Scottish Government and Welsh Government to ensure we were prepared for a possible incursion of the virus. This included reviewing our contingency plans, processes and training so we were ready to lead a national disease operation. Both APHA and Defra also took immediate steps to stop imports of susceptible live animals and affected dairy and meat, and raise awareness of the risks of this virus.

Protecting animal and plant health in numbers

Alongside our disease outbreak response, we have continued to work with our customers and partners to deliver the following:

Protecting against disease and pests at our borders

Issued 416,388 export certificates

Issued 3,584 import licences and authorisations

Issued 2,994 phytosanitary certificates for plant exports

Completed 41,005 physical inspections of plant imports

Completed 141,022 plant import document checks

Tested 74,399 animal export samples

Protecting against disease and pests inland

Completed 2,116 plant passporting visits in total across audits and GSI

Completed 8,119 annual and multi-annual plant surveys

Tested 41,372 blood samples for statutory artificial breeding controls

Tested 9,920 blood samples for antimicrobial resistance surveillance

Completed 205,272 TB gamma tests

Completed 2,540 TB genotyping tests

Completed 17,353 culture/PCR bovine TB tests

Completed 3,918 TB tests of non-bovine animals

Responded to 2,136 reports of animal welfare concerns

Completed 3,587 risk-based egg marketing inspections

Completed 2,351 animal feed sampling visits for the National Feed Audit.

Completed 21,447 inspections of bee colonies across 3,439 apiaries.

Completed over 1,000 inspections of non-native species at various premises including zoos, garden centres and animal rescue centres

PROMOTE PILLAR

We promote and assure animal health, plant health and animal welfare to support the UK's productivity and trade



Protecting the health of our bees

There are reportable and notifiable pests and diseases in the UK that are a risk to the health of our bees. These include the *Vespa velutina*, known as the yellow-legged hornet or Asian hornet, which is a predator of honeybees and wasps.

Since the first sighting of the yellow-legged hornet in the UK back in 2016, our National Bee Unit (NBU) has responded to annual sightings of this insect and their nests with around 70 sightings in 2024/25 and 24 nests were destroyed.

In April each year, the NBU set traps in areas of the UK identified as high risk for yellow-legged hornets including Kent, East Sussex, Devon and North Yorkshire. These traps are used to monitor the activity of this hornet to help find and destroy their nests.

During the year there has been extensive press coverage of the work of the NBU and its fight to protect our bees, particularly during Asian Hornet Week in early September which is the time of year when the insects are at their height of activity and are most likely to be seen.

Part of APHA's work to contain the threat of the Asian hornet is raising awareness of good biosecurity and how everyone can help by reporting possible sightings of the insect.

The Asian hornet was the theme of APHA's winning exhibit at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Chelsea Flower Show in May 2024.



With the title 'Stay alert, take action, protect our pollinators', the exhibit used informative panels, interactive visuals, and representative models to highlight the threat of Asian hornet to pollinators, especially honeybees, and to show people how they can identify and report sightings using the Asian hornet app.

It also promoted the plants people can grow in their gardens and window boxes to help pollinators. Along with a gold medal, the stand was also chosen as the Best Discovery Exhibit as part of the show's Discovery Zone which highlights the displays from research groups and charities.

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2024 coincided with Invasive Species Week. There are over 2,000 non-native species in Britain, which have been introduced from all over the world by people. Most are harmless, but around 15% spread and become invasive non-native species (INNS), such as the yellow-legged hornet, and can harm our biodiversity. Our stand was an example of how we raise awareness of such species and how the public can help. Other campaigns include Be Plant Wise and Check Clean Dry.

Promoting our work

Published 171 peer reviewed publications in scientific and trade journals, and published [25 science blogs](https://aphascience.blog.gov.uk) (<https://aphascience.blog.gov.uk>)

Attended 10 trade and public shows to promote plant health

Delivered and supported 114 training and education events on bee health

Attended 60 outreach events at junior schools, senior schools and universities on scientific career opportunities at APHA

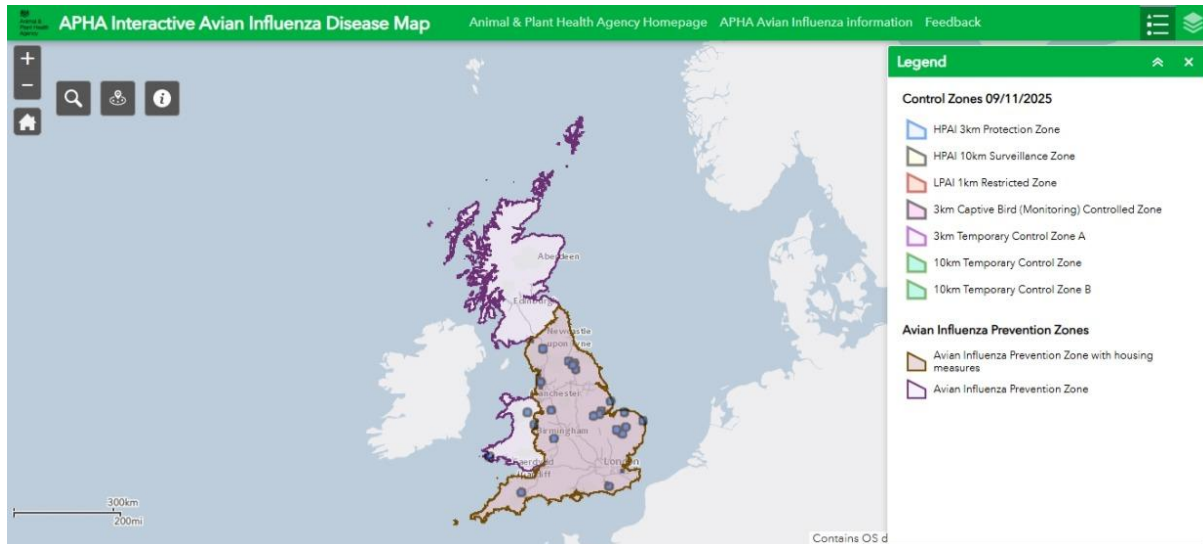
Held 8 open days at Weybridge for local sixth form students

INNOVATION PILLAR

We're an innovative organisation that enables industry to thrive



Improving APHA's digital resilience and capability



During 2024/25 we improved and further digitalised some of our processes which now automate around 950,000 transactions, saving an estimated 3.85 tonnes of CO2 emission while increasing our productivity by 45,000 hours.

We introduced a new Legacy IT Risk Assessment Framework which provides a standard evidence-based mechanism for APHA to assess the technical health of legacy IT assets, to help allocate funding for the wider legacy estate.

22 projects replaced old and outdated systems by migrating them to modern new platforms or remediating them to improve our cyber security, digital and business resilience.

These systems underpin our services and capability to prevent and respond to disease threats. They are essential for capturing quality data and delivering our processes which in turn help facilitate international trade, protect the UK's food security, and reduce the risk of disease for animals, plants and people. Delivery of this work is dependent on funding and support from Defra's Digital, Data and Technology and Security.

Examples include:

- TB tracings are now automated, making it easier for front line staff to complete this work.
- A new egg marketing system was rolled out to replace an old legacy system which has streamlined and improved ways of working and user experience for the egg marketing inspectorate.

- We have a new unified Geographical Information System which replaces dated systems and improves our capability to identify and control pests and diseases.
- A new system has replaced the legacy IT system used by our third-party post-mortem providers to collate and submit disease surveillance. The new system improves how we capture disease surveillance data to feed into the overall Scanning Surveillance Network. Feedback on the improved customer experience and usability of the system has been positive.
- A new Disease Tracking and Reporting Platform improves the tools available to staff which underpins how APHA delivers its outcomes.
- Building on the success of Avian Influenza Licensing Service (AILS) introduced in 2022, we launched the Animal Disease Movement Licensing (ADMLS) in April 2024 which enables livestock keepers to submit movement licence applications online for both bluetongue and avian influenza. This innovation has delivered benefits for customers and our outbreak licensing team by streamlining the application process and reducing manual paperwork. This in turn has meant a more efficient use of our resources and a speedy response to applications.

Looking ahead, we will continue to work with the Defra group on delivering our Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy with the roll-out of AI powered tools, such as Microsoft 365 Copilot, to help staff work smarter and improve productivity.

APHA announced phase 3 of the field trials for our research project to develop a viable and effective cattle TB vaccine and a new DIVA skin test for bovine TB.

Farmers are invited to take part in field trials similar to the previous two phases which will take place on commercial cattle farms where there is a low incidence of bovine TB.

Laboratory studies have indicated that the vaccine and DIVA skin test perform well under controlled APHA facility environments. Phase 3 will gather further information on the performance of the DIVA skin test to ensure that bTB infected cattle, which are vaccinated, will continue to be detected reliably among vaccinated and disease-free cattle.

APHA's Surveillance Unit launched a new notification system for veterinary professionals working with pet animals. Called SmART (Small Animal Risks and Threats) Comms, this communication sends emails and texts of potential disease and health risks and threats for the small animal sector.

This complements APHA's Endemic and Emerging Disease Alert System (EEDAS) for farm livestock.

PEOPLE PILLAR

We value our people, providing them with the right tools, continuously improving through delivering change well



Supporting postgraduate studies

The APHA Academic Board strengthens our scientific and veterinary capability and supports career development by co-ordinating and approving postgraduate opportunities for colleagues. During 2024, three colleagues were approved funding for PhDs, 17 to complete MSc studies, and 12 colleagues began plant health and biosecurity postgraduate studies at Harper Adams University.

The Academic Board hosts an annual student day for colleagues and students to showcase their research and studies and promote the different types of learning opportunities at APHA including apprenticeships.

Supporting these studies in turn supports our succession planning, increasing scientific publications and strengthening links with our academic partners. We have continued our partnerships with colleges and universities to support opportunities for apprenticeships and further education studies. For example, we set up an online level 6 biosciences degree with TIRO (training provider for science apprenticeships) and Middlesex University for APHA colleagues working at our regional laboratories.

Enhancing our technical skills and knowledge

Due to the large range of work in APHA, specialist training is available for our colleagues working on plant and bee health, disease outbreak response, and scientific and field activities.

Our annual two-day training event on the statutory requirements of the National Control Programmes (NCPs) for Salmonella in poultry was held for veterinary and field colleagues who attend farm visits for the NCP. The sessions cover biosecurity, reporting, non-compliance and the impact of Salmonella on public health.

APHA confirmed a case of classical bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) on a farm in Ayrshire, Scotland in May 2024. Precautionary movement restrictions were put in place at the premises while we investigated the source of the outbreak. While such cases are infrequent today, it remains important that we continue to maintain our knowledge of the clinical signs of BSE and compliance with animal health legislation. Our Animal Health Capability Development Team produced an online BSE training package to support this need.

Work was completed on the APHA Field Development Framework which was designed to support the development of the crucial skills and capabilities for Animal Health Officers and Senior Veterinary Inspectors, during the first year of their respective field roles.

This complements the Career Learning Pathways (CLPs) which continue to be rolled out for veterinary and field staff to complete. CLPs are structured training packages for specific areas of work, such as exotic notifiable diseases or animal movements, with the aim to officially certify competencies in line with quality management standards.

For our plant health inspectors, our annual Plant Health Annual Technical Meeting was held in January 2025 with talks from Fera, the Horticultural Trades Association and the Royal Horticultural Society. Regular training was also provided in various areas, including tree identification, crop inspection and plant pathology using in-house specialists and specialists from Fera Science Limited.

Similar technical provision was provided to APHA bee inspectors at their April technical meeting and events throughout the year. This included training on electronic hornet tagging which has so far been deployed in over 20 outbreak cases.

Media training has also been provided to those who may be called upon to speak on behalf of APHA on animal and plant health topics.

Supporting the delivery of change projects

The change agent network is a group of colleagues who support change initiatives and ensure that those affected by the change are ready, willing and able to adopt the change. They work alongside project managers to support people through change. They carry out stakeholder analysis and impact assessments to understand who, and how, will be impacted by the change, provide communications and ensure people have the right training when needed.

APHA has adopted the Prosci ADKAR® Model as our preferred approach to change management and change managers and change agents have completed training on this methodology.

The network has supported various projects in APHA such as the rollout of digital SIM cards, user acceptance testing of updated geospatial apps and the launch of a workforce management system.

Maintaining our core skills

As part of the Defra group and Civil Service, all APHA colleagues have access to a range of training and coaching on core skills such as line management, data literacy and communication. This complements the Civil Service mandatory learning on health and safety, counter fraud, and security and data protection.

PLACE PILLAR

We act locally to deliver nationally, minimise our environmental impact and future proof our high tech infrastructure



Planning permission approved for the National Biosecurity Centre (NBC) Programme at Weybridge



The National Biosecurity Centre – Weybridge is a cornerstone of the UK's animal health infrastructure.

It will support UK trade, our food and farming sectors, protect economic growth and the prosperity of the nation.

The ongoing redevelopment programme, led by Defra working with APHA, reflects a significant investment in the UK's biosecurity network, which will enhance our capabilities and secure our position as a world-leading reference centre for the coming decades.

Weybridge's vital role in safeguarding national biosecurity was recognised with the change of name to the National Biosecurity Centre Programme. It was previously known as the Science Capability in Animal Health (SCAH) Programme.

The NBC Programme reached a significant milestone during the past year, with Master Outline Planning permission granted by Runneymede Borough Council. This followed extensive consultation with planning authorities, local stakeholders and residents. This achievement marks a crucial step forward in our transformation journey.

Defra secured funding for the next step of the programme, with £208 million in funding over 2024 to 2026 announced in the Autumn 2024 budget.

Work has continued on preparing the site with enabling works and clearing the footprint for the future Science Hub to upgrade the infrastructure and provide new interim facilities.

The design of the main science hub continues to progress as we move through the various Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stages, with continued progress with design into RIBA stage 3 and towards construction starting in 2027.

The National Biosecurity Centre Programme remains on track to deliver initial capability in 2027/28 and a new Science Hub by 2033/34. On completion, the programme will transfer to APHA.

Other APHA estates projects

A refurbishment of the office facilities at Heathrow was completed in July 2024 for the animal imports team. This work has also enabled the team to be co-located with the plant health inspectors at the airport which helps team working and support.

This is an example of the APHA Estates team working with Defra group Property and local APHA teams to improve and modernise ways of working. Similar projects will be progressed in 2025/26.

APHA ARA 2024/25: performance measures

Protect pillar

APHA outcomes	Performance measure	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target
Support trade (imports)	Import licences issued within agreed timeframes	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%
	Complete inspection of listed plant material imported into England/Wales consignments (Highest risk – woody plants)	23%	52%	66%	76%	99%
Enhance food security	Contracted milestones delivered to plan for cross-government PATH-SAFE programme					
Improve biosecurity	Complete animal by-product (ABP) routine inspections required under a risk-based approach	64%	57%	45%	47%	90%
Improve animal welfare	Visit all high priority animal welfare reports within one calendar day of notification	86%	92%	83%	88%	95%
	Complete cross compliance inspections to meet the Single Payment Scheme deadline				N/A	100%
Support eradication of bovine TB	Deliver TB vaccination programme to plan					See notes below table
	Ensure animal disease tracing action is initiated within 10 working days from date of confirmation	100%	100%	62%	100%	90%
	Disease management removal of reactors/disease cases from breakdown herds within 10 working days of disclosure / identification	92%	92%	87%	97%	90%
	Number of persistent herds (England & Wales)	255	256	263	261	Total number
	Ensure the volume of gamma samples which cannot be tested is <0.36%					<0.36%
Manage disease outbreaks	Avian influenza: report on cases visited within 24 hours					96%
	Avian influenza: movement licence to be issued within deadline timescales					100%
	Deliver a scanning surveillance					

	programme to plan and within agreed tolerances					
	% of pest and disease outbreaks we respond to reported cases of notifiable disease within 24 hours					100%
	Ensure there are contingency arrangements in place for an outbreak that have been formally assured and exercised					Qualitative
	Maintain our 49 national and 23 international reference centres for animal diseases					

The delivery of ABP inspections was impacted by the need to respond to concurrent disease outbreaks. The highest risk sites are visited as a priority and APHA is developing a revised risk matrix.

All animal welfare reports are triaged by a veterinary inspector who will note urgent cases to ensure that animal welfare is not further compromised. Where a target is missed due to resource capacity, an inspection is scheduled at the next earliest opportunity.

The target for cross compliance inspections is for Scotland and Wales only and is based on the calendar year and is cumulative. The target for 2024 was 284 inspections and APHA achieved 97% at the end of 2024 against a 100% target. A new approach for measuring this performance for England was introduced in 2025/26.

The metric for the TB vaccination programme includes three lower level KPIs:

- The KPI to maintain badger TB vaccination area (900km²) was completed and the target exceeded.
- Phase 3 of the programme was paused to review timelines and resources. Refreshed plans include July 2025 to start field activities which will be led and completed by APHA.
- The KPI to secure the manufacturing contract for the DIVA skin test is a few months behind schedule due to the tenure process and budget considerations which are outside of APHA control.

Promote pillar

APHA outcomes	Performance measure	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target
Support trade (imports)	Import licences issued within agreed timeframes	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%
	Complete inspection of listed plant material imported into England/Wales consignments (Highest risk – woody plants)	23%	52%	66%	76%	99%
Support trade (exports)	% of certificates and licences progressed within required timescales and to agreed standards This metric is a combination of 5 types of certificates: (1) EHC, (2) CITES, (3) bird, (4) plant	100%	99%	100%	99%	97%

The metric for the inspection of listed plant material measures the number of APHA inspections of the highest risk plant products imported into England and Wales. The quarterly figures demonstrate we have improved our delivery in this area since quarter one and we continue to work on this for 2025/26.

It was agreed with Defra that there should be a pragmatic approach to increase delivery performance while we were also implementing the Border Target Operating Model at the time. This was alongside recruiting and training import inspectors. The priority was to avoid significant delays to the trade. For example, an inspection may not be completed at the border due to packing / unloading issues but may be highlighted to inland teams to check the consignment based on the disease risk. We are reviewing these performance targets with Defra.

Innovate pillar

APHA outcomes	Performance measure	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target
Excellent customer services	Achieve published turnaround times for laboratory services.	Trade 99%	Trade 99%	Trade 99%	Trade 99%	Trade 99% Non-trade 95%
	This metric measures our laboratory turnaround times for both trade and non-trade tests.	Non-trade 91%	Non-trade 97%	Non-trade 96%	Non-trade 97%	

Our environmental performance and contribution to sustainability

Background

The environmental data and associated financial costs presented in the following pages are consistent with the requirements of HM Treasury's Public Sector Annual Reports: Sustainability Reporting Guidance 2022/23.

Greening Government Commitments (GGCs) targets and performance

This section sets out APHA's performance against the sustainability objectives of its estate and operations.

APHA is provided data from Defra group's Environmental Management Systems, which measure against some of the Greening Government Commitments (GGC) targets. These targets are for reductions in greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions to mitigate climate change, waste production, paper use, and water use. Further information on the source of the data is available in the Defra Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25.

The majority of GGCs are managed centrally by Defra including the commitments for consumer single use plastics, finite resource consumption, nature recovery and biodiversity action planning. Defra also manages reducing the environmental impacts from ICT and digital, climate change adaptation, sustainable proofing, air travel, fleet vehicles, and other natural resource consumption.

Defra group Property is also tasked to deliver a sustainable estate through the provision of facility services focused on reducing energy and utility consumption, reducing waste, the use of sustainable and renewable materials in both the day-to-day operation of our facilities and the procurement of new facilities. Consequently, all these GGCs are reported in the Defra Annual Report and Accounts. APHA does not hold any natural capital or landholdings.

The GGC targets, which are measured from a 2017/18 baseline, to be met by the end of March 2025, include:

- Reduce GHG from the whole estate and business-related transport by 50%
- Reduce direct GHG from buildings by 15%
- Reduce the amount of waste to landfill to below 5%
- Increase the amount of recycled waste to above 70%
- Reduce total waste by 15%
- Reduce water consumption by 8%
- Reduce the GHG from domestic flights by 30%
- Reduce paper use by 50%
- Upgrade all fleet vehicles to ultra-low emissions (by end 2027)

Performance against these targets is defined using the following terms:

- Exceeded target: the target has been exceeded.
- On target: performance is on track to meet the target.
- Below Target: improvement in performance but is not on track to meet the target.
- Increase from baseline: no reduction made and performance in this area has worsened since the baseline year.

For 2024/25, APHA has increased from the baseline for direct GHG reduction, total waste reduction and water reduction. We have reduced our total GHG emissions by 14% but these are below the target of 50%. Staff returning to the office for 60% of their working week has impacted meeting these targets. In addition, APHA has increased in size since 2017/18. In 2017/18, the average FTE was 2,154 and the average FTE in 2024/25 was 3,282.

APHA is below where we would like to be for these targets which is partly due to the size and the complexity of the facilities at the Weybridge site. We continue our efforts to improve our sustainability performance and the investment at the Weybridge site alongside the Weybridge Sustainability Strategy will support this work. APHA has exceeded the target for the three other GGC performance measures.

GGC Performance	Target April 2025	2023/24 APHA achievement	2023/24 APHA performance	2024/25 APHA achievement	2024/25 APHA performance
Total GHG reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	50% reduction	14.46% reduction	Below target	14.06% reduction	Below target
Direct GHG reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	15% reduction	9.96% increase instead of reduction	Increase from baseline	13.35% increase instead of reduction	Increase from baseline
Landfill waste reduction 2024/25	Less than 5% sent to landfill	0.16%	Exceeded target	0.03%	Exceeded target

Recycling waste 2024/25	More than 70% recycled	60.02%	On target	80.21%	Exceeded target
Total waste reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	15% reduction	0.7279	Increase from baseline	31.15% increase instead of reduction	Increase from baseline
Water reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	8% reduction	17.64% increase instead of reduction	Increase from baseline	15.88% increase instead of reduction	Increase from baseline
Domestic flights emissions reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	30% reduction	N/A			
Paper use reduction 2024/25 vs. baseline	50% reduction	61.34% reduction	Exceeded target	88.15%	Exceeded target

Flight emissions were not reported in previous years and therefore a comparison cannot be provided.

Governance

The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework requires organisations to disclose four themes: governance, strategy, risk management and metrics and targets. The TCFD interprets and adapts the climate-related financial disclosures framework for the UK public sector. APHA has used that framework to assess how close we are to a TCFD-compliant disclosure.

APHA is part of the Defra group. The majority of TCFD disclosures are managed centrally by Defra, including the following:

- governance (all recommended disclosures)
- metrics and targets (disclosure B) which are reported in this sustainability report.

APHA plans to make disclosures for strategy, risk management and metrics and targets (disclosures A and C) in future reporting periods, in line with the central government implementation timetable.

Governance in APHA is set out in the statement on page 38 and our risk management approach is explained in the risk management section on page 40. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee regularly review APHA's Principal Risk Register, and the Executive Board review it monthly.

We currently have a risk on our Principal Risk Register regarding sustainability and climate change. We are aware of the impact climate change can have on our ability to respond, identify and mitigate threats on UK animal and plant health, human health, food security and the environment. For example, climate change can lead to new animal and plant diseases in the UK which we must respond to, and we plan to draft a sustainability strategy, which will mitigate these risks.

We are committed to developing our sustainability strategy and take action to integrate climate as a management issue within our governance to improve our approach to climate change.

APHA has compiled and disclosed required information in line with the Phase 2 Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) where information is available but there are elements where disclosure has not been possible due to limited availability of information. We are planning to provide recommended disclosures for strategy recommended disclosures in future reporting periods in line with the central government implementation timetable.

Sustainability strategy

As part of Defra's Sustainability Leadership Group, APHA has sought to incorporate a Defra-wide strategy that sets out its approach to deliver ongoing commitments to minimise the impact on the environment from our operations. The strategy lays out priority business outcomes guided by aims and objectives that are structured around four themes: responding and adapting to climate change; nature recovery and enhancement; resource and water conservation; and social impact and value.

We launched a new corporate strategy 'Sustainable Futures' in May 2023, which includes the commitment to minimise our environmental impact, ensure our operations sustainable and work towards achieving net zero.

APHA will work with Defra group Property to create a sustainability strategy that will be aligned to the Defra Sustainability Strategy, which will initially largely focus on APHA's National Biosecurity Centre (NBC) Programme that oversees the major re-development of its science estate. In addition, it will include aims to reduce the carbon footprint of the car fleet and improve the infrastructure for electric vehicles on our sites.

Weybridge sustainability strategy

The investment in the science capability at the Weybridge site is an opportunity to improve the environmental performance of these facilities which contribute most to APHA's carbon emissions.

The Weybridge Sustainability Strategy aligns with the structure of the Defra Group Sustainability Strategy, with the same four sustainability themes to guide outcomes that maintain its aim to deliver resilience, regenerative development, and biodiversity net gain in line with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

The Plan outlines the key actions taken and future aims through facilities and estates services provided by Defra group Property:

- We have measured our existing primary energy consumption and established an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) value site baseline and will continue to install additional meters so that we can measure consumption on a more granular (building) basis.
- Continuing with our supply authority negotiations to move to reduced carbon use with the electrification of the thermal energy infrastructure.
- Explore the potential for renewable energy innovation and generation.
- Review ancillary land for biodiversity improvements along with enhanced landscape on the main research site.
- We are adding additional capacity on our existing incinerator scheme to recover energy from our waste disposal process. This enables us to explore and enhance our waste strategy related to recycling and developing circular economy with other Arm's Length Bodies for disposal of their waste in our energy from waste process.

Sustainable procurement and car fleet

APHA's Contract Management team continues to work with Defra Commercial to ensure that the service provision from new contracts and suppliers are in line with the Defra Sustainable Procurement Strategy. All non-electric vehicles have been removed from the lease car choice list to help APHA reach the zero emissions target.

The same applies to building projects led by DgP on behalf of APHA and the shared estate, and the agency's continued commitments under the cross-government approach to a sustainable fleet. We are working towards the target of 100% of the government car and van fleet to be fully zero emissions at the tailpipe by 31 December 2027.

APHA is committed to procuring sustainably, in line with Defra's Sustainable Procurement Policy Statement, and minimising its own environmental impact.

Suppliers are asked to consider social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainability in all in scope procurements for APHA, and this is evaluated and forms part of the decision-making in tender awards. The aim is to buy more sustainable and efficient products and engage with suppliers to understand and reduce the environmental impacts of our supply chain.

Sustainability data

Greenhouse gas emissions		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2017/18 Baseline
Non-financial indicators (tonnes CO2e)	Scope 1: Direct emissions	10,491	10,391	9,073	9,045
	Scope 2: Energy indirect emissions	4,534	4,729	4,011	7,969
	Scope 3: Official business travel emissions	1,163	993	1,607	1,823
	Total emissions	16,188	16,113	14,690	18,837
	Direct emissions from Buildings	10,068	9,766	9,016	8,882
Financial Indicator (£)	Expenditure on official business travel	1,284,146	1,107,084	753,907	Not reported in this year

Official business travel includes air travel, rail travel, taxis, car mileage, short-term car rental and bus.

Flights	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2017/18 Baseline
Emissions from domestic flights (tonnes CO2e)	37	29	Not reported in these years	
Emissions from international flights (tonnes CO2e)	443	322	Not reported in these years	
Number of domestic flights	360	398	Not reported in these years	
Distance of domestic flights (kms)	228,399	182,067	Not reported in these years	
Distance of international flights (kms)	3,054,672	2,441,525	Not reported in these years	

Flight emissions were not reported before 2023/24. Previous years' data on flight emissions has been revised from last year's publication to incorporate corrections.

Waste management		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2017/18 Baseline
Recovered or recycled (tonnes)	Recycled or reused	1,561.12	1,539.22	975.21	186.50
	Composted	3.95	0.00	5.02	4.99
	Incinerated with energy recovery	127.08	657.07	731.83	897.98
Total waste recovered or reused		1,692.15	2,196.30	1,712.07	1,089.46
Not recovered or recycled (tonnes)	Incinerated without energy recovery	257.48	363.92	329.42	379.67
	Landfilled	0.62	4.14	7.72	14.93
Total waste (tonnes)		1,950.25	2,564.36	2,049.16	1,484.07
Percentage (%) recovered or reused		86.94	85.65	83.55	73.41

Energy and Water		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2017/18 Baseline
Energy Consumption (kWh)	Oil	1,264,663	1,290,520	668,256	985,541
	Non-renewable Electricity	21,898,857	22,838,539	20,769,960	22,668,330
	Renewable Electricity	0	42,665		
	Gas	52,951,915	47,863,030	48,450,493	46,749,868
	Biomass	0	0	0	774
Water consumption (m3)		148,146	150,407	32,446	127,850
Financial Indicators (£)	Oil/Carbon	117,214	299,987	73,835	Not reported in this year
	Electricity	5,811,124	5,268,706	4,209,871	Not reported in this year
	Gas	3,166,727	1,941,171	2,621,206	Not reported in this year
	Water	264,794	177,914	136,745	Not reported in this year
Total Energy and Water Expenditure		9,359,859	7,687,778	7,041,658	Not reported in this year

Paper use	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2017/18 Baseline
Paper use (A4 reams equivalent)	936	3053	1,495	7,898
% reduction from baseline	88%	61%	81%	n/a

Fleet Data 24/25	Total Vehicles	Pure EV	% EV
Total	434	107	25%

APHA had an average monthly FTE of 3,282 for 2024/25.

Shared buildings within Defra group have been apportioned according to floor space occupancies.

Electricity consumption was not previously classified as non-renewable or renewable.

Defra group does not have the data for APHA to report on the expenditure on the different forms of waste.

Financial review

APHA's total operating expenditure for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 was £418 million, £13 million higher than the £405 million in the previous year. The increase in expenditure was driven by increased headcount, exotic disease outbreak costs and an increase in non-current asset impairments, partially offset by lower Defra corporate services charges.

More detail on staff costs and other expenditure is provided in the Staff Report and Note 3 of the Financial Statements respectively.

APHA's total income was £87 million (2023/24: £83 million), of which nearly 50% came from the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. We plan to increase fee and charge rates over the next two years to ensure that full cost recovery is achieved across all existing schemes. This time frame reflects the need for relevant approvals and legislative changes.

The total operating expenditure of £418 million was funded by the operating income of £87 million (21%), leaving comprehensive net expenditure of £331 million to be funded by Defra.

The operational challenges during the year, such as the impact of disease outbreaks, have been managed through the re-allocation of resources and additional funding from Defra and the devolved administrations. We worked closely with Defra to ensure that we operated within budget and funding limits.

Our future financial priorities are based on continuing to improve financial capabilities, developing external income streams, and identifying efficiency and value for money initiatives to help to offset future inflationary and funding pressures.

We are required to treat supply funding from Defra as financial contributions because they are from our sponsoring body. Therefore, we credit these directly to the general reserve and do not include them in our net expenditure in the financial statements.

Non-current assets

Non-current assets, which include both operational assets such as science equipment and corporate assets such as property and IT, have decreased by £7 million compared to last year. The net book value (NBV) of our non-current asset base is £307 million (2023/24: £314 million). The construction of property and IT assets are managed by Defra group Corporate Services on behalf of APHA. Assets are then transferred to APHA on completion. Further details are provided in Notes 5 and 6.

We are required to carry out an independent five-yearly revaluation of our land and buildings, with a desktop exercise in the intervening years. The revaluation in March 2025 resulted in increases and decreases in building values and the overall result is a net £11 million downwards revaluation. This review also considered the remaining economic life and change of use of the buildings as part of the redevelopment of the Weybridge estate. More detail is provided in Note 5.

Going concern

The statement of financial position at 31 March 2025 shows taxpayers' equity of £305 million (31 March 2024: £315 million). In common with other government executive agencies, the future funding for our liabilities will come from Defra and other external income.

The Government makes decisions about Defra's funding through HM Treasury's Spending Review process and a proportion of this funding is then allocated to APHA. This process sets funding for all government departments. The most recent Spending Review was completed in June 2025 and set departmental revenue funding through to 2028/29 and capital funding to 2029/30. Our functions are required by statute and therefore are expected to continue.

We have already received approval for our Defra funding for next year (up to March 2026), and APHA funding for the following years is currently being finalised as part of Defra business planning.

We expect to be able to continue to provide our services within the constraints of the funding envelope provided and we have therefore prepared these financial statements on a going concern basis.

APHA Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
19 November 2025

Accountability report

Introduction

The purpose of the Accountability Report is to explain our governance structures and how they support the achievement of our objectives.

The Governance Statement sets out how we have managed and controlled our resources during the year. It provides assurance on our corporate governance, how we have managed significant risks and addressed control issues.

The Accountability Report is based on the matters required to be dealt with in a Directors' Report.

The Remuneration and Staff Report provides information on people in APHA and sets out our remuneration policy for directors. It reports on how that policy has been implemented and sets out the amounts awarded to directors.

Director's report

The chief executive as the Accounting Officer has personal responsibility and accountability to Parliament through ministers and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. They are also responsible for the delivery of APHA services and resources, as well as appointing and line managing the directors who sit on the Executive Board.

The chief executive is supported and challenged by the APHA Steering Board and its committees and is managed by Defra's Director General (DG) for Food, Biosecurity and Trade who acts on the Ministers' behalf.

Complaints

During 2024/25, the APHA Executive Office responded to:

- 68 second stage (escalated complaints) (2023/24: 75). The majority of these were related to non-compliant imported pet animals, inspections of imported plants and seeds, bovine TB testing, trade of endangered species and products, and the new mandatory bird registration regulations. Local teams lead on any corrective action or improvements required following customer feedback. These usually include further training or updating guidance.
- 11 internal reviews of complaints (2023/24: 5). These were not all requested by customers; some reviews were due to management decision to verify that the complaint cannot be upheld. Three of these cases were referred to Defra Legal Services for advice.
- One request for information from the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman (2023/24: one).

Access to Information

During 2024/25, APHA received:

- 323 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests (2023/24: 399)
- 36 Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests (2023/24: 35)
- 43 Subject Access Requests (2023/24: 39)

Imports was the frequent topic for requests, particularly queries about the import of dogs and primates. This was followed by avian influenza in poultry.

There were no appeals from the Information Commissioner's Office. (2023/24: one).

Raising concerns

During the year, intranet articles reminded APHA staff on how to raise a concern by following the process for whistleblowing and 'Raising a Concern'.

For 2024/25, there were five concerns raised via the Raising a Concern Champions (2023/24: 11). Two of these five cases are still ongoing and three were completed with no wrongdoing found.

The closed cases led to some recommendations to improve processes, communications and internal efficiencies in APHA. Follow-up actions have ensured that the recommended improvements have been implemented.

Counter fraud

APHA continues to operate in line with the Defra Counter-Fraud and Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy and is working to improve our counter fraud maturity in line with the Government Functional Standard.

In 2024/25, APHA conducted an Organisational Fraud Risk Assessment and agreed Counter Fraud Outcome Based Metrics which subsequently led to an update to the APHA Counter Fraud Strategy, and update to the APHA Counter Fraud Action Plan.

APHA continues to share intelligence and uses best practice to minimise fraud risk. This includes contributing to the Defra Counter Fraud Network, taking part in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) with regular reviews by the APHA Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

During 2024/25, there were 28 instances of detected fraud (value £53k) submitted in the Consolidated Data Request (CDR) returns to the PSFA (2023/24: 28). These were related to staff overpayments that have been referred for debt recovery.

All cases of suspected fraud, bribery and corruption are thoroughly investigated and dealt with appropriately. APHA is committed to protecting public resources, revenue, property, information, and other assets from any attempt, either by members of the public, contractors, and sub-contractors or its own employees, to gain, by deceit, any financial or other benefits.

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, HM Treasury has directed APHA to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form of and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of APHA and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by HM Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis.
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis.
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.
- Confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Accounting Officer of Defra has designated the responsibility of APHA Accounting Officer to the Chief Executive of APHA.

This carries with it responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which they are answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding APHA's assets, as set out in 'Managing Public Money', published by HM Treasury.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that APHA's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

Governance statement

The chief executive of APHA is responsible for maintaining effective governance and a sound system of internal control to achieve the agency's aims and objectives.

This governance statement sets out the key challenges faced by APHA, the issues that have arisen, the risks that remain and the controls in place to manage these.

Assurance and audit findings in this statement confirm that arrangements are effective.

As an executive agency of Defra, APHA provides regular performance reports, risk assessments and other information to Defra, as required, throughout the year. APHA follows the HM Treasury Corporate Governance Code for Central Government.

In addition, the chief executive meets with the ministerial team on a quarterly basis to provide an update on the agency's delivery targets.

The Principal Accounting Officer and Permanent Secretary for Defra, Tamara Finkelstein (at the time), designated the chief executive as Accounting Officer of APHA.

The Accounting Officer is accountable for the delivery and performance of APHA, delivering the priorities set by the Secretary of State for Defra and those of the Scottish and Welsh Governments.

Support and advice are provided on these issues by the APHA Steering Board, which also provides scrutiny, challenge, and support to the APHA Executive Board.

The comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of the assurances provided are scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). During the year these assurances have been appropriate to meet the governance needs of the APHA Steering Board and Accounting Officer, and for supporting the decisions taken.

Executive Board

This Board is chaired by the APHA chief executive. It meets monthly and its remit covers the day-to-day operations and management of APHA. It is the decision-making body for the agency.

Steering Board

During the financial year 2024/25, the Steering Board was chaired by Elizabeth Buchanan, APHA Lead Non-Executive Director. This is an advisory board and comprises the executive and non-executive members of APHA. It met five times during the year. Details of the membership of the Board are in the Remuneration Report.

The Steering Board has received assurance on the quality of data it receives, and the process of internal control from the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Board.

Full details of the Steering Board remit, governance structure, the remit of committees and attendance records are available on APHA's web pages on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/our-governance>

Sub-committees

The new APHA sub-committees mirror the five pillars of the APHA organisational strategy: Innovate, Protect, Promote, People and Place. These were set up to allow the Executive Board more time to invest in strategic planning for the future.

The sub-committees meet monthly ahead of the Executive Board. This allows for urgent matters to be escalated to the Executive Board if necessary. The sub-committees have delegated authority to make decisions relevant to the strategy pillars and day-to-day operational matters.

The chairs for the sub-committees during 2024/25 were:

- Innovate – Andrew Soldan, APHA Veterinary Director
- Protect – Irene Cristofaro, APHA Veterinary Director
- Promote – Nicola Hirst, APHA Service Delivery Director
- People and Place – Yvonne Spencer APHA Director of Science Capability

Other committees

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) is chaired by Lizzie Peers APHA Non-Executive Director. The committee met five times during 2024/25. It supports the Steering Board and the Accounting Officer (AO) by reviewing, and providing independent assurances on:

- the effectiveness, reliability and integrity of the agency's governance arrangements,
- risk management and control environment,
- financial statements and the APHA Annual Report and Accounts, and
- internal and external audit services.

During 2024/25 the Joint Health and Safety (H&S) Governance Board was jointly

chaired Jenny Stewart, APHA chief executive (interim) and James Greenway, Director of Defra group Property.

It met five times during 2024/25 and oversees the delivery of joint APHA and Defra H&S strategies, the H&S plan for APHA and the Defra group Property Weybridge Development Control Plan.

The Science Advisory Board (SAB) is chaired by Professor Laura Green, APHA Non-Executive Director. It met four times during 2024/25, and it oversees the delivery of APHA's scientific work.

Corporate services

APHA receives corporate services from Defra in several areas. As part of the Defra services delivery model, Heads of Profession conduct regular benchmarking and assessments against cross government Functional Standards. The approach to applying Functional Standards has continued to mature across the department during 2024/25. Compliance assessments are in place for all Functional Standards and these are used to determine future development areas.

Assessments have shown that for services received, over half are rated as 'Good' or above ('Better' or 'Best'). The communications service provision is jointly provided between APHA and Defra and its rating is 'Better'. Compliance with functional standards that is led by APHA, counter fraud and project delivery, are rated as 'Good' and 'Developing', respectively. The focus for 2025/26 will be on improving areas which are 'developing' and maintaining compliance levels already assessed at a higher level.

Effectiveness of risk management

The role of APHA is to protect animal and plant health to benefit people, the economy and the environment. We have a corporate approach to risk management and works within the strategy and guidelines set for all parts of the Defra group.

The principal risk register is aligned to the APHA strategy and is used to drive discussions at each Executive Board meeting with regular deep dives on specific topics.

During the year, risk management software was introduced across APHA to assist in recording, mitigation and management of risk.

ARAC oversees and receives regular reports on the risk management policy and effectiveness of risk management arrangements. It also has regular updates or risk-based deep dives on the main areas of risk including:

- delivery of the National Biosecurity Centre (NBC) redevelopment programme at the Weybridge site.
- operational and cyber security risks, with a specific focus on old legacy technology systems in use.
- health, safety and wellbeing culture.
- delivery of the Delivering Sustainable Futures transformation programme and associated benefit reporting.
- capacity and capability risk, and delivery of the People Plan.

Key risks identified and managed during 2024/25

The three main and highest scoring risks on the principal risk register which we focused on during the year, and were also escalated to Defra, were:

- Outbreak response: the ability to respond and protect the UK's animals and plants from concurrent and/or large outbreaks of disease(s). The mitigation plan for this risk is being further developed in our response to the National Audit Office report 'Resilience to Animal Disease' published in June 2025.
- Infrastructure failure: critical infrastructure of APHA's science capability and facilities causing failure to maintain scientific excellence and deliver APHA's Science Strategy.
- Digital and data: the digital estate does not enable APHA to deliver core services.

The risk areas on the principal risk register by strategic pillar are shown in the following table.

Each risk is scored on inherent, residual and target risk, based on the likelihood and impact on a scale of 1 to 25. Residual risk scores have been relatively stable during 2024/25, except for the increased risk from digital and data. The scores at March 2025 are shown in brackets after each of the risks.

 People	 Place	 Protect	 Innovate	 Promote
Capacity and capability, retention, recruitment and development (16)	Infrastructure failure (25)	Outbreak response (20)	Business planning and delivering our outcomes within our funding (16)	Political and policy change (9)
Security (15) Security at Weybridge (20)	Sustainability (12) Climate change (6)	Delivery of statutory requirements (16)	Failure to innovate (12)	External confidence in biosecurity (6)
Health, safety and wellbeing (12)		Border controls (20)	Digital and data (20)	
Change and transformation (12)				

In all these areas of risk, mitigation plans are reviewed regularly to help manage the risks towards more acceptable levels and within risk appetite and tolerances, but in some cases, like our top three risks, they are reliant on Defra dependencies.

The consideration of risk appetite provides a framework which enables APHA to make informed management decisions. Our risk appetite was refreshed in June 2025 following the consideration of organisational business plan risks, issues and consequences.

Appetite levels can vary; in some areas our risk tolerance will be minimal and cautious while in other areas we are open and eager for risk, and willing to carry some risk in the pursuit of important objectives.

We will always aim to operate organisational activities at the levels defined. Where activities are projected to exceed the defined levels, this must be highlighted through appropriate governance mechanisms.

Safety, health and wellbeing

APHA met with the Health and Safety Executive early in 2024 to review our inspection and performance scores for specialist biocontainment in 2024/25 and discuss actions taken following our previous meeting.

Areas for continual improvement include the control and movement of high hazard biological agent work at the Weybridge site, outbreak response, maintaining our regional laboratory network and effective working with Defra; against the backdrop of changes in APHA's senior management.

The reinforcement of good safety culture, roles and responsibilities and developing a refreshed safety vision and annual improvement plan will provide further opportunities for improvement.

The Safety, Health and Welfare (SHaW) team continued to support avian influenza outbreak visits which included attending larger infected premises to conduct safety assurance visits, and to identify lessons learnt.

786 incidents were reported to the SHaW team during 2024/25; four were reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). The top root causes were third parties (other than contractors and sub-contractors, mainly relating to field activities), animal behaviour and poor risk perception.

The reporting of workplace stress cases continues to rise; the majority relate to management shortcomings and personal stressors such as relationships. Colleagues are encouraged to report stress so we can measure and audit our people's wellbeing alongside health and safety incidents.

The team continues to deliver specialist health and safety training courses. A deep dive into mandatory training requirements and compliance in the coming year will ensure we continue to offer the high-quality training that is expected. We continue to work collaboratively with Defra group Property and ISS, our facilities management provider, to address facility-related safe working practices.

Third party assurance and quality management systems

APHA aims to maintain a high standard of quality in all aspects of the delivery of its operational work. Where possible, we seek assurance of the quality of our work through independent third-party assessment from organisations such as the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) and the Bureau Veritas Certification Body.

The laboratory services at APHA are UKAS accredited to BS EN ISO 17025:2017 (Lab No 1769) laboratory competency standard for an extensive range of tests.

Plant health imports and passporting, outbreak management, and bee health foulbrood inspections are accredited to BS EN ISO 17020:2012 inspection standard (Inspection No. 5640). Work is progressing to apply the ISO 17020 standard to animal health field delivery.

APHA offers the VETQAS® independent, ISO 17043 accredited, proficiency testing (PT) service provided by APHA's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU). This is the global market leader in the provision of PT schemes for veterinary laboratories.

APHA is certificated to BS EN ISO 9001:2015 by Bureau Veritas Certification Body for the provision of a range of specialist veterinary scientific services and products to the Government and other interested parties worldwide. We also comply with the Joint Code of Practice for Research projects.

Additionally, we hold a statement of compliance with Good Laboratory Practice in specific departments in support of the licensing of veterinary products. We also hold a certificate of compliance with Good Manufacturing Practice in specific departments as a supplier of contract quality control services, and Good Clinical Practice (veterinary) for clinical studies.

As part of a three-year plan, we are working to implement a quality management framework across the agency, to extend the scope of quality systems in plant, bee and animal health, and embed a new digital quality management system. The system will help embed a consistent approach to quality and audit management. A pilot of the system began with plant and bee health services with plans to further roll out the system in 2025/26.

Information security assurance

APHA holds a significant level of sensitive information equal to its range of statutory requirements and business delivery. Work continues with Defra's Digital, Data, Technology and Security services to remediate our legacy technology estate to mitigate cyber security risks.

There are data collection policies and controls in place which ensure access to information is managed correctly in line with data protection legislation (Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation), Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Freedom of Information Act 2000.

There is a Senior Risk Owner who ensures the overall management of such information. There were no personal data breaches by APHA reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) during 2024/25.

Head of Internal Audit Opinion

The APHA Head of Internal Audit, who is part of the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) provides the APHA internal audit function. GIAA helps ensure that government and the wider public sector provide services effectively. It is an executive agency, sponsored by HM Treasury.

The Head of Internal Audit gave an overall moderate assurance for APHA based on the evidence from the audits during the year and other related assurance pieces. This opinion is based on a scale of unsatisfactory, limited, moderate and substantial. Further information on the quality assurance of government models is available on GOV.UK.

A total of six audits that related to APHA were carried out in this reporting period:

- One audit received 'substantial' assurance (recruitment compliance).
- Two audits received 'moderate' assurance (fee income and health and safety incidents and actions).
- Three audits resulted in a 'limited' assurance (people planner, grey IT and Weybridge health and safety follow-up). The recommendations from these audits have been accepted and either have been, or will be, implemented during 2025/26.
- No audits resulted in an 'unsatisfactory' assurance.

Conclusion

As Accounting Officer, I have considered the evidence provided on the production of the governance statement and the independent advice and assurance provided by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

This evidence included assurance provided by the former Chief Executive (interim), Jenny Stewart, who was Accounting Officer during 2024/25.

I conclude that APHA has appropriate risk management and control systems in place.

Accountability Report: Remuneration Report

The Steering Board

The Steering Board is responsible for supporting and constructively challenging our Executive Board in the development of strategies, plans, business cases and targets and for monitoring our business performance targets.

Name	Position
David Holdsworth	Chief Executive Officer (left on 30 June 2024)
Jenny Stewart	Director of Science (until 30 June 2024) Interim Chief Executive Officer (from 1 July 2024 to 15 June 2025)
Andrew Soldan	Veterinary Director (part-time, job share)
Irene Cristofaro	Interim Veterinary Director (job share, from 1 May 2024)
Nicola Hirst	Service Delivery Director
Michelle Reynolds	Strategy, Planning and Innovation Director
Yvonne Spencer	Director of Science Capability
Rowena Hansen	Interim Director of Science Operations and Research (from 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2024)
Matt Chinn	Director of Science Operations and Research (from 1 September 2024)
Kevin Ingram	Defra Finance Director with responsibility for APHA
Vicki Brookes	Defra HR Director with responsibility for APHA (until 2 March 2025)
Anna Jenkins	Defra HR Director with responsibility for APHA (from 3 March 2025)
Chris Nicholson	Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Steering Board (until 30 April 2024)
Elizabeth Buchanan	Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Steering Board (from 1 April 2024)
Lizzie Peers	Non-Executive Director, Steering Board Member and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair
Laura Green	Non-Executive Director, Steering Board Member and Science

	Advisory Board Chair
Deep Sagar	Non-Executive Director, Steering Board Member and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Member
Mike Venables	Non-Executive Director, Steering Board Member and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Member

A representative from APHA's employee engagement group called Voice (Voice of Improvement, Culture and Engagement) also attends the Steering Board. While they are not members of the Board, they play a key role in representing the view of APHA's employees at Steering Board level. The representative plays a full and active role in Steering Board meetings. They can raise concerns and ensure employees are informed of actions by Steering Board members.

Executive Board

The APHA Executive Board comprises the team of executive directors headed up by the chief executive. The Executive Board sets the strategy and direction of APHA and has overall authority to run the Agency on a day-to-day basis. All members of the APHA Executive Board are members of the APHA Steering Board.

Name	Position
David Holdsworth	Chief Executive Officer (left on 30 June 2024)
Jenny Stewart	Director of Science (until 30 June 2024) Interim Chief Executive Officer (from 1 July 2024 to 15 June 2025)
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Matt Chinn	Director of Science Operations and Research (from 1 September 2024)
Kevin Ingram	Defra Finance Director with responsibility for APHA

Vicki Brookes	Defra HR Director with responsibility for APHA (until 2 March 2025)
Anna Jenkins	Defra HR Director with responsibility for APHA (from 3 March 2025)

Remuneration policy

Defra's Senior Civil Service Pay Committee, chaired by the Permanent Secretary, determines the remuneration and performance conditions of the members of the Executive Board and Steering Board. Consolidated pay awards and non-consolidated bonuses are assessed in accordance with normal Civil Service procedures and Defra's remuneration policy which is subject to the recommendations of the Senior Salaries Review Body.

In reaching its recommendations on remuneration, the Senior Salaries Review Body considers:

- The need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities.
- Regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff.
- Government policies for improving public services including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services.
- The funds available to departments as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits.
- The Government's inflation target.

The Senior Salaries Review Body takes into account the evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations. Further information about its work is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-manpower-economics>.

Service contracts

Civil Service appointments are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Code. This requires appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition, except for circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made.

With the exception of the non-executive directors, the APHA Steering Board members at 31 March 2025 hold open-ended appointments. The employment of the chief executive and of the other executive APHA Steering Board members may be terminated in accordance with normal Civil Service procedures. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in compensation being payable as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

The non-executive directors are typically appointed on three-year fixed term contracts which may be subject to early termination by either party. Any early termination by APHA would be without compensation to the non-executive director.

Salary

The term 'salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This annual report is based on accrued payments made by APHA and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind (Audited)

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by APHA and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. The value of benefits in kind received by directors in 2024/25 is Nil (2023/24: £Nil).

Bonuses (Audited)

Bonuses paid in 2024/25, as part of the performance management review, were assessed and awarded by the chief executive. Performance-related pay was approved at a Defra group level by the Defra remuneration committee.

Remuneration of Non-Executive Directors (Audited)

Name	Period of appointment		Remuneration 2024/25 (£'000)	Remuneration 2023/24 (£'000)
	From	To		
Chris Nicholson	01/05/2018	30/04/2024	0-5 (15-20 FYE)	10-15
Elizabeth Buchanan	01/04/2024	31/03/2027	40-45	-
Mike Venables	01/04/2019	31/03/2026	20-25	10-15
Laura Green	01/12/2021	30/11/2027	10-15	10-15
Deep Sagar	18/07/2022	17/07/2025	10-15	5-10
Elizabeth Peers	13/02/2023	12/02/2026	15-20	15-20

Chris Nicholson completed two 3-years terms in position. He was in post until 30 April 2024. The Full Year Equivalent (FYE) salary banding is 15-20.

Elizabeth Buchanan was appointed as a Non-Executive Director and the Chair of the Steering Board on 1 April 2024. She shared the post with Chris Nicholson until 30 April 2024.

Mike Venables completed two 3-years terms and was extended for one further year.

Laura Green was extended for a second 3-year term.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (Audited)
The emoluments of the APHA Executive Board members in 2024/25

		2024/25				2023/24				
	Salary	Bonus payments	Benefits in kind	Pension benefits	Total	Salary	Bonus payments	Benefits in kind	Pension benefits	Total
	£'000	£'000	Nearest £100	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	Nearest £100	£'000	£'000
David Holdsworth	30-35 (125-130 FYE)	-	-	10	40-45 (135-140 FYE)	120-125	-	-	37	155-160
Andrew Soldan	55-60 (90-95 FTE)	-	-	23	75-80 (115-120 FTE)	75-80 (85-90 FTE)	-	-	-6	70-75 (80-85 FTE)
Kevin Ingram	90-95	0-5	-	48	140-145	85-90	0-5	-	35	125-130
Jenny Stewart	115-120	0-5	-	64	180-185	110-115	-	-	56	165-170
Yvonne Spencer	80-85	5-10	-	84	170-175	75-80	-	-	43	120-125
Nicola Hirst	80-85	0-5	-	74	155-160	75-80	-	-	40	115-120
Vicki Brookes	80-85 (85-90 FYE)	5-10	-	24	110-115 (115-120 FTE)	80-85	-	-	33	115-120
Michelle Reynolds	80-85	-	-	50	130-135	75-80	-	-	32	110-115
Irene Cristofaro	40-45 (75-80 FTE and FYE)	-	-	27	70-75 (105-110 FTE and FYE)	-	-	-	-	-
Rowena Hansen	30-35 (80-85 FYE)	0-5	-	33	65-70 (115-120 FYE)	-	-	-	-	-
Matt Chinn	50-55 (90-95 FYE)	-	-	12	60-65 (100-105 FYE)	-	-	-	-	-
Anna Jenkins	5-10 (100-105 FYE)	-	-	45	50-55 (145-150 FYE)	-	-	-	-	-

Notes

David Holdsworth stepped down from his position as APHA Chief Executive and Accounting Officer on 30 June 2024. He was replaced on an interim basis by Jenny Stewart. The Full Year Equivalent (FYE) salary banding is 125-130.

Andrew Soldan is employed part-time from 1 January 2024; he is in a 60% job share. The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) salary banding is 90-95. Taking account of inflation, the CETV funded by the employer has decreased in real terms in 2023/24.

Although paid by Defra, Kevin Ingram is included because he is a member of the Executive Board and Steering Board and is deemed to be in positions to influence APHA decisions.

Vicki Brookes stepped down as HR Director on 2 March 2025, the FYE salary banding is 90-95. Her salary is presented as her full salary, and not apportioned for any work she did for the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). Although paid by Defra, Vicki Brooks is included because she is a member of the Executive Board and Steering Board and is deemed to be in positions to influence APHA decisions.

Irene Cristofaro joined the Executive Board and Steering Board as Interim Veterinary Director from 1 May 2024 and is employed in a 60% job share. The FYE and FTE salary banding is 75-80.

Rowena Hansen covered the Director of Science Operations and Research position on an interim basis from 1 April 2024 until 31 August 2024. The FYE salary banding is 80-85.

Matt Chinn commenced the role of Director of Science Operations and Research on 1 September 2024. The FYE salary banding is 90-95.

Anna Jenkins commenced the role of APHA HR Director on 3 March 2024. The FYE salary banding is 100-105. Although paid by Defra, Anna Jenkins is included because she is a member of the Executive Board and Steering Board and is deemed to be in positions to influence APHA decisions.

Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment.

The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the Alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

Pension benefits (Audited)

Directors on the APHA Executive Board as at 31 March 2025

	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31 March 2025 £'000	Accrued lump sum at pension age as at 31 March 2025 £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £'000	CETV at 31 March 2025 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership pension account £'000
David Holdsworth	30-35	80-85	0-2.5	617	605	5	-
Andrew Soldan	5-10	-	0-2.5	93	66	19	-
Kevin Ingram	10-15	-	2.5-5	174	127	36	-
Jenny Stewart	50-55	-	2.5-5	928	833	49	-
Yvonne Spencer	40-45	110-115	2.5-5 plus a lump sum of 5-7.5	1054	933	81	-
Nicola Hirst	35-40	15-20	2.5-5 plus a lump sum of 0-2.5	722	633	60	-
Vicki Brookes	45-50	-	0-2.5	979	931	12	-
Michelle Reynolds	45-50	-	2.5-5	789	710	38	-
Irene Cristofaro	10-15	-	0-2.5	131	106	15	-
Rowena Hansen	15-20	-	0-2.5	213	185	20	-
Matt Chinn	40-45	110-115	0-2.5	998	962	6	-
Anna Jenkins	55-60	-	0-2.5	1221	1165	34	-

Note: Although they are paid by Defra, Kevin Ingram, Vicki Brookes and Anna Jenkins are included because they are members of the Executive Board and are deemed to be in positions to influence APHA decisions.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme.

A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension scheme arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost.

CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Compensation for loss of office (Audited)

No amounts have been paid during the year in respect of compensation or awards to former directors or senior managers.

Fair pay disclosures (Audited)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year for both salary and performance pay in respect of the highest paid director in their organisation and the average percentage change in respect of the employees of the organisation taken as a whole.

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) of pensions.

	2024/25	2023/24
Annualised band of highest paid director salary (£'000)	125-130	120-125
Annualised band of highest paid director remuneration (£'000)	125-130	120-125
Highest paid director remuneration (midpoint of pay band) (£)	127,500	122,500
The percentage change from previous financial year in respect of highest paid director	4.08%	8.89%

The percentage change in 2024/25 is a result of yearly pay review. The calculation is based on the annualised, full-time equivalent of staff in post as at the reporting date.

The banded remuneration of permanent employees in APHA ranged from £20,000-£25,000 to £125,000-£130,000 (2023/24: £20,000-£25,000 to £120,000-£125,000). In 2024/25. No permanent staff received full-time equivalent remuneration in excess of the highest paid director (2023/24: Nil).

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the 25th percentile, median and the 75th percentile remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The ratios between the mid-point of the banded remuneration (excluding pension benefit) of the highest paid director and the lower quartile, median, and upper quartile for staff remuneration are as follows:

	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
2024/25	4.5 : 1	3.9 : 1	3.0 : 1
2023/24	4.8 : 1	4.1 : 1	3.1 : 1

The lower quartile, median, and upper quartile for staff salaries and total pay and benefits are as follows:

	Lower Quartile		Median		Upper Quartile	
	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25	2023/24
Salary (£)	25,839	23,811	29,578	28,200	41,200	39,439
Total pay and Benefits (£)	28,680	25,561	32,504	29,803	41,953	39,439

In 2023/24 all employees below SCS grade received a one-off cost of living bonus of £1,500 included in the Total Pay and Benefits calculations shown above.

The average percentage change in total pay and benefits from the previous financial year for employees, as a whole, has increased by 5.4% in 2024/25 to £35,896 (2023/24: £34,052).

Accountability Report: Staff Report

Staff costs (Audited)

	2024/25	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Wages and salaries	115,547	107,716
Social security costs	12,581	11,658
Pension costs	31,865	26,399
Agency staff costs	13,565	17,125
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(188)	(268)
Total staff costs	173,370	162,630

The apprenticeship levy was introduced from 1 April 2017 and payment of the levy is considered a form of taxation. The levy is included in the social security costs contributions line in the table above.

Recoveries in respect of outward secondments relate to staff seconded to other Defra group organisations, the devolved administrations or other government bodies.

APHA has a consultancy spend of £2,513k for the year ended 31 March 2025 (2023/24: £4,175k). This is included in Operating Costs, Programme Service Delivery Costs shown in Note 3.

Under IAS 19 Employee Benefits, an accrual has been established for staff leave due, but not taken at 31 March 2025; this employee benefit is payable in 2025/26. This accrual is included within the wages and salaries line 2024/25: £6,850k (2023/24: £7,186k).

Agency staff costs have been separately identified as they are not employed staff. The numbers have been included in the table of average number of full-time equivalent staff.

Staff cost capitalisation in 2024/25 attributed to agency staff £433k and permanent staff £72k (2023/24: agency staff £50k and permanent staff £17k). The capitalised cost is included in the capital additions to Intangible Assets shown in Note 6 – Intangible Assets.

Pension contributions (Audited)

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but APHA is unable to identify its share of the underlying liabilities. The Government Actuary's Department assesses the scheme liabilities, assumptions and financial position each year.

Details are in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office - Civil Superannuation at <http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/>.

The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the Alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

In 2024/25, employer's contributions of £31,550k were payable to the PCSPS (2023/24: £25,996k) at one of four rates in the range 26.6% to 30.3% of pensionable pay based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2024/25.

A new pension scheme, alpha, was introduced from 1 April 2015. The majority of Principal Civil Service Scheme members (includes classic, classic plus, premium and nuvos) have moved to alpha. Most new members will also join alpha.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension or a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employer's contributions of £256k (2023/24: £232k) were paid to appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age related and range from 8% to 14.75% of pensionable pay.

APHA also matches employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable pay. There were £Nil (2023/24: £Nil) employer contributions to the PCSPS to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirements of employees.

Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the 31 March 2025 were £8k (2023/24: £8k).

Four members of staff retired early on ill-health grounds in 2024/25 (2023/24: one). The total additional accrued pension liabilities in the year amounted to £36k (2023/24: £11k).

Analysis of the average number of persons employed (Audited)

Average number of full-time equivalent staff	2024/25	2023/24
(Audited)	FTE	FTE
Permanently employed staff	2,870	2,661
Agency staff	126	170
Fixed term contracts and inward secondment	222	181
Temporary employed staff	64	102
	3,282	3,114

Number of senior civil servants or equivalent by pay band at 31 March 2025 (Audited)

Senior staff by pay band	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Pay band 3	0	0
Pay band 2	1	2
Pay band 1	6	5

The remuneration and emoluments of the Executive Board are set out in the Remuneration Report on page 46 to 55.

Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages (Audited)

During the year no employees left APHA under early release schemes (2023/24: Nil).

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year that the exit package is agreed.

Where the employer has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the employer and not by the Civil Service Pension Scheme. Any ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table. There were no compulsory redundancies during 2024/25 (2023/24: Nil).

Staff turnover

The staff turnover percentage for APHA is 8.4%. The reasons for leaving are shown in the table below.

Reason for leaving	Number of staff
Retirement	62
Death in service	1
Resignation	153
End of casual, period, conditional or provisional appointment or end of contract by mutual consent	59
Dismissal	6
Other reason for leaving (includes discharged probation and other)	7

Equal Opportunities and Corporate Social Responsibility

APHA aims to be a diverse and inclusive employer that can attract and retain talented people from the widest range of backgrounds and offer all our staff equality of opportunity to progress and achieve their potential on merit.

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a duty to promote equality of opportunity in the delivery of our services and employment on the grounds of disability, gender, race, age, gender-reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

APHA participates in a recruitment system that guarantees an interview to any candidate who has declared a disability and meets the minimum essential criteria for the post. In addition, we have a mandatory e-learning course on unconscious bias for all employees who recruit, interview and manage the performance of others. The aim of the training is to raise awareness and support all our employees in becoming diversity confident.

We actively consider temporary and permanent reasonable adjustments to enable every employee to be fully effective in their employment, training, career development and promotion. Disability leave is also available which provides paid time off work for the purposes of assessment, treatment and rehabilitation for disabled employees.

Sickness absence is closely monitored and policies are in place to reduce absence and to support people so that they can remain at work, including return-to-work interviews and occupational health advice.

Wellbeing support and advisory services are available through our contracted Employee Assistance Programme, or our internal Wellbeing Advisor. Training offering guidance on personal resilience and managing stress is available, and we have mental health first aiders supported by Wellbeing Champions.

There are several ways that colleagues and managers can recognise and reward people. There are online cards and awards, a long service recognition scheme and APHA can submit nominations for the annual Defra group and Civil Service Awards, and HM King's Birthday and New Year Honours.

We participate in the annual Civil Service People Survey which gathers feedback on employees' views and experience of working in the Civil Service. In 2024, APHA had a high response rate of 74% with an overall engagement score of 63% (2023: 57%). The feedback from the survey will be built into our activities of implementing our strategy and business plan.

Further information on People Survey results is available in table 3 of the benchmark scores document on GOV.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-people-survey-2024-results>

Gender split 31 March 2025	Female	Male
Directors	5	2
Senior managers	154	133
Other staff	1,885	1,192

Gender split 31 March 2024	Female	Male
Directors	4	3
Senior managers	135	123
Other staff	1,742	1,121

Sickness absence data	2024/25	2023/24
Number of sick days	17,049	14,868
Number of staff	3,099	2,922
Average days lost per employee	5.50	5.09

The tables above exclude temporary APHA staff and temporary agency staff.

Trade Union facility time

In accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication requirements) Regulations 2017, the following is a summary of the number of trade union (TU) officials in APHA and facility time used by this group during 2024/25.

- 24 (22.9 FTE) employees were TU representatives (2023/24: 15 (14.3 FTE)). Of these, 24 employees (2023/24: 15) spent up to 50% of their working hours on facility time.
- The total cost of the facility time was £82,340 (2023/24: £46,410) which is 0.05% (2023/24: 0.03%) of the total pay bill. The total pay bill cost was £159,093k (2023/24: £144,722k).

Review of tax arrangements of public sector appointees

As part of the Review of Tax Arrangements of Public Sector Appointees published by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 23 May 2012, departments and their arms' length bodies must publish information on highly paid and senior off-payroll engagements. The following data is required to be reported.

Highly paid off-payroll worker engagements as at 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater	
Number of existing engagements as of 31 March 2025 of which:	37
• has existed for less than one year at the time of reporting	37
• has existed for between one and two years at the time of reporting	-
• has existed for between two and three years at the time of reporting	-
• has existed for between three and four years at the time of reporting	-
• has existed for between four or more years at the time of reporting	-

All highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater	
Number of off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2025 of which:	80
Not subject to off-payroll legislation	80
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as in-scope of IR35	-
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as out-of-scope of IR35	-
Number of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year of which:	-
Number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	-
Number of engagements where the status was disputed under provisions in the off-payroll legislation	-
Number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	-
Number of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year of which:	-
Number of engagements that saw a change to IR35 status following review	-

For any off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility, between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	
Number of off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility, during the financial year.	-
Total number of individuals on and off-payroll that have been deemed board members, and / or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility during the financial year. This figure should include both on-payroll and off-payroll engagements.	15

Accountability Report: Parliamentary Accountability Report

Regularity of expenditure (Audited)

The Accounting Officer and the Steering Board are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds through the scrutiny of finance, performance and risk reports provided to them and their sub-committees, as detailed in the Governance Statement.

Their opinion is that there have been no material instances of irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance during the financial year. Instances of fraud are reported in the Governance Statement.

Fees and charges (Audited)

APHA's fees and charges are approved by Ministers and then set in statute. Our objective for charging is to ensure that we recover our estimated actual costs for delivering the service. Eligible recoverable costs are guided by HM Treasury's Managing Public Money handbook.

Existing plant varieties and seeds fees (Seed Marketing Regulations 2011 and National Listing/Plant Breeders Rights) are at full cost recovery, while the majority of Animal Health and Plant Health fees have under-recovered. Therefore, we are progressing with our uplift of existing fees for these services. We are also looking to extend animal health charging into other statutory areas, subject to consultation.

This table sets out the amount of income we have received across the different legislative areas of service which APHA provides.

Legislation	Total income received	Total expenditure
	£'000	£'000
The Plant Health etc. (Fees) (England) Regulations 2019	8,586	11,853
Animal Health Regulations 2013 (2018 Amendments)	2,151	4,814
The Seed Marketing Regulations 2011	1,950	1,772
National Listing (NL)/Plant Breeders Rights (PBR)	1,638	1,675
The Animal By-Products and Pet Passport Regulations 2018 (2023 Amendments)	787	959
The Disease of animals (Approved Disinfectants) 2011 (2022 Amendments)	211	270
The Ivory Prohibitions (Exemptions) Regulations 2022	174	354
Other animal health legislation	107	148
Total	15,604	21,846

Remote contingent liabilities (Audited)

APHA does not have any remote Contingent Liabilities as at 31 March 2025; this was the same as at 31 March 2024.

Losses and Special payments (Audited)

Managing Public Money requires a statement showing losses and special payments by value and type to be shown where they exceed £300,000 in total, and those individually that exceed £300,000.

Losses may relate to: cash and stores losses; bookkeeping losses; losses arising from failure to make adequate charge for the use of public property or services; fruitless payments, and claims abandoned as well as frauds.

Special payments may relate to extra contractual, extra statutory, and ex gratia payments and compensation.

There were no losses or special payments which exceeded £300k in 2024/25 (2023/24: Nil).

APHA Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

19 November 2025

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Animal and Plant Health Agency for the year ended 31 March 2025 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

The financial statements comprise the Animal and Plant Health Agency's

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2025;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Animal and Plant Health Agency's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and its Total net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and HM Treasury directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 *Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2024)*. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2024*. I am independent of the Animal and Plant Health Agency in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Animal and Plant Health Agency's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Animal and Plant Health Agency's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Animal and Plant Health Agency is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate and report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Animal and Plant Health Agency and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Reports.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Animal and Plant Health Agency or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Animal and Plant Health Agency from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view and are in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; and
- assessing the Animal and Plant Health Agency's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Animal and Plant Health Agency will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Animal and Plant Health Agency's accounting policies, key performance indicators and performance incentives.
- inquired of management, the Animal and Plant Health Agency's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Animal and Plant Health Agency's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Animal and Plant Health Agency's controls relating to the Animal and Plant Health Agency's compliance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Animal and Plant Health Agency's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud,
- discussed with the engagement team and the external specialists, including on property where specialist expertise was engaged on the audit, regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Animal and Plant Health Agency for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Animal and Plant Health Agency's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Animal and Plant Health Agency operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Animal and Plant Health Agency. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Managing Public Money, employment law, pensions legislation and tax legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Committee and in-house legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board; and internal audit reports; and
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members including external specialists and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at:

www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General

Date 20 November 2025

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Financial Statements

Statement of comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025

		2024/25	2023/24
	Note	£'000	£'000
Revenue from contracts with customers	4	(86,494)	(82,572)
Other operating income	4	(204)	-
Total operating income		(86,698)	(82,572)
Staff costs	3	173,370	162,630
Total staff costs		173,370	162,630
Other operating costs			
Official veterinarian costs	3	48,984	47,023
Operating costs	3	82,526	76,740
Non-cash costs	3	113,616	118,485
Total non-staff costs		245,126	242,248
Total operating expenditure		418,496	404,878
Total net expenditure		331,798	322,306
Other comprehensive expenditure			
Net loss / (gain) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	5	(9,057)	(9,466)
Net loss / (gain) on revaluation of intangibles	6	(319)	(163)
Total comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025		322,422	312,677

All expenditure is derived from continuing operations.

The notes on pages 76-100 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025

		31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	Note	£'000	£'000
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	5.1	263,942	282,038
Right of Use assets	5.2	4,129	3,108
Intangible assets	6	39,246	28,944
Total non-current assets		307,317	314,090
Current assets			
Inventories	8	5,632	5,198
Trade receivables and other current assets	9	36,044	37,668
Cash and cash equivalents	10	3,593	13,505
Total current assets		45,269	56,371
Total assets		352,586	370,461
Current liabilities			
Trade payables and other liabilities	11	(43,559)	(52,449)
Lease liabilities	5.2	(1,744)	(1,141)
Total current liabilities		(45,303)	(53,590)
Total assets less current liabilities		307,283	316,871
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	5.2	(2,634)	(2,363)
Total non-current liabilities		(2,634)	(2,363)
Assets less liabilities		304,649	314,508
Taxpayers' equity			
General fund		187,191	188,525
Revaluation reserve		117,458	125,983
Total taxpayers' equity		304,649	314,508

The notes on pages 76 to 100 form part of these financial statements.

APHA Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

19 November 2025

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2025

	2024/25	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net operating income / (expenditure)	(331,798)	(322,306)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions	113,617	118,485
(Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	1,624	(9,558)
(Increase) / decrease in inventories	(434)	(117)
Increase / (decrease) in trade payables	(8,695)	9,056
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(225,686)	(204,440)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(1,794)	(2,575)
Purchase of intangible assets	(11,084)	(5,911)
Proceeds from the disposal of non-current assets	248	10
Net cash outflow from investing activities	(12,630)	(8,476)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Net cash requirement received from Defra	230,000	201,500
Capital element of payment in respect of finance leases	(1,596)	(564)
Net cash outflow from financing activities	228,404	200,936
Change in cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April	13,505	25,485
(Decrease) / Increase in cash	(9,912)	(11,980)
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March	3,593	13,505

The notes on pages 76 to 100 form part of these financial statements.

Statement of changes in taxpayers' equity for the year ended 31 March 2025

		General	Revaluation	Total
		Fund	Reserve	Reserves
	Note	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April 2023		215,728	131,261	346,989
Transfers between reserves		14,907	(14,907)	-
Non-cash charges - notional charges	3	79,299	-	79,299
Non-cash adjustments		(603)	-	(603)
Net expenditure for the year		(322,306)	-	(322,306)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	5	-	9,466	9,466
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangible assets	6	-	163	163
Parliamentary funding received from Defra		201,500	-	201,500
Balance at 31 March 2024		188,525	125,983	314,508
Transfers between reserves		17,901	(17,901)	-
Non-cash charges - notional charges	3	67,198	-	67,198
Non-cash adjustments		15,365	-	15,365
Net expenditure for the year		(331,798)	-	(331,798)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	5	-	9,057	9,057
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangible assets	6	-	319	319
Parliamentary funding received from Defra		230,000	-	230,000
Balance at 31 March 2025		187,191	117,458	304,649

The notes on pages 76 to 100 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

1.1. Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2024/25 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury.

The accounting policies in the FReM adapt and interpret International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for the public sector and comply with the guidelines issued by the International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, these accounts follow the treatment which is most appropriate to give a true and fair view for APHA. The policies adopted by APHA are described in this statement. These policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material in relation to the accounts.

1.2. Accounting Convention

These accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis, under the historical cost convention, modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets. The accruals basis of accounting means reporting income and expenditure when it is incurred rather than when it is received or paid.

In common with other government executive agencies, the future funding for APHA liabilities will come from Defra and other external income. Defra confirms funding on an annual basis and there is no reason to believe that future approvals will not be made.

APHA expects to be able to continue to provide services within the constraints of the funding envelope provided and have therefore prepared these financial statements on a going concern basis.

1.3. Significant Judgements and Estimation Uncertainty

The following areas represent significant judgements that APHA has made in applying the accounting policies:

Non-Current Assets

APHA land and buildings are part of large science estate, primarily based at the Weybridge site. Buildings are valued on the Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) basis.

Estimates inherent in the DRC valuations:

Cost estimates for modern equivalent assets of the APHA buildings, remaining lives for the buildings, the appropriate indices to deploy to provide annual changes to costs and the location weighting. The key judgements are that, following review of information from external valuers, the cost estimates used are appropriate for the building type and the remaining lives align with the business' expectations (See Note 1.8.2).

Estimation and assumptions inherent when considering impairment:

APHA is developing plans for the Weybridge site redevelopment. These may impact on the remaining lives of some of the buildings and also the maintenance priorities. The key judgement is therefore around which buildings may be impacted by the Weybridge/ National Biosecurity Centre (NBC) plans and the point in time when they may cease service; and any related impairment required.

At the time of signing the APHA Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25, the full business case has not been finalised and therefore the impairments have been limited to buildings which are already known to be withdrawn from use (See Notes 3, 5 and 6).

Intangible assets are mainly sourced from Defra. APHA applies judgement at the point ownership of Assets Under Construction (AUC) pass from Defra to APHA, (the home of the judgement), and are recognised under IAS38.

APHA then assesses and judges the most appropriate measurement and remaining useful lives of intangible assets aligned with business expectations.

1.4. Income Recognition

Operating income disclosed in the accounts relates directly to the operating activities of APHA. Under the previous accounting policies, income was recognised on an accruals basis using work undertaken during the year to ascertain the stage of completion for service contracts. Under IFRS15 income is recognised when the performance obligations in the contract are satisfied.

APHA recognises revenue from contracts with customers in accordance with the five-stage model set out in IFRS15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers. These steps are:

Step 1. Identify contract(s) with a customer: a contract is defined as an agreement between two or more parties that creates enforceable rights and obligations and sets out the criteria for every contract that must be met.

Step 2. Identify performance obligations in the contract: a performance obligation is a promise in a contract with a customer to transfer a good or service to the customer.

Step 3. Determine the transaction price: the transaction price is the amount of consideration to which APHA expects to be entitled in exchange for transferring promised goods or services to a customer, excluding amounts collected on behalf of third parties.

Step 4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations in the contract: for a contract that has more than one performance obligation, APHA allocates the transaction price to each performance obligation in an amount that depicts the amount of consideration to which APHA expects to be entitled in exchange for satisfying each performance obligation.

Step 5. Recognise revenue when (or as) a performance obligation is satisfied.

Details of APHA's main performance obligations, how and when they are satisfied, and the determination of transaction prices are detailed in Note 4.

Where income is received for a specific activity which is to be delivered in a subsequent financial year, or for income in the current year but the performance obligation in the contract is not satisfied, then that income is deferred and recognised as a contract liability in the accounts.

Income from the sale of non-current assets is recognised only when all material conditions of sale have been met and are measured as the sums due under the sale contract.

1.5. Financing from Defra

APHA receives funding that is classified as 'resource' or 'revenue' (to fund operating expenditure) or 'capital' (to fund expenditure on items providing longer term benefit). This funding is treated as financing received from its controlling party, which is Defra. The receipts are recorded as a financing transaction and are credited directly to the general reserve in the statement of financial position and not through the statement of comprehensive net expenditure.

1.6. Expenditure on Goods and Services

Expenditure on goods and services is recognised when and the extent that they have been received. It is measured at the fair value of those goods and services. Expenditure is recognised in operating expenses except where it results in the creation of a non-current asset such as property, plant and equipment.

1.7. Expenditure on Employee Benefits

1.7.1 Short-term Employee Benefits

Salaries, wages and employment-related payments are recognised in the period in which the service is received from employees. The cost of annual leave entitlement earned but not taken by employees at the end of the period is recognised in the financial statements to the extent that employees are permitted to carry forward leave into the following period.

1.7.2 Pension Costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The scheme is an unfunded, defined benefit scheme. It is not possible for APHA to identify its share of the underlying scheme liabilities. Therefore, the scheme is accounted for as a defined contribution scheme. Employer's pension cost contributions are charged to operating expenditure on an accruals basis.

APHA recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for the payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS.

In respect of the defined contribution schemes, APHA recognises the contributions payable for the year.

Additional pension liabilities arising from early retirements are not funded by the scheme and APHA meets the additional cost. Although the Early Departure Provision for additional pension costs is a liability of APHA, it is actually paid by Defra. Pension arrangements are described in the Staff Report.

1.8 Non-Current Assets

1.8.1 Recognition

Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised in the month expenditure is incurred when:

- it is held for use in delivering services or for administrative purposes.
- it is expected to be used for more than one financial year end.
- the cost of the item can be measured reliably.
- it individually has a cost of at least £10,000.
- it collectively has a cost of at least £10,000 where the assets are functionally interdependent, the individual items have broadly simultaneous disposal dates and are under single managerial control.

APHA occupies both specialist laboratory and general administrative accommodation. Although legal ownership of both types of property lies with Defra, as APHA derives direct economic benefit from the specialist accommodation which allows for the charging of tests and research, these properties are included in the Statement of Financial Position (SoFP) of APHA.

The split of this disclosure is made on a site by site basis and includes sites where APHA has enhanced a property originally held by Defra under the terms of an operating lease in order to bring that property to a condition fit for purpose for APHA's operations.

Capital expenditure by Defra is transferred via the general fund and recognised on APHA's fixed asset register when the asset is available for use.

Title to the freehold land and buildings shown in the accounts is held as follows:

- I. All freehold land and buildings comprising the farms attached to the main laboratory site at Weybridge are held in the name of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;
- II. All freehold land and buildings at the main laboratory site at Weybridge and at any of the Regional Laboratories are Civil Estate property.

1.8.2 Measurement

1.8.2.1 Valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment

All property, plant and equipment assets are measured initially at cost, representing the costs directly attributable to acquiring or constructing the asset and bringing it to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

Freehold land and buildings are stated at fair value and are professionally revalued at least every five years at Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC), in accordance with guidance issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), in so far as these terms are consistent with the agreed requirements of the Financial Reporting Manual and HM Treasury. The latest revaluation took place on 31 March 2025 and was carried out by the Defra-appointed external valuer Montagu Evans, and covered all freehold land and buildings.

Property values are scrutinised annually by means of a desktop review undertaken by external valuers, where every valuation is reviewed having regard to local and national indices and local knowledge. This professional independent valuation adheres to the principles outlined in the RICS Red Book.

Every five years, when the land and buildings are professionally revalued, the accumulated depreciation is reset to zero, whereas the revaluation in the intervening years is adjusted through both cost and depreciation.

APHA transfer revaluation reserves to meet the costs of excess depreciation charges in the general fund, to the extent an individual asset has accumulated a revaluation reserve.

Assets Under Construction are not revalued until the asset concerned is brought into service.

1.8.2.2 Valuation of Intangible Assets

Software licences are valued at historic cost. They are capitalised where the licence period is for more than two years, and the cost is greater than £10,000. Software licences are amortised over the term of the licence or their useful economic life, if shorter.

Internally generated software and software licences are regularly revalued by using appropriate indices provided by the Office for National Statistics.

APHA employs Defra Digital, Data, Technology & Security (DDTS) to develop key platforms and where the costs give rise to assets, which meet the IAS 38 recognition criteria, these amounts are capitalised. Where costs do not meet this, they are expensed in year.

Intangible Assets Under Construction are not depreciated or revalued until the asset concerned is brought into service.

1.8.2.3 Subsequent Expenditure

Subsequent expenditure on both Tangible and Intangible Assets is capitalised if the criteria for initial capitalisation are met; if it is probable that economic benefits will flow to APHA and that the cost of the expenditure can be reliably measured.

1.8.2.4 Research and Development

APHA's expenditure on research activities is written off to the SoCNE as it is incurred in view of the uncertainty surrounding the economic benefit resulting from it. APHA carries out research into animal related diseases on behalf of Defra. Capitalisation of development costs is contingent on fulfilling the criteria in IAS 38 (Intangible Assets).

1.8.3 Depreciation and Amortisation

Land and properties under construction are not depreciated. Tangible Assets Under Construction are not depreciated until the asset is available for use. Otherwise, depreciation and amortisation are charged on a straight-line basis to write off the costs or valuation of tangible and intangible non-current assets, less any residual value, over their estimated lives.

The estimated useful economic life of an asset is the period over which APHA expects to obtain economic benefits or service potential from the asset. This is specific to APHA and may be shorter than the physical life of the asset itself. The estimated useful lives and residual values are reviewed each year end, with the effect of any changes recognised on a prospective basis.

Useful economic lives applied for depreciation charges	
Buildings	5 - 60 years
Office equipment and furniture	5 - 15 years
IT assets	2 - 20 years
Plant and motor vehicles	5 - 30 years
Scientific equipment	5 - 10 years

A full month's depreciation is charged to the SoCNE in the month of acquisition and assets are not depreciated in the month of disposal.

Useful economic lives applied for depreciation charges	
Software licences	2 - 15 years
Internally generated software	2 - 15 years

Amortisation of Intangible Assets commences when the developed asset is fully brought into use and is based on a systematic allocation over the period during which APHA is expected to benefit from the use of the intangible asset.

APHA does not hold any intangible assets with an indefinite useful life.

1.8.4 Impairment

APHA reviews its assets annually to identify those where the recoverable amount of assets falls below their carrying amount. The treatment of any impairment losses is dependent on whether they are result of:

- Consumption of economic benefit or reduction in service potential; if this is the case the loss is taken to the SoCNE.
- A change in market value; in this case the fall in value will first be offset against the accumulated balance in the revaluation reserve (if any) and, once that element of the reserve is exhausted, the remainder of the fall in value will be taken to the SoCNE.

1.9 Leases and APHA as a Lessee

Liabilities are measured at the present value of unavoidable future lease payments. Right of Use (ROU) assets are calculated as the lease liability but may require further adjustment for initial direct costs, prepayments or incentives, and costs related to restoration at the end of a lease.

1.10 Inventory

Inventory, which consists of veterinary and scientific consumables and stocks of both raw and finished reagents, is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is measured using the first in, first out (FIFO) method. This is considered to be a reasonable approximation to fair value due to the high turnover of stock.

For inventory where there is no or minimal expectation of consumption or sale in the ordinary course of business, the value is impaired to reduce it to Net Realisable Value by means of a stock obsolescence provision.

1.11.1 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise of cash held with UK banks at the reporting date. Bank accounts are held within the Government Banking System.

1.12 Value Added Tax (VAT)

APHA is covered by Defra's VAT registration. A significant proportion of the activities of APHA are outside the scope of VAT and in general output tax does not apply and input tax on purchases is not recoverable. An element of recovery of input tax does take place under the contracted-out services provisions applicable to government departments. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets.

In all instances, where output tax is charged, and input tax is recoverable, amounts are stated in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as net of VAT. Where input tax cannot be recovered, amounts are stated in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as inclusive of VAT.

1.13 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Assets

In accordance with IAS37, Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets, APHA provides for its obligations arising from past events where a reliable estimate of the obligation can be made and it is probable that the obligation will require settlement.

In addition to contingent liabilities disclosed in accordance with IAS37, APHA discloses, for Parliamentary reporting and accountability purposes, certain statutory and non-statutory contingent liabilities where the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit is remote.

A contingent asset is disclosed where an inflow of economic benefits is probable.

1.14 Financial Instruments

APHA holds a range of financial instruments (trade payables and trade receivables), aggregated into classes based on their nature. The majority of these relate to contracts for non-financial items in line with the APHA's expected purchase and usage requirements and APHA is not exposed to significant credit, liquidity or market risk. As a result of the low risk there is no requirement to disclose, in terms of IFRS7, Financial Instruments: Disclosures.

A general impairment provision based on expected credit losses has been created, using a standard 1% of anticipated external UK sales values for 2024/25; and a standard 2% of anticipated export sales values for 2024/25 (the latter to recognise the additional challenges of collecting foreign debt where there is no legal redress). The impact of credit loss provision is not considered material.

1.15 Notional Corporate Services Charges

Defra provides a number of services centrally and the cost of these is shown as notional charges. The value of notional charges is determined by Defra. There is a rigorous process to check, challenge and approve these charges. Further details are provided in Note 3.

1.16 Foreign Currency Translation

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into sterling using the rate of exchange at 31 March 2025, or where appropriate, the rate of exchange fixed under the terms of the relevant transaction. Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling using the rate at the date of the transaction. Differences on translation are written off to the SoCNE.

1.17 Impending Application of Newly Issued Accounting Standards Not Yet Effective

IAS 8, Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors, requires disclosures in respect of new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), amendments and interpretations that are or will be applicable after the reporting period.

There are a number of IFRSs, amendments and interpretations that have been issued by the International Accounting Standards Board that are effective for future reporting periods. Those with relevance to APHA are outlined below. APHA has not adopted any new IFRSs early.

IFRS17: Insurance Contracts. This standard will apply to all types of insurance and reinsurance contracts and proposes an approach to measuring insurance contract liabilities that is based on the expected present value of future cash flows. It is being applied by HM Treasury in the FReM from 1 April 2025. APHA has carried out reviews and assessed there are no arrangements that currently fall within IFRS17 scope and therefore this standard will have no impact on the financial statements.

Non-investment assets valuation: From 1 April 2025 HM Treasury changed the requirements in FReM in respect of revaluations of property, plant and equipment. Assets are now valued using one of the following processes: a) a quinquennial revaluation supplemented by annual indexation in intervening years, b) a rolling programme of revaluations over a 5-year cycle, with annual indexation applied to assets during the four intervening years, c) for non-property assets only, appropriate indices. The option to measure intangible assets using the revaluation model is withdrawn. The carrying values of intangible assets at 31 March 2025 will be considered the historical cost at 1 April 2025.

1.18 Operating Segments

IFRS8 requires operating segments to be identified on the basis of internal reports about components of the agency that are regularly reviewed by the Chief Operating Decision Maker to allocate resources to the segments and to assess their performance. APHA has identified the Chief Executive Officer as the Chief Operating

Decision Maker. The required granular information is disclosed in Note 2.1 and 2.2 and is reflective of the information presented to senior management and relevant decision makers.

2. Operating Segments

2.1 Expenditure and income 2024/25

Region/sector	Total expenditure	Total income	Net expenditure
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Service Delivery Directorate	175,399	(55,874)	119,525
Science Directorate	84,115	(30,620)	53,495
Professional Advice and Standards Directorate	11,517	-	11,517
Strategy, Planning and Innovation Directorate	28,206	-	28,206
Corporate centre, notional charges, depreciation and amortisation	119,055	-	119,055
Subtotal	418,292	(86,494)	331,798
Apprenticeship levy training expenditure/ (grant income)	204	(204)	-
Totals	418,496	(86,698)	331,798

In 2024/25, the Veterinary Directorate was renamed Professional Advice and Standards Directorate. The Animal Health & Welfare Advice (AHWA) cost centre moved from Service Delivery Directorate to Professional Advice and Standards Directorate. The table (2.2) summarises the results based on APHA's internal reporting structure.

- a. **Gross Assets** - An allocation of gross assets is not provided to the Chief Operating Decision Maker (Steering Board) on a regular basis and accordingly no analysis is provided here.
- b. **Interest** - APHA had no interest revenue or expense.
- c. **Liabilities** - The Steering Board does not require an analysis of liabilities by segment for the purposes of allocating resource or assessing performance. Accordingly no analysis is included in these accounts.

2.2 Expenditure and income 2023/24 prior year

Region/sector	Total expenditure	Total income	Net expenditure
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Service Delivery Directorate	169,416	(56,175)	113,241
Science Directorate	77,203	(26,397)	50,806
Veterinary Directorate	4,144	-	4,144
Strategy, Planning and Innovation Directorate	30,575	-	30,575
Corporate centre, notional charges, depreciation and amortisation	123,540	-	123,540
Totals	404,878	(82,572)	322,306

3. Operating Costs

	2024/25	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	115,547	107,716
Social security costs	12,581	11,658
Pension costs	31,865	26,399
Agency staff costs	13,565	17,125
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(188)	(268)
Total staff costs	173,370	162,630
Official veterinarian costs		
Official veterinarian costs	48,984	47,023
Total official veterinarian costs	48,984	47,023
Operating costs		
Outsource laboratory and technical services	29,163	22,767
Veterinary and laboratory costs	19,980	18,411
Programme service delivery costs	12,109	12,386
Estates and accommodation costs	1,188	1,030
Travel and subsistence	7,484	7,196
IT costs	7,780	11,276
Training and apprenticeship levy training	2,652	1,637
Service level agreements	2,170	2,037
Total other operating costs	82,526	76,740
Non-cash costs		
Defra notional charges	67,198	79,299
Depreciation and amortisation	26,183	26,791
Impairments	20,286	12,404
(Profit) / loss on disposal of fixed assets	(51)	(9)
Total non-cash costs	113,616	118,485
Total non-staff costs	245,126	242,248

For more detailed disclosures regarding staff costs, see the staff report on page 56.

Official Veterinarian Costs

Official Veterinarians (OVs) are qualified veterinarians in private practice who undertake work on behalf of APHA.

Exotic Disease Outbreak Costs

Avian influenza outbreaks affected 52 premises (2023/24: 38 premises) in England, Wales and Scotland. The number of infected premises and costs are lower than the peak in 2022/23 but remain persistently high against pre-2020/21 averages. Other exotic diseases and pests dealt with by APHA in 2024/25 included bluetongue virus, Colorado beetle and Asian hornet.

Notional Charges

APHA does not directly meet the costs of certain services, shown in the table below, that are provided centrally by Defra. Annual notional non-cash charges for these services are instead issued to each Defra group body for inclusion in their statutory accounts to ensure they fairly reflect the costs, with a matching credit recorded in the general fund. The value of notional charges is rigorously checked and reviewed prior to approval by APHA.

The Defra overhead notional recharge comprise:

Defra overhead notional recharges	2024/25	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Estates costs	36,173	44,896
Information technology services, staff and project costs	20,021	24,533
Shared services including payroll and financial costs	3,684	2,778
Finance service costs	2,564	2,407
Human resources services and staff costs	2,252	1,689
Commercial costs	1,013	630
Communications costs	819	839
Corporate strategy	-	831
Legal services costs	351	395
External audit fee	180	160
Defra investigation services costs	141	141
Total	67,198	79,299

Within the estates costs, the full cost of occupation is reflected in relation to buildings that are either owned or leased by Defra or specialised properties held on APHA's SoFP.

The costs are proportionate to occupation and include rates, utilities, management overheads, facilities management and associated capital charges. For Defra leasehold properties, this also includes rental costs. There are no rental costs for Defra freehold properties. The decrease in estates costs in 2024/25 is due to a

reduction in planned and reactive maintenance expenditure.

For 2024/25, the corporate strategy cost will no longer be chargeable outside core Defra.

The external audit fee is the Comptroller and Auditor General fee of £180k for the audit of the 2024/25 financial statements (2023/24: £160k). No remuneration was paid to the auditors for non-audit work.

4. Income

4.1.1 Revenue from contracts with customers 2024/25

Analysis by customer	Service Delivery	Scientific Services	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Defra and Defra Agencies	690	10,910	11,600
Devolved administrations	39,028	3,266	42,294
Other government departments	377	3,190	3,567
Other non-commercial	473	1,281	1,754
Fees and charges	15,297	306	15,603
UK commercial and external	9	8,045	8,054
EU	-	844	844
Overseas commercial	-	2,778	2,778
Total	55,874	30,620	86,494

4.1.2 Revenue from contracts with customers 2023/24 prior year

Analysis by customer	Service Delivery	Scientific Services	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Defra and Defra Agencies	446	10,225	10,671
Devolved administrations	39,740	3,250	42,990
Other government departments	568	2,508	3,076
Other non-commercial	422	341	763
Fees and charges	14,995	411	15,406
UK commercial and external	4	7,605	7,609
EU (over accrual from prior year)	-	(319)	(319)
Overseas commercial	-	2,376	2,376
Total	56,175	26,397	82,572

Income from the Devolved Administrations: Welsh Government £26,198k (2023/24: £26,312k) and Scottish Government £16,095k (2023/24: £16,677k).

APHA's major income streams, and an assessment of the related performance obligations, are detailed below:

Devolved Administrations

APHA has an annual contract with an agreed budget with both the Welsh Government and Scottish Government. The monthly report which details activities undertaken is agreed with both governments and an invoice is raised in arrears. This means that the performance obligation is satisfied over time.

Other Non-Commercial

Other non-commercial income is mainly composed of reactor removal framework income. This is when a third party agent provides haulage and slaughter services including the sale of carcasses on APHA's behalf. Income is accounted for in the month the carcass sale occurs.

Fees and Charges

For services, licences and fees levied by public bodies, the control over the service, and benefit of that service, is gained at the point the licence is granted or services are undertaken.

Project Income

Project income is recognised over time as APHA's work creates or enhances an asset controlled by the customer or the customer simultaneously receives and consumes the benefits provided by APHA.

APHA receives funding from Defra to cover its operating requirements by cash transfers which pass through the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity rather than being accounted for as income through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Accounting policy note 1.4 explains the rationale for the accounting treatment of this funding.

Transactions which are denominated in a foreign currency are translated into sterling at the Bank of England spot rate. The spot exchange rate is the exchange rate at the date of the transaction. Any gains or losses on exchange are taken to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the year in which they are incurred. Foreign exchange is not material for APHA, so this has not been disclosed separately in the accounts.

5. Property, Plant and Equipment

2024/25	Land	Buildings	Scientific Equipment	Office Equipment and Furniture	Plant	Right of Use Assets	IT Assets	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost of Valuations								
1 April 2024	28,024	290,356	18,121	202	13,725	4,197	-	354,625
Additions	-	-	1,773	-	202	2,470	-	4,445
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers to/from Defra	-	6,668	976	85	237	-	153	8,119
Disposals	-	-	(403)	-	(24)	(380)	-	(807)
Impairment	74	(20,361)	-	-	-	-	-	(20,287)
Revaluation	179	(46,294)	-	9	18	-	3	(46,085)
31 March 2025	28,277	230,369	20,467	296	14,158	6,287	156	300,010
Depreciation								
1 April 2024	-	(55,922)	(8,129)	(175)	(4,164)	(1,089)	-	(69,479)
Charged in year	-	(14,258)	(1,605)	(18)	(896)	(1,343)	(92)	(18,212)
Transfers to/from Defra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	329	-	7	274	-	610
Impairment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	55,153	-	(2)	(7)	-	(2)	55,142
31 March 2025	-	(15,027)	(9,405)	(195)	(5,060)	(2,158)	(94)	(31,939)
Net Book Value								
31 March 2024	28,024	234,434	9,992	27	9,561	3,108	-	285,146
31 March 2025	28,277	215,342	11,062	101	9,098	4,129	62	268,071

Asset Financing								
Owned	28,277	215,342	11,062	101	9,098	-	62	263,942
Leased (ROU)	-	-	-	-	-	4,129	-	4,129
Asset Financing	28,277	215,342	11,062	101	9,098	4,129	62	268,071

ROU represents the leased cars recognised in accordance with IFRS16.

Prior Year 2023/24	Land	Buildings	Scientific Equipment	Office Equipment and Furniture	Plant	Right of Use Assets	IT Assets	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost of valuation								
1 April 2023	28,305	285,507	13,588	200	9,435	1,259	-	338,294
Additions	-	-	2,197	-	182	2,938	-	5,317
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers to/from Defra	-	8,433	1,367	-	3,969	-	-	13,769
Disposals	-	(107)	(97)	-	-	-	-	(204)
Impairment	(75)	(12,330)	-	-	-	-	-	(12,405)
Revaluation	(206)	8,853	1,066	2	139	-	-	9,854
31 March 2024	28,024	290,356	18,121	202	13,725	4,197	-	354,625
Depreciation								
1 April 2023	-	(41,266)	(6,402)	(171)	(3,151)	(310)	-	(51,300)
Charged in year	-	(14,763)	(1,475)	(3)	(974)	(779)	-	(17,994)
Transfers to/from Defra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	107	96	-	-	-	-	203
Impairment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	(348)	(1)	(39)	-	-	(388)
31 March 2024	-	(55,922)	(8,129)	(175)	(4,164)	(1,089)	-	(69,479)
Net Book Value								
31 March 2023	28,305	244,241	7,186	29	6,284	949	-	286,994
31 March 2024	28,024	234,434	9,992	27	9,561	3,108	-	285,146

Asset Financing								
Owned	28,024	234,434	9,992	27	9,561	-	-	282,038
Leased (ROU)	-	-	-	-	-	3,108	-	3,108
Asset Financing	28,024	234,434	9,992	27	9,561	3,108	-	285,146

5.1 Land and Buildings

Montagu Evans undertook the valuation of land and buildings at 31 March 2025, supported by a building by building assesment carried out by APHA management. This resulted in Land and Buildings being valued at £243,619k (land £28,277k plus buildings £215,342k), a net decrease from 2023/24 of £18,839k.

Of the £18,839k total movement:

- £9,038k has been credited against the Revaluation Reserve (£179k less £46,294k plus £55,153k)
- £(20,287)k impairment debited to the SoCNE
- transfers from Defra £6,668k
- depreciation charge of £(14,258)k

The revaluation was treated as a quinquennial valuation, which required the writing down of the accumulated depreciation balance to zero (this does not include leasehold and infrastructure assets).

The £20,287k impairment includes:

- £13,110k - building 267 (change in laboratory category resulting in a fall in value, also identified for demolition in the plans for the National Biosecurity Centre)
- £2,641k - building 269 (identified as the footprint for a future incinerator, the remaining life was shortened to reflect this)
- £3,806k relating to Defra transfers being valued below the carrying value;

The £6,668k of transfers from Defra related to building work on APHA properties. All APHA assets are owned and none is held under a finance lease.

The capital investment at Weybridge is led by Defra with Assets Under Construction reported in the Defra financial statements until assets are completed and handed over to APHA, at which point APHA will enjoy the risks and rewards of their operation.

5.2 Right of Use Assets

From 1 April 2022 APHA recognises the value of Right of Use assets in accordance with IFRS16. The liabilities of rental repayment and interest payable are recognised in SoFP.

As of 31 March 2025 the net book value of all the leased cars is £4,129k (2023/24: £3,108k). Total liabilities included in the SoFP is £4,378k (current liability £1,744k and non current liability £2,634k).

In consultation with Defra it has been decided that the value of the leased cars covered by IFRS16 are immaterial, therefore no further detailed disclosure is required.

6. Intangible Assets

2024/25	Software licences	IT software	Assets Under Construction	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2024	1,314	119,413	7,356	128,083
Additions	-	-	10,708	10,708
Transfers to/from Defra	-	7,246	-	7,246
Transfers from AUC	-	16,114	(16,114)	-
Revaluation	21	2,117	-	2,138
At 31 March 2025	1,335	144,890	1,950	148,175
Amortisation				
At 1 April 2024	(837)	(98,302)	-	(99,139)
Charged in year	(239)	(7,732)	-	(7,971)
Transfers to/from Defra	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	(16)	(1,803)	-	(1,819)
At 31 March 2025	(1,092)	(107,837)	-	(108,929)
Net Book Value				
31 March 2024	477	21,111	7,356	28,944
31 March 2025	243	37,053	1,950	39,246

IT assets transferred from Assets Under Construction in 2024/25 £16,114k (2023/24: £nil). This represents IT developments in response to outbreaks, changes in legislation and upgrading legacy systems.

£16,114k transfers from AUC are as follows:

- £4,920k workforce and people management,
- £4,008k are operational systems,
- £7,185k management information, licensing data and disease tracking.

£7,246k transfers from Defra relate to:

- £2,270k Inspection and Notifiable Diseases,
- £2,691k Unicorn Pegasus CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)
- £2,284k ECHO (Export Health Certificates Online) and NIRMS (Northern Ireland Retail Management Scheme)

The material individual intangible assets are:

1. The Business Reform Programme (BRP), which delivered the IT system known as SAM for operational use. This software is what drives most of the work of the Service Delivery Directorate. It has a Net Book Value of £1,574k, and is part of a group of inter-dependent assets whose useful economic lives are two years as at 31 March 2025.
2. The re-platforming of SAM, in preparation for the next phase of the programme which will demonstrate enhanced user functionality, has a NBV of £2,471k with a remaining two-year useful economic life as at 31 March 2025.
3. The CITES online portal allows users to register items exempt from the prohibition on dealing in ivory for a fee and generates either a registration or exemption certificate dependent on the exemption. The portal has a NBV of £1,026k increased in year by £100k capital investment and a remaining 12-year useful economic life.
4. Unicorn Pegasus CITES was transferred from Defra in 2024/25. It delivers a digitisation solution to replace the existing legacy of CITES service. The new service is a GOV.UK front end portal where applications are submitted for a CITES permit, with a NBV of £2,464k and a remaining useful life of 9.5 years at 31 March 2025. CITES is a global convention to protect trade in endangered species.
5. There are two projects that were completed in 2024/25 from AUC and are in use as viable assets relating to Resources and Work Force Management (£2,001k and £2,918k). Both have a useful economic life of 10 years.
6. Export Health Certificates Online (EHCO) is a web-based service enabling exporters to apply for certificates for all UK animal exports, and is replacing a manual PDF process called Exports Management Service. In 2023/24 additional capital expenditure £3,300k was incurred for ECHO enhancements associated with NIRMS (Northern Ireland Retail Management Scheme). The total NBV for ECHO and NIRMS is £12,193k with a current remaining five year useful economic life.

Prior Year 2023/24	Software licensees	IT software	Assets Under Construction	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2023	1,309	142,017	657	143,983
Additions	-	-	6,699	6,699
Transfers to/from Defra	-	(23,224)	-	(23,224)
Transfers from AUC	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	5	620	-	625
At 31 March 2024	1,314	119,413	7,356	128,083
Amortisation				
At 1 April 2023	(596)	(98,136)	-	(98,732)
Charged in year	(238)	(8,559)	-	(8,797)
Transfers to/from Defra	-	8,852	-	8,852
Revaluation	(3)	(459)	-	(462)
At 31 March 2024	(837)	(98,302)	-	(99,139)
Net Book Value				
31 March 2023	713	43,881	657	45,251
31 March 2024	477	21,111	7,356	28,944

7. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of APHA are met through the estimate process, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with APHA's expected purchase and usage requirements, and APHA is not exposed to credit, liquidity or significant market risk. Accordingly no disclosure is required.

Liquidity risk

APHA net revenue resource requirements and capital expenditure are financed by resources voted annually by Parliament or through fees charged to bodies funded by Parliament. APHA is therefore not exposed to material liquidity risks.

Credit risk

The majority of APHA income comes for the Devolved Administrations of Scotland and Wales, and Defra. None of these sources are a material credit risk.

Foreign currency risk

Any foreign currency exposure risk is limited to purchases from foreign suppliers. These are not considered to be material.

Financial assets: these comprise receivables that are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market.

Receivables are initially recognised at fair value and subsequently held at amortised cost after an appropriate provision for expected credit loss.

Financial liabilities: these comprise trade and other payables, and other financial liabilities. They are initially recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, less directly attributable transaction costs. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

8. Inventories

	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	£'000	£'000
Finished goods	7,503	6,916
Raw materials and consumables	2,097	2,178
Impairment provision	(3,968)	(3,895)
Total	5,632	5,198

9. Trade Receivables and Other Current Assets

	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	£'000	£'000
Trade receivables	21,754	23,680
Deposits and advances	356	365
Other receivables	283	298
Prepayments and accrued income	13,651	13,325
Total	36,044	37,668

10. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Government Banking Services	£'000	£'000
Opening balance	13,505	25,485
Net cash inflow / (outflow)	(9,912)	(11,980)
Closing balance	3,593	13,505

11. Trade Payables and Other Current Liabilities

	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Amounts falling due within one year	£'000	£'000
VAT payables, other taxation and social security	(5,185)	(7,015)
Trade payables	(7,561)	(11,708)
Other payables	(3,327)	(2,816)
Accrued expenditure	(24,147)	(28,781)
Contract liabilities	(3,339)	(2,129)
Total trade payables and other current liabilities	(43,559)	(52,449)
Lease liabilities	(1,744)	(1,141)
Total current liabilities	(45,303)	(53,590)
Amounts falling after more than one year		
Lease liabilities	(2,634)	(2,363)
Trade payables and other liabilities	(47,937)	(55,953)

Lease liabilities are car lease repayments payable as of 31 March 2025 in relation to the right of use assets under IFRS 16. None of the liabilities is over five years as vehicle leases are generally for four years.

12. Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2025, APHA had capital commitments of £483k (31 March 2024: £832k) relating to equipment for the Weybridge and regional sites, not otherwise included in these accounts.

13. Other Financial Commitments

Contracts held by Defra, which benefit APHA, are included in the annual notional recharge of costs, but do not represent APHA financial commitments.

14. Contingent Liabilities

There is one contingent liability as at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024: £Nil) relating to a potential appeal against an industrial tribunal claim in favour of APHA. It is not yet clear what value might be involved.

15. Related Party Transactions

APHA is an executive agency of Defra and is also a supplier of services to Defra. During the period ended 31 March 2025, Defra provided APHA with remuneration for services and provided a number of services to APHA.

In addition, APHA had a number of operational transactions with Defra's other executive agencies, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate and non departmental public bodies, the Environment Agency, and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.

APHA had a number of operational transactions with other government bodies, notably the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland, and the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

None of the members of the APHA Steering Board, other key managerial staff or other related parties undertook any material transactions with APHA during the period.

Any compensation paid to key managerial staff would be a related party transaction. Should compensation payments be made to any Director this would be disclosed in the Remuneration Report.

APHA keeps a fully updated Register of Interests. All interests declared are monitored by management and processes put in place to mitigate any risks.

16. Events after the Reporting Period

APHA's financial statements are laid before the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for Defra. IAS 10, Events after the Reporting Period, requires the Accounting Officer to disclose the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue.

The authorised date for issue is the date of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Audit Certificate.

Richard Lewis replaced Jenny Stewart (interim) as APHA Chief Executive and Accounting Officer on 16 June 2025.

The UK-EU summit on 19 May 2025 reached an understanding that the UK and EU should work together to establish a common Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) area through the negotiation of an agreement. The SPS Agreement will cover SPS standards and controls and wider agrifood rules related to food labelling, organics, and marketing standards. There is no immediate impact on APHA, although we will need to monitor the situation as negotiations progress.

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