

Bird keepers urged to prepare for winter Avian Flu threat

The Chief Veterinary Officers across the UK are encouraging all poultry keepers to take action now to reduce the risk of disease in their birds over the winter.

There are some simple measures that all poultry keepers, whether they are running a large commercial farm, keeping a few hens in their back garden, or rearing game birds, should take to protect their birds against the threat of avian influenza (bird flu) in the coming winter months. These include:

- Keeping the area where birds live clean and tidy, controlling rats and mice and regularly disinfecting any hard surfaces
- Cleaning footwear before and after visits
- Placing birds' feed and water in fully enclosed areas that are protected from wild birds, and removing any spilled feed regularly
- Putting fencing around outdoor areas where birds are allowed and limiting their access to ponds or areas visited by wild waterfowl
- Where possible, avoid keeping ducks and geese with other poultry species.

A joint statement by the four Chief Veterinary Officers in the UK today, said:

Avian flu is a constant threat to all poultry, and with winter approaching there will be an increasing risk of disease incursion from migrating birds. It is therefore important that all keepers of poultry, including game birds and pet birds, act now to reduce the risk of transmission of avian flu to their flocks.

Good robust biosecurity should be maintained at all times, including regularly cleaning and disinfecting the area where you keep birds and separating them from wild birds wherever possible.

All poultry keepers across the UK are urged to remain vigilant and alert APHA in Great Britain or DAERA in Northern Ireland as soon as they suspect any signs of the disease.

All bird keepers across Great Britain should also register their birds on the Great Britain Poultry Register (GBPR). If you have 50 or more birds, this is a legal requirement. Keepers with fewer than 50 birds are also strongly encouraged to register.

In Northern Ireland there is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to register their birds on the DAERA Bird Register.

Registering your birds means the government can contact you in case of any

outbreaks and provide information on the steps to take to limit the chances of your birds contracting disease.

The UK has retained its OIE country freedom status since September 2017, as there have been no detections of highly pathogenic avian influenza in poultry or kept birds in the UK since June 2017.

The H5N6 strain of avian influenza was confirmed in 21 wild birds between January and June 2018. No cases were found in domestic poultry, either in commercial or small holdings, or in captive birds in 2018. Whilst there have been no findings in wild birds in the UK since June 2018, the virus is still circulating around the world both in wild birds and domestic poultry. So it is important that you are taking action to improve biosecurity.

The government continues to monitor for incursions of avian flu and is working with the poultry and game bird industries; hen rehoming and pure and traditional poultry breeds stakeholders to help prevent incursions.

[Press release: Bird keepers urged to prepare for winter Avian Flu threat](#)

Poultry farmers and pet bird keepers urged to prepare for winter Avian Flu threat.

[UK Hydrographic Office 2018-2019 Annual Report released](#)

The UK Hydrographic Office has released its Annual Report and Accounts for 2018 to 2019.

In addition to its performance review, accountability report and financial statements, the document contains information about the organisation's transformation to become a marine geospatial information agency and a number of case studies that showcase its work.

You can download and view the document using the links below:

[UK Hydrographic Office Annual Report and Accounts for 2018 to 2019](#)

[UK Hydrographic Office Annual Report and Accounts for 2018 to 2019](#)

[\(accessible version\)](#)

The UKHO is an executive agency and operates as a trading fund within the Ministry of Defence. This paper was laid before Parliament in response to a legislative requirement or as a Return to an Address and was ordered to be printed by the House of Commons.

Drax Re-power station proposal granted development consent

Development consent has been given to modify up to two of the coal-fired generating units (known as Units 5 and 6) at Drax Power Station, Selby, to become gas-powered generating plant. The proposed Project comprises up to four new combined cycle gas turbines (CCGT) (up to two for Unit 5 and up to two for Unit 6), each powering a dedicated generator of up to 600MW in capacity. The project is located at the Drax Power Station in North Yorkshire.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Drax Power Ltd on the 29 May 2018 and accepted for examination on 26 June 2018. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 4 July 2019.

The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in the 6 month long examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their recommendation.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"This is another example of The Planning Inspectorate demonstrating its ability to examine Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) within timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008."

"The certainty of knowing when a decision can be expected provides developers and investors with the confidence to build and improve the infrastructure this country needs to secure future economic growth."

It is the 78th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to be examined and decided and brings the total of energy projects to 52.

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the

Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#)

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Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning

Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email:

Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, National Infrastructure Programme of Projects details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months. It can be viewed at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

South Shields waste crime offender ordered to pay over £6,000

On Tuesday 1 October, Mr Paul Catley, aged 54, of Bonsall Court, South Shields was successfully prosecuted by the Environment Agency. He was fined £1,384 by the Court and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £135 and costs of £4,483.90.

The overall total amounting to £6002.90.

This was after Mr Catley entered a guilty plea to the charge under regulation 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016, having being arrested the previous day (30 September) for failing to attend court.

Mr Catley was prosecuted for operating an 'end of life' vehicle waste activity and depositing waste without a permit between January 2017 and September 2018 at Bolden Lane in South Shields, South Tyneside.

Mr Catley ignored all of the advice and guidance provided to him by the Environment Agency and failed to co-operate in the investigation. He continued to operate his unlawful business and disregarded the need to obtain a permit.

By failing to obtain a permit Mr Catley put the environment and the surrounding communities at risk, and also obtained a commercial advantage over legal operators.

Mitigating, Tracey Wood told magistrates that Mr Catley had fallen on hard times and “buried his head in the sand” when it came to operating the site, as he had been sole carer for his mother who suffered from dementia.

Jamie Fletcher, Area Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

End of life vehicles contain fuels and oils which are classed as hazardous waste. These crimes are serious offences that will not be tolerated.

The laws exist to ensure that operations involving chemicals and other waste substances do not have a detrimental impact on the environment. Any company thinking of getting involved in scrap cars, especially those that contain hazardous waste must make sure they know the rules and are meeting all of their legal obligations.

Mr Catley has also been ordered by the Court to have all of the offending waste removed by 1 December 2019.

If you see or are aware of waste crime, you can report it by calling the Environment Agency’s incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.