

North East 'Ark' sites are safe haven for endangered crayfish

The Environment Agency and Northumberland Rivers Trust have relocated hundreds of native crayfish from the abundant populations found in the River Wansbeck in Morpeth, to six refuge sites in North Northumberland.

These refuges, known as 'Ark' sites, give the crayfish new safe places to breed and build their numbers, ensuring several populations remain if disaster strikes on the main Wansbeck.

The River Wansbeck is one of the last remaining strongholds for the white-clawed crayfish, but the survival of the species is threatened by the invasive and highly aggressive American signal crayfish. Signal crayfish are bigger, outcompete for food and can pass on the 'crayfish plague' which is deadly to the native crayfish.

The signal crayfish, which originates from America, was introduced in the 1970s and can also burrow into banksides, causing increased siltation of watercourses.

Crayfish relocated during maintenance work

Over the last few weeks, native crayfish have been moved from the main River Wansbeck at Mitford and relocated to the Ark sites. The opportunity to move a large number of the crayfish has come as a result of maintenance works being carried out at Mitford Dam, which is part of the Morpeth Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The crayfish were collected by experienced and licenced staff using a combination of traps, stone turning and hand nets, all under a Natural England conservation licence.

It's just one part of the wider Northumberland Crayfish Strategy, which also involves partners including the National Trust and Northumberland Zoo, to ensure 2022 isn't the native species' final year in the county's rivers.

'Very real danger' of native species disappearing from rivers

The Environment Agency's Ian Marshall, Biodiversity Technical Specialist in the North East and white-clawed crayfish National Species Lead, said:

We're in very real danger of this native species disappearing from our rivers. These new Ark sites will give them a chance to breed and build new populations to help secure their long-term future.

It builds on the positive progress already made by ourselves and our partners in Northumberland to protect them.

Pete Kerr, Northumberland Rivers Trust, said:

While Northumberland's rivers do have some of the best remaining populations of native crayfish in the UK, the invasive signal crayfish are a constant and imminent threat.

Many people haven't seen a native crayfish but they are amazing creatures that play a vital ecological role. We need to do all we can to shelter them from harm and these new Ark sites will play a key role.

The Northumberland Crayfish Partnership is calling on people to 'Check, Clean, Dry' their clothing and equipment after visiting local rivers to avoid transferring invasive crayfish and the crayfish plague between rivers which can be transported in damp soles of shoes or within fishing gear.

If you see any crayfish, alive or dead, leave it where it is and report it immediately to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60. If possible, take close-up photos of the crayfish to help identify the species. It is illegal to handle or remove crayfish from the water without the correct licences.

[New Non-Executive Director of the SIA appointed](#)

News story

Caroline Corby has been appointed a Non-Executive Director of the Security Industry Authority (SIA).



Security Industry Authority

The Minister for Safeguarding has approved the appointment of Caroline Corby to the role of Non-Executive Director with the Security Industry Authority from 19 September 2022.

Caroline is currently the Chair of the Parole Board for England and Wales and the Chair of the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from previous public sector roles, notably in criminal justice and healthcare settings.

Caroline has been appointed to the Authority for a term of 3 years and 6 months.

Published 20 September 2022

MAC commissioned to review shortage occupation list

Published 1 September 2022

Last updated 20 September 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 20 September 2022

Added letter from the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration to the MAC, to allow the use of SOC 2010 data for the SOL commission.

2. 1 September 2022

First published.

HRC 51: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the human rights situation of women and girls in Afghanistan

Thank you Mr President,

Two months ago, this Council concluded that “the oppression of women and girls in Afghanistan is grave, institutionalized, widespread and systematic”. Tragically, nothing has changed.

To the human rights defenders across Afghanistan and to the Afghan women here today, let me begin by saying thank you. Thank you for continuing to shine a

spotlight on the appalling situation you face. I am humbled by your courage and tireless determination.

Afghanistan is the only country in the world where girls cannot attend secondary school. Women in Afghanistan are unable to move around freely. They are confined to their homes. In many cases they are unable to work. They are severely restricted from enjoying their human rights.

With girls kept out of school, and as parents struggle to feed their families, the risk of child early and forced marriage increases.

Without education for girls, there will be fewer doctors, teachers and entrepreneurs in Afghanistan.

The UK will continue strongly championing the voices of Afghan women and girls and continue to provide life-saving support and provide space for Afghan women's voices.

Our message to the Taliban is clear. Listen to Afghan women. Allow girls to go to school. Allow women to work. Allow women humanitarian workers to deliver life-saving aid. To put it simply, uphold their human rights.

Mr President, this Council must unite and demonstrate, once again, that we stand with Afghan women and girls.

Thank you.

[HRC 51: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan](#)

Thank you, Madam Vice President.

Special Rapporteur,

Let me start by thanking you for your detailed and sobering update to this Council. It is a reminder to us all, on this first day of the fifty-first session of the Council, of how crucial your mandate is in providing a voice to millions of Afghans.

We share your grave concern about the, "staggering regression in women and girls' enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights since the Taliban took power". Indeed, in no other country have women and girls so rapidly disappeared from all spheres of public life, particularly secondary schools. We call on the Taliban to urgently reverse these policies and practices restricting the human rights of Afghan women and girls.

Special Rapporteur, we also welcome your efforts to shed light on the broader

situation of human rights in Afghanistan. Religious and ethnic minorities continue to be targeted, including by terrorist groups. There are allegations of arbitrary detention, torture and extrajudicial killings at the hands of the Taliban. Media freedoms have been restricted and there are all too frequent reports of peaceful public dissent being violently repressed.

The UK remains committed to supporting the Afghan people. We urge the Taliban urgently to take steps to protect the rights of all Afghans. This includes ensuring inclusive dialogue, which truly reflects Afghan society.

Your role, Special Rapporteur, is vital to provide an independent voice for the Afghan people, including women and girls. We will do all we can to support you in your work and we encourage our fellow members of this Council to do the same.

Thank you.