

Press release: Cutting edge bio-tech system to clean A38 water run-off in Devon

A cutting edge bio-technology system is being tested by Highways England to improve water quality around a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Devon.

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Water run-off from the A38 and adjacent farmland can carry pollutants such as oil and metal residue, and this has the potential to impact water quality in the Dean Burn and the surrounding area, including Potters Wood SSSI.

The new system features a bio-engineered filtration pond which will substitute a traditional reed bed by using an engineered soil specifically designed to trap dissolved pollutants in the highways water run-off. This should significantly enhance the quality of water running into Dean Burn and improve the local ecosystem.

The system is being trialled for the first time by Highways England and if successful could be rolled out and used across the country.

Project manager Michelle Reed said:

We are delighted to be able to work on such a worthwhile pilot environmental scheme, especially as it is the first time this system has been used on the strategic road network in England.

The filtration system provides a physical barrier to polluted water, then chemical and biological mechanisms work in combination to break down even more pollutants. It also has the advantage of taking up far less space than other treatment systems, which makes it very cost effective.

When completed, this work should significantly improve the quality of water running into Dean Burn and help to support the local environment and its wildlife.

Bug hotels, butterfly scrapes and bee banks are also being installed as part of the work to benefit biodiversity in the area.

The scheme, which has been designed by Highways England contractor Kier and delivered by South West Highways, will start on Monday 10 June and is expected to continue for 14 weeks.

In order to modify the existing drainage system and divert it into the new treatment system, a tunnel will be bored under the A38, which will limit the impact on traffic.

However, two overnight lane closures will be required on the A38 in August to make the drainage connections. There will also be temporary traffic lights on the B3380 and the road between Dean Burn overbridge and the A38 westbound onslip during June and August.

Highways England is committed to a national Biodiversity Plan which is being supported by a £30 million national investment programme over the next five years. The plan recognises road verges and associated land can be managed to provide areas of habitat, relatively free from human access, that may be scarce in the surrounding landscape. These road verges can also be used to connect fragmented habitats in the wider landscape, enabling plant and animal populations to move and interact, and so become stronger and more resilient.

Over the last year a number of other biodiversity schemes have been undertaken by Highways England including grassland and wildflower creation schemes in Devon and Cornwall, and a scheme to protect and promote the habitat of the narrow-headed ant, England's rarest ant, on the A38.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: Fishing vessel owner and skipper ordered to pay £76,772.50 for fisheries offences](#)

Ansgar is a 36.6 metre fishing vessel owned by Buchan (E104) Limited and skippered by Willem de Boer.

The court heard how Royal Navy boarding officers performed a routine sea boarding on behalf of the MMO on 5 July 2018. The vessel was twin rig trawling in a section of the North Sea known as Dogger Bank.

When the boarding team approached the Angsar a boarding ladder was not provided. During the inspection both port and starboard cod end nets failed twine thickness regulations. A total of 40 failures were found on both nets.

There was also no square mesh panel on either net. As the vessel is British registered it is required to have a square mesh panel fitted to nets of mesh size 70-199 mm in ICES IV (North Sea).

Mr de Boer and Buchan (E104) Limited pleaded guilty to all charges. The owners were fined £66,455 and Mr de Boer was fined £8,147. They were jointly ordered to pay £1,830.50 in costs and a £340 victim surcharge.

An MMO spokesperson said:

It is essential for the proper management of stocks that vessels fish in a manner compliant with the law and that conservation methods requiring specified gear types are followed. MMO officers and agents must be able to carry out monitoring and enforcement activities unhindered and it's vital that vessel safety requirements are met to allow them to do this.

When this is not the case the MMO will always take the appropriate action, including prosecution, to ensure offenders do not benefit from such illegal activity and to protect fish stocks for the wider fishing industry and future generations.

Speech: PM statement with US President: 4 June 2019

This week we commemorate the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of those who gave their lives for our liberty on D-Day, 75 years ago.

As leaders prepare to gather here from across the world, it is fitting that we begin with a celebration of the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States – enduring partners who stood side by side on that historic day – and every day since.

For generations, at the heart of the transatlantic alliance has been our shared democratic values, our common interests and our commitment to justice.

It is that unity of purpose that will preserve the deep-rooted ties between

our people and underpin our nations' security and prosperity for the next 75 years and beyond.

So I am very pleased to welcome the President of the United States of America on this State Visit to the United Kingdom.

For the past two and a half years the President and I have had the duty and privilege of being the latest guardians of this precious and profound friendship between our countries.

As with our predecessors, when we have faced threats to the security of our citizens and our allies, we have stood together and acted together.

When Russia used a deadly nerve agent on the streets of our country, alongside the UK's expulsions the President expelled 60 Russian intelligence officers – the largest contribution towards an unprecedented global response.

And, in Syria, when innocent men, women and children were victims of a barbaric chemical weapons attack, Britain and America, along with France, carried out targeted strikes against the regime.

Since we spoke about NATO during my first visit to the White House we have maintained our support for this crucial alliance.

Thanks in part to your clear message on burden-sharing, Donald, we have seen members pledge another \$100 billion, increasing their contributions to our shared security. And I'm pleased to announce that NATO will soon be able to call on the UK's Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers and F-35 fighter jets to help tackle threats around the world.

Today we have discussed again the new and evolving challenges to our security, our values and our way of life.

We share the same view about their origin and our objectives in meeting them.

But – like Prime Ministers and Presidents before us, and no doubt those that will come after – we can also differ sometimes on how to confront the challenges we face.

I have always talked openly with you, Donald, where we have taken a different approach – and you have done the same with me.

I have always believed that cooperation and compromise are the basis of strong alliances, and nowhere is this more true than in the special relationship.

Today we have discussed again the importance of our two nations working together to address Iran's destabilising activity in the region and to ensure Tehran cannot acquire a nuclear weapon.

Although we differ on the means of achieving that – as I have said before, the UK continues to stand by the nuclear deal – it is clear we both want to reach the same goal.

It is important that Iran meets its obligations and we do everything to avoid escalation which is in no-one's interest.

Recognising our nations are safer and more prosperous when we work together on the biggest challenges of our time, I also set out the UK's approach to tackling climate change, and our continued support for the Paris Agreement.

And we also spoke about China, recognising its economic significance and that we cannot ignore action that threatens our shared interests or values.

As we have deepened our cooperation on security – including our joint military operations, and our unparalleled intelligence-sharing – so our economies too are ever more tightly bound together.

Every morning 1 million Americans get up and go to work for British companies in America. And 1 million Britons do the same for American companies here.

Our trading relationship is worth over £190 billion a year and we are the largest investors in each other's economies – with mutual investments valued at as much as \$1 trillion.

Mr President, you and I agreed the first time we met that we should aim for an ambitious free trade agreement when the UK leaves the EU.

And from our positive discussions today I know that we both remain committed to this.

I am also sure that our economic relationship will only grow broader and deeper, building on the conversations we had and the ideas we heard from UK and US businesses when we met them earlier today.

Tomorrow we will sit down in Portsmouth with our fellow leaders to reaffirm the enduring importance of the western alliance and the shared values that underpin it.

And as we look to the future – in the years and in the generations ahead – we will continue to work together to preserve the alliance that is the bedrock of our shared prosperity and security – just as it was on the beaches of Normandy 75 years ago.

[News story: HMS Queen Elizabeth to join NATO rapid reaction force](#)

The Prime Minister announced today that the Royal Navy will ready the UK's largest and most advanced warship ever to join allies in forming part of NATO's major 'Readiness Initiative' when she becomes operational.

The first of the UK's Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers, together with the formidable F-35 fighter jets, will fly the flag of a Global Britain alongside NATO allies, projecting influence for peace and standing ready to fight, deliver aid and take on terrorism around the world.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

I'm pleased to announce that NATO will soon be able to call on the UK's Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers and F-35 fighter jets to help tackle threats around the world.

NATO's 'Readiness Initiative' aims to improve the readiness of the alliance's forces to deploy and move within Europe and across the Atlantic to safeguard international security. The UK will look to make its aircraft carrier a key part of those plans as the country continues to play a leading role in the alliance which has been the cornerstone of its defence for 70 years.

Defence Secretary, Penny Mordaunt said:

Be it projecting influence for peace, standing ready to fight, or delivering vital aid around the world, HMS Queen Elizabeth and her sister ship HMS Prince of Wales, will fly the flag of a Global Britain. Nothing symbolises the leading role that we play in NATO more than our nation's future flagship being ready to respond to any challenge that the Alliance may face.

At the Defence Ministers' meeting in June, Allies committed, by 2020, to having 30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 naval combat vessels ready to use within 30 days. This was reinforced by Allied Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in July.

HMS Queen Elizabeth remains set to be deployed on global operations from 2021 and when HMS Prince of Wales joins her in the fleet in the near future, the UK will have one carrier available at very high readiness at all times.