



SANDSTONE VET GROUP

29 March 2022

To Whom It May Concern

I am a veterinary surgeon at Sandstone Vet Group who provide veterinary care to the dairy cattle owned by Mr Andrew and Mrs Nia Jones at Torriad Farm. Currently the herd is made up of approximately 600 Holstein Friesians with on average two calvings per night however this can reach double figures. The farm produces high quality milk to high welfare standards for Tesco.

As part of our continual aim to maintain and further improve the welfare of these cattle, we have reviewed all aspects of the herd's performance over the past twelve months. One area that we have identified as an area for improvement is the number of accidents affecting the cattle. Both frequency and severity of accidents have been significantly higher at night when the farm isn't staffed. Examples of these incidents include bilateral hindlimb paresis or paralysis incurred during calving when assistance was required but unavailable due to no staff being present on site. Most of these cases could have been avoided with earlier intervention. I firmly believe that these accidents compromise animal welfare and results in both reduced productivity and even death of the animal.

Whilst we accept that a small number of accidents occur in a herd of this size, the numbers that have been experienced are above target. As previously mentioned, most of these occur when the farm isn't staffed despite the use of CCTV technology. Therefore, based on welfare grounds, I have recommended that the farm is staffed overnight.

In my professional opinion, a farm of this size with no overnight staffing arrangements is highly irregular and raises concerns about the welfare of the animals located there. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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