

Notice: England Coast Path at Drigg: comment on proposals to change the approved route

Updated: Habitats Regulations assessment document added.

On 22 August 2018, Natural England submitted a report to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs setting out proposed changes to the approved route of the England Coast Path in Cumbria, at Drigg.

Read the variation report to find out why changes to the approved route are required.

The opportunity to comment closes at midnight on 17 October 2018.

Objections will be passed to an independent planning inspector who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State about each one.

The Secretary of State will consider all representations and objections before making a decision about Natural England's proposals.

Comment on Natural England's proposals

View the [guidance on representations and objections](#).

Make a representation

Anyone can make representations to us about the variation report. Read the representation guidance notes before completing the representations form (both are attached above).

Make an objection

Owners and occupiers of affected land may make objections about the variation report. Read the objection guidance notes before completing the objection form (both are attached above).

News story: Government backs ban on

third party sales of puppies and kittens

A ban on third party puppy and kitten sales in England will be introduced to help drive up animal welfare standards, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove announced today.

Confirming the government's support for the prominent Lucy's Law campaign, Defra has published [a consultation](#) on an outright ban that will mean anyone looking to buy or adopt a puppy or kitten must either deal directly with the breeder or with one of the nation's many animal rehoming centres.

The steps follow a commitment by the Prime Minister Theresa May in December to crack down on cruel puppy farms, and aim to bring an end to the grisly conditions found in puppy farming and tackle a range of existing animal welfare issues.

These include the early separation of puppies and kittens from their mothers, their introduction to new and unfamiliar environments and the increased likelihood of multiple journeys the puppies or kittens have to undertake. All of which can contribute to a chaotic start in life and lead to serious health problems and lack of socialisation.

Environment Secretary, Michael Gove, said:

A ban on third party sales will ensure the nation's much-loved pets get the right start in life. I pay tribute to the Lucy's Law campaign, spearheaded by PupAid, Care And Respect Includes All Dogs (CARIAD), and Canine Action UK, who have fought tirelessly for this step.

People who have a complete disregard for pet welfare will no longer be able to profit from this miserable trade.

The proposed ban on third party sales is part of a series of government reforms on pet welfare including banning the sale of underage puppies and kittens and tackling the breeding of dogs with severe genetic disorders. New laws come into force on 1 October this year banning licensed sellers from dealing in puppies and kittens under the age of eight weeks and tightening the compulsory licensing of anyone in the business of breeding and selling dogs.

As part its animal welfare reform programme, the Government is also bringing in higher maximum sentences of up to five years for animal abusers – the toughest sentencing in Europe.

Puppies and kittens are defined as being less than six months old.

The RESIST project – Natural coastal protection

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News story: Restrictions on oak imports introduced to guard against pests

Restrictions on the import of most species of oak into England have been introduced as part of new regulations to protect native trees from the threat of [Oak Processionary Moth \(OPM\)](#)

The new regulations ban the movement of certain oak trees into the UK's OPM Protected Zone (an area of the EU declared free of the pest) unless specific conditions are met. They cover both imports from overseas and movement of trees from areas of the country where OPM is already present – in London and surrounding counties.

The measures cover all oaks (*Quercus*) – with the exception of cork oak (*Quercus suber*) – which have a girth of 8cm or more at 1.2 metres above the root collar and are imported from either the EU or a third country or moving

into the Protected Zone from other parts of England. This is because such trees represent the greatest likelihood of introducing OPM.

The regulations apply to all businesses which import and move oak trees.

Defra Chief Plant Health Officer Nicola Spence said:

Protecting our country from tree pests and diseases is vital to safeguard our environment, economy and our health.

That is why we are introducing tighter restrictions on the importation of oak trees to England, and the movement of oak trees out of certain parts of South East England which are infested with OPM.

Through investment, research and legislation we will continue to help protect our precious oak trees for years to come.

OPM caterpillars feed on oak leaves and can increase trees' vulnerability to attack by other pests and diseases, making them less able to withstand adverse weather conditions, such as drought and floods.

[The Forestry Commission](#), councils and land managers tackle the pest which affects Greater London and several surrounding counties with an annual control programme of tree treatment.

The new restrictions follow the launch of the Government's first [Tree Health Resilience Strategy](#) in May which pledged tough action to protect the nation's trees from pests, diseases and climate change. A key element of the strategy is [the Action Oak campaign](#) which seeks to protect the UK's 121 million oak trees for future generations.

The new OPM legislation is published on gov.uk [here](#)

Notes to editors:

- The new legislation prohibits the movement of oak trees, with a girth of 8cm or more at 1.2 metres above the root collar, into the UK's OPM protected zone unless one of these specific conditions are met:
1. That trees have been grown throughout their life in places of production in countries in which OPM is not known to occur;
 2. That trees have been grown throughout their life in a protected zone which is recognised as such for OPM or in an area free from OPM established by the national plant protection organisation in accordance

with ISPM No. 4;

3. That trees have been produced in nurseries which, along with their vicinity, have been found free from OPM on the basis of official inspections carried out as close as practically possible to their movement and official surveys of the nurseries and their vicinity have been carried out at appropriate times since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation to detect larvae and other symptoms of OPM;
 4. That trees have been grown throughout their life in a site with complete physical protection against the introduction of OPM and have been inspected at appropriate times and found to be free.
- All oak trees moving into and within the OPM protected zone must already be accompanied by a plant passport regardless of the size of the consignment. And all landings of oak plants in England must be pre-notified to the plant health authorities.
 - For more information about OPM, including a map of the affected areas, visit [the Forestry Commission website](#)
 - People are also urged to report sightings of OPM to the Forestry Commission's [Tree Alert](#) with a precise description of the tree's location.