

News story: Investigation into reports of 'foam' washing up on Isle of Wight

A number of people have contacted HM Coastguard saying they have seen what looks like foam coming ashore. Ventnor and Bembridge Coastguard Rescue Teams were sent to investigate, take samples and report back. Duty controller Phil Norman said: 'At this stage we are in the early part of an investigation to see what it is and see whether further action needs to be taken.'

Press release: Public urged to report Oak Processionary Moth caterpillar sightings

People in London and the South East of England are being reminded to report sightings of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) caterpillars, which could be damaging oak trees in their area.

Any sightings should be reported to the Forestry Commission via its [Tree Alert online form](#). Alternatively, people can email opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk or call 0300 067 4442.

The Forestry Commission, councils and land managers have an annual programme in place to tackle the pest, which affects certain part of the country in the Spring.

Nests are typically dome or teardrop-shaped, averaging the size of a tennis ball. They are white when fresh, but soon become discoloured and brown. The caterpillars have black heads and bodies covered in long white hairs which contain proteins which can cause itchy rashes, eye and throat irritations. They can also occasionally cause breathing difficulties in people and pets, so should not be touched under any circumstances.

The greatest risk period is May to July, when the caterpillars' emerge and feed before pupating into adult moths, but nests should not be touched at any time. The caterpillars feed on oak leaves, which can leave the trees vulnerable to other pests and diseases and drought.

Craig Harrison, the Forestry Commission's South-East England Director, said:

The public and those working in green spaces such as tree surgeons and gardeners can help by reporting any suspected OPM sightings.

However, they should not touch the caterpillars or nests themselves; removal is most safely done by specially trained and equipped pest control experts.

Dr Deborah Turbitt, London Deputy Director for Health Protection for Public Health England, endorsed the 'don't touch' advice, saying:

We strongly advise people not to touch or approach the caterpillars or their nests because of the health risks posed by the hairs. Pets and livestock can also be affected, and should be kept away as well. The Forestry Commission website has pictures to help identify the pest.

People should see a pharmacist for relief from milder skin or eye irritations following possible OPM contact, or consult a GP or NHS111 for more-serious reactions. Contact a vet if animals are seriously affected.

Anyone pruning or felling oak trees in the affected areas should contact Forestry Commission England's Tree Health Unit beforehand on opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk or 0300 067 4442 for advice about safe removal of the material.

Further information is available from [the Forestry Commission website](#) and advice about stings and bites is available on [the NHS Choices website](#).

Press release: Welsh company receives Board of Trade Award for exporting success

Pioneering technology firm Sure Chill was today (17 May 2019) presented with a Board of Trade Award (BOFTA) by International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP in recognition of their exporting success.

Established in 2011, Cardiff-based Sure Chill's cooling technology protects life-saving vaccines in developing countries. Their medical refrigerators can last without power for up to 12 days and have since protected 20 million vaccinations around the world.

The BOFTAs celebrate businesses who have made an outstanding contribution to international trade by championing free trade through exporting, bringing investment into the UK or demonstrating an innovative approach to entering international markets.

International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade Dr Liam Fox MP said:

I am absolutely delighted to present Sure Chill with a Board of Trade award today in Wales. The company's success in Africa and Asia is a great example of how exporting can improve the lives of people in developing countries miles away from the UK.

Businesses like Sure Chill boost the Welsh economy and showcase the best of Welsh innovation and entrepreneurship.

Sure Chill's life-changing refrigerators are improving healthcare and living conditions in countries across Africa and Asia – especially those without reliable power. The company currently exports to over 50 countries including Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Pakistan and Nepal, with plans to enter new markets in South America and the Gulf states.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Sure Chill is an inspiring Welsh business success story and their product is internationally recognised as saving lives with their innovative refrigeration technology. I'd like to congratulate them on receiving this Board of Trade Award for Exporting Success which cements their credentials as a world-leading exporting company and great contributor to the British economy.

The UK Government stands ready to support all Welsh businesses that wish to replicate Sure Chill's success, through providing an extensive network of export support to help them develop and expand into markets around the globe.

Sure Chill have already featured in the Exporting is GREAT campaign launched by the Department for International Trade – designed to inspire more businesses to export by promoting the success of British businesses in international markets.

Last year, Sure Chill Chief Executive Nigel Saunders joined the Prime Minister Theresa May to South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya to explore new trade and investment opportunities for UK businesses across the African continent.

Nigel Saunders, Chief Executive Officer at Sure Chill, said:

I am thrilled to accept this award in recognition of Sure Chill's progress in establishing itself as a global success story for Wales.

We are renowned in the vaccine market and are now leveraging the endless commercial applications of the technology with leading

brands who have a dependence on cool.

Our bold ambitions will help us to expand our offering and enter new global markets, spreading the positive social and environmental impact even further whilst revolutionising how the world keeps things cool. We will achieve this with our team's expertise, innovative approach and motivation to make an impact.

Later on Friday afternoon, both Secretaries of State will recognise the success of inspiring and pioneering business leaders in Wales with awards during an Institute of Directors Wales event in Cardiff.

Dr Fox is expected to commend the world-renowned innovation of Welsh businesses and their contribution to Wales' bright trading future. He is expected to say:

I have visited around 40 countries now as a trade minister, and I always find you can tell a lot about a society from its attitudes towards business.

Today's awards tell us a lot about what Wales values.

There are awards for large businesses and small ones. Awards for family businesses and brand new start-ups, for young directors and inclusive directors, and for those who are innovative or socially-responsible.

[...] Whenever I lead trade missions abroad I hear the same thing: we in the UK are known for combining innovation with high standards, including quality in our goods, professionalism in our services, and high environmental and social standards.

Robert Lloyd Griffiths OBE, Director IoD Wales said:

I am delighted that the Secretaries of State for International Trade and for Wales will join us at our awards celebration. Businesses across Wales are making huge efforts to contribute to the economy and our members continue to make a positive impact in Wales, the UK and on the global stage.

The Institute of Directors (IoD) Wales awards recognise the very best talent and achievements of Directors and we are confident that great Directors mean great businesses which ultimately means a better economy.

ENDS

For further information:

Contact the DIT Media and Digital Team on 020 7215 2000 Follow us:
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Press release: Scottish Secretary visits Loch Ryan port

Yesterday [Thursday 16 May] Mr Mundell was given a tour of the facilities at Loch Ryan port by the Stena Line Operations Manager, Andy Kane. He gave an insight into the work that goes into running this vital trading route for many Scottish companies.

Like thousands of people every day Mr Mundell travelled on the ferry as he made his way to the first Board of Trade to be in held in Belfast. The Board of Trade, chaired by the International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, champions exports, inward investment and outward direct investment to deliver economic growth and prosperity across the whole of the United Kingdom.

Mr Mundell said:

It was very helpful to be given a tour of Loch Ryan port which confirmed just how important it is for Scotland – and the UK's – economy. With more than 9,000 sailings each year, it accounts for 45 per cent of Northern Ireland's trade with the rest of the UK.

Loch Ryan is the busiest passenger port in Scotland with 1.2 million passengers using this service last year. This helps to maintain the important cultural and economic links that have long existed between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Transport links like this are important throughout the UK, underpinning local economies and communities. They support important sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, which are crucial to Scotland's thriving food and drinks industry and are the lifeblood of the vibrant tourism industry in the south west of Scotland.

I am of course aware of the infrastructure challenges faced by Stena Line and others using this busy port. As an MP from Dumfries & Galloway I have constantly campaigned for improvement to the A75 and will continue to do so.

News story: VMD web and telephone services will be unavailable from 06:00 to 14:00 18 May

The following online application services will be unavailable:

[Special Import Certificates](#)

[Special Treatment Certificates](#)

You should obtain an import certificate in advance if you think you will need to import/use an imported medicine during this period. In urgent cases you may purchase and use an imported veterinary medicine prior to obtaining a certificate from the VMD. This is a special dispensation which only applies to the VMD online system during this maintenance period. You should obtain an import certificate retrospectively as soon as possible.

[Research Import Certificates](#)

[Export Certificates](#)

[Microchip Adverse Event Reporting](#)

[Animal Adverse Reaction Reporting](#)

[Human Adverse Reaction Reporting](#)

The following online information service will be unavailable:

[Product Information Database](#)

Along with access to the following Registers:

- Register of SQP Retailer Premises
- Register of SQPs
- List of Accredited Internet Retailers
- Register of Specific Manufacturing Authorisations

Also, we will not be able to receive phone calls through the switchboard number or via direct dial.

The systems should be operational again from 14:00 Saturday 18 May.

The VMD apologises for any inconvenience.