

Press release: Poultry keepers urged to be vigilant of Newcastle Disease

Poultry keepers across the United Kingdom have been urged to be vigilant of [Newcastle Disease](#) following reported cases in flocks across Europe.

Recent cases in Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg have led to [Animal and Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#) experts to advise that the risk of the disease in UK flocks has risen from 'low' to 'medium'.

Newcastle Disease is caused by a virulent strain of paramyxovirus and can be spread through direct contact with the bodily fluids of infected birds. It can cause severe losses in certain poultry species, including:

- commercial and specialist breeds
- pet chickens
- other captive birds, including racing pigeons.

[Public Health England](#) advises the risk of Newcastle Disease affecting people is very low.

Christine Middlemiss, UK Chief Veterinary Officer, said:

The Animal and Plant Health Agency experts have advised that the risk of disease has risen to 'medium' following reports of Newcastle Disease in mainland Europe.

I urge all poultry keepers – whether of commercial, smallholder flocks or specialist breeds or pet chickens – to remain vigilant to the clinical signs of this disease, and urge them to put in place strong biosecurity measures to ensure the health and welfare of their birds.

Poultry species that are affected by Newcastle Disease may show the following clinical signs:

- Respiratory distress, such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling and rattling
- Nervous behaviour, such as tremors, paralysis and twisting of the neck
- Unusually watery faeces that are yellowish-green in colour
- Depression and a lack of appetite
- Produce fewer eggs which could be misshapen and soft-shelled

If a bird keeper suspects that their birds may be infected with Newcastle Disease, they should contact their private vet and the APHA immediately.

There are several precautions poultry keepers can follow to further minimise the risk to their birds, including:

- Ensuring, where appropriate, their birds have been vaccinated against the disease.
- Implementing strict biosecurity measures on their premises, including using disinfectant foot baths and reducing visitors to the birds.
- Thoroughly cleaning vehicles, equipment, clothing, boots that have been in contact with birds.
- Feeding and watering should be under cover and kept away from wild birds.
- Washing their hands with soap and water after handling their own birds.

For APHA contact details visit [here](#)

BGS position – Hydraulic fracturing consent

Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth, Claire Perry has issued Hydraulic Fracturing Consent to Cuadrilla Resources for Preston New Road in Lancashire, with effect from 24th July 2018.

BGS position – Hydraulic Fracturing Consent

Statement from the BGS following the announcement by the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth, Claire Perry to grant consent for hydraulic fracturing by Cuadrilla Resources at Preston New Road in Lancashire.

Corporate report: Accord between Forestry Commission (England) and National Parks England

The Accord, a statement of a shared ambition between the Forestry Commission and National Parks England, will bring together decision makers to ensure

woodland is managed sustainably and in line with a natural capital approach. This will take into account the environmental, social and economic impact of trees and forests and the statutory purposes of our National Parks.

News story: New accord launches to enhance National Parks and woodland

A new Accord that aims to expand and enhance woodland in National Parks to protect wildlife and connect people with nature has been launched today at the New Forest Show.

The Accord, a statement of a shared ambition between the Forestry Commission and National Parks England, will bring together decision makers to ensure woodland is managed sustainably and in line with a natural capital approach. This will take into account the environmental, social and economic impact of trees and forests and the statutory purposes of our National Parks.

National Parks are already home to a third of the Public Forest Estate in England, and the Accord will also consider how woodland creation grants can be used to sensitively expand wooded areas across these landscapes. The partnership ensures all woodland will be managed to the highest standards so they are rich in wildlife and protected for future generations to enjoy.

The Accord was launched at the New Forest National Park today, where National Parks Minister Lord Gardiner joined Margaret Paren, Chair of National Parks England and Ian Gambles, Director of Forestry Commission England to plant a tree and demonstrate the benefits woodland can bring.

Its launch comes during [‘Discover National Parks Week 2018’](#), which celebrates the UK’s 15 National Parks. With over half of people living within an hour of a National Park, the week encourages people to get outside and discover them for themselves.

Margaret Paren, Chair of National Parks England, said:

Our National Parks are cultural landscapes cherished for their nature and beauty. This Accord provides the basis for strong partnership working between the Forestry Commission and National Parks. By working closely together we can ensure public forests in our National Parks are at the forefront of sustainable forest management.

And through adopting high-quality decision-making on woodland creation, design, management, protection and removal we can also ensure trees and woods contribute to the beauty of our National

Parks for years to come.

There is a strong synergy between the aims in the Accord and the goals in the [Government's 25 Year Environment Plan](#), which sets ambitious plans for enhancing beauty and landscapes and more and better managed woodland as a key way to improve the environment for the next generation.

Lord Gardiner, Minister for National Parks and Forests, said:

Woods and forests make an immense contribution to our enjoyment of our National Parks, as well as providing important habitats for wildlife.

Our 25 Year Environment Plan sets out ambitious targets for tree planting and connecting people with nature. This Accord will help realise the full potential of woodland in our National Parks.

Sir Harry Studholme, Chair of the Forestry Commission, said:

Forestry is a leading player in the story of the National Parks and of their landscapes. The Forestry Commission may be the largest single holder of land across the network of National Parks. Nowhere is the relationship more apparent than here in the New Forest where the Forestry Commission and National Park Authority's roles are deeply intertwined.

At this time of change in agriculture and land management, forestry and afforestation are important components of the discussion. The Forestry Commission and National Parks must work together not only to create new resilient and multi-purpose woodlands but also to enable existing ones adapt to a changing environment.

This will benefit National Park landscapes, provide rural employment and support local communities and allow the delivery of Natural Capital benefits like carbon absorption, water management and public access.

The Accord agrees a pragmatic and deliverable national framework for the Forestry Commission and National Parks' shared ambitions for woods and forests, with local priorities for individual National Parks to be determined according to their specific needs.

It sets out five shared priorities for delivering a range of benefits that protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage:

1. Decision-making that enhances National Park landscapes and their woodlands;

2. Woodland creation and expansion in National Parks;
3. Highest standards of forest management in line with natural capital approach;
4. Woodland grant schemes that contribute to the delivery of the shared ambition;
5. Engage and connect people with woodlands and forests.