

# News story: New Farming Rules for Water

From 2 April 2018 [new rules for all farmers in England](#) will be introduced to help protect water quality, by standardising good farm practices that many are already performing and offering a new approach to regulation.

In essence the rules require farmers to:

- keep soil on the land;
- match nutrients to crop, and soil needs, and
- keep livestock fertilisers and manures out of the water.

The Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

These new rules are a win-win for farmers and the environment. They will help improve water quality, set a level playing field for all farmers, help businesses save money from better resource efficiency and improve their resilience.

Our ambition is to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it and these new rules will help us deliver our plans for a Green Brexit along with a better future for farming business.

Farmers and land managers will be able to determine what approach is best for their land, through methods such as deciding when it is safe to spread fertilisers.

The farming rules for water were drawn up with farming and environment stakeholders to recognise and build on the good progress that a great many farmers have made in trying to tackle pollution.

There are eight rules, five about managing fertilisers and manures and three on managing soils.

The fertiliser rules require farmers to test their soils, then plan and apply their fertiliser or manure to improve soil nutrient levels and meet crop needs. They include minimum storage and spreading distances from water bodies. They also require the farmer to assess weather and soil conditions to reduce the risk of runoff and soil erosion.

The remaining rules require farmers to manage livestock by protecting land within five metres of water and reducing livestock poaching.

In addition to these rules, farmers are encouraged to incorporate organic fertilisers into the soil within 12 hours of spreading to significantly reduce ammonia pollution.

Farming rules for water are part of a whole package of measures to help farmers and land managers look after the environment. The government is also investing £400 million through Countryside Stewardship which supports farmers in creating or restoring precious habitats and a £12 million farm ammonia reduction grant has incentivised farmers to tackle agricultural emissions.

The new rules will not only benefit farming businesses: clean water helps tourism, fishing and shellfish businesses to thrive, reduces the cost of treatment and protects biodiversity.

The Environment Agency will roll out the rules through an advice led approach, working with farmers to meet the requirements before enforcement action is taken.

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## [Press release: Report 17/2017: Partial collapse of a wall onto open railway lines, Liverpool](#)

### **Summary**

At about 17:38 hrs on Tuesday 28 February 2017, part of a wall at the top of a cutting 20 metres above the four track railway line between Liverpool Lime Street and Edge Hill stations, collapsed. Around 170 tonnes of masonry and other debris fell into the cutting in at least two separate falls, the last of which occurred at 18:02 hrs.

No trains were struck by the falling debris and there were no injuries. The overhead wires on some of the tracks were brought down and all lines were blocked by the debris. This led to severe disruption of train services. The lines were closed until 8 March 2017, during which time repairs were made to the wall, the overhead electrical supply system and the track.

The investigation found that there had been developments on the leased property adjacent to the cutting, which included the addition of a soil embankment immediately behind the top of the wall. A small portion of the developed land was owned by Network Rail and was not part of the leased property. The increase in ground level caused the wall to be subjected to higher loading. Heavy rainfall may also have played a role in triggering the collapse. Information recorded by Network Rail during its routine examinations was insufficient to detect the developments on adjacent land and the infringement of its property. The investigation also found that Network Rail did not have a suitable risk prioritisation process in place for retaining walls, such as the one that collapsed, that have a high potential safety consequence in the event of a failure.

## **Recommendations**

The RAIB has made two recommendations to Network Rail. The first relates to being aware of those of its walls which have a potentially high safety consequence in the event of failure. The second is for Network Rail to review its assessment procedures for such walls, the use of open source data to identify changes in land use, and the provision of information on property boundaries to structures examiners.

### **Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:**

The collapse of the cutting wall on this busy line just outside Liverpool Lime Street occurred without warning, and about 170 tonnes of rubble fell on the railway. It had the potential to crush or derail a passing train, with disastrous consequences.

However, the signs that a dangerous situation was developing had been there for a long time. Network Rail's examination system did not pick up the significant changes that were taking place behind the wall due to earth moving activities undertaken by the occupier. Similar changes in land use can occur anywhere, especially in areas of urban regeneration. Although I recognise that it can be challenging for the railway industry, it is vital that Network Rail carries out regular and effective checks for activities on its boundaries that may endanger the integrity of its structures. Changes in technology mean that tools, such as aerial surveys, to improve the way in which such information is gathered and analysed, are now readily available.

RAIB has made recommendations for the railway industry to put in place systems that will reliably detect threats to high risk structures, and cause prompt and appropriate action to be taken, to avoid a danger to the line. I hope that this investigation will result in a significant change to the way that the railway manages risk from its neighbours.

## **Animation**

This video is a 3D model created from aerial images captured on the day following the wall collapse:

[3D model of wall collapse close to Liverpool Lime Street station](#)

## **Notes to editors**

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we

discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.

3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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PDF, 9.55MB, 41 pages

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## [News story: Celebrate your shortlisted 2021 UK City of Culture City](#)

Show your support for the 5 shortlisted cities before the winner is revealed on 7 December.

On the evening of 7 December, the 2021 UK City of Culture will be revealed. The winning city will be selected from a [shortlist of 5 UK cities](#) comprised of Coventry, Paisley, Stoke-on-Trent, Sunderland and Swansea.

### **How to get involved**

In the run up to the winner being announced, we'll be shining a spotlight on each of these cities in turn through our social media channels on the following days:

- Friday 1 December: #Coventry
- Monday 4 December: #Paisley
- Tuesday 5 December: #Sunderland
- Wednesday 6 December: #StokeonTrent
- Thursday 7 December: #Swansea

You can also show your support and get involved in celebrating what you love about each of these cities on these days on your social media channels by:

- Following DCMS on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to follow and share our content.
- Sharing your messages of support for your favourite shortlisted city on their day.

- Posting images and videos about your favourite places to visit and enjoy in these cities.
- Sharing your stories and facts about what makes each shortlisted city unique.
- Make sure you include your city as a hashtag alongside the #CityofCulture2021 hashtag to join the conversation.

## About the UK City of Culture

The UK City of Culture is a designation given to a city in the United Kingdom for a period of one year. [Derry-Londonderry](#) was the first winner in 2013, followed Hull, which is the current title holder for 2017. [Find out more about Hull 2017.](#)

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## [Press release: Justice Secretary enforces robust action to improve prison safety](#)

- Prisons Chief Inspector can now directly alert Justice Secretary where serious failings are found in establishments
- Justice Secretary will publish his response and a plan of action within 28 days of the report being received
- The urgent notification process is part of a package aimed at improving the safety of people in prisons

A new process introduced by the Secretary of State, David Lidington, will mean that prisons that require urgent attention will have 28 days to introduce tough measures that will drive improvement.

From today (30 November 2017), and for the first-time, the Secretary of State will be directly alerted by the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMIP) if an urgent issue needs addressing to ensure that recommendations are acted upon immediately.

A team of specialists will be brought together to ensure immediate action is taken, along with a more in-depth plan to ensure we see sustained improvement for the prison in the long term.

This team, who are accountable to Ministers, will have 28 days to set out what steps the prison and department are taking to improve safety and bring the prison up to the required standard.

Secretary of State, David Lidington said:

Openness and transparency are powerful instruments of change and I believe we should be accountable so the public can see exactly what we are doing to turn prisons into safe places where offenders can change their lives.

“A team of specialists will now respond when HMIP trigger Urgent Notification to urgently drive improvements and ensure that prisons are safe, secure and providing a regular regime.

To implement these actions plans and improve safety, the recruitment of an additional 2,500 prison officers is key and we are already halfway towards reaching that target.

This process forms part of the broader work of the Secretary of State to enhance our responses to external scrutiny.

Peter Clarke, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, said:

I welcome the new ‘Urgent Notification’ protocol which the Secretary of State for Justice has signed and which will now play a key role in the work of HM Inspectorate of Prisons to inspect the treatment and conditions for many thousands of prisoners and other detainees held in custody.

In particular, I welcome the principle of transparency and accountability underlying this new protocol. The Secretary of State has accepted that he and his successors will be held publicly accountable for delivering an urgent, robust and effective response when HMIP assesses that treatment or conditions in a jail raise such significant concerns that urgent action is required.

Senior officials in HMPPS and MOJ will be directly involved in the work to ensure immediate action is taken, along with a more in-depth plan to ensure we see sustained improvement for the prison in the long term.

### **Notes to editors:**

- [urgent notification](#) is a new process where the Chief Inspector of Prisons can inform the Secretary of State of any urgent and severe prison problems found on an inspection
- Secretary of State will have 28 days to publicly report on action taken to resolve issues raised by HMIP
- response at the 28 day point will focus on urgent and severe issues
- there will be a longer-term plan to support sustained improvement
- there are already taking a number of steps being taken to improve safety in the prison estate, including an investment of £100 million to boost the front line by 2,500 additional prison officers
- we are also investing to make sure our dedicated officers have the tools they need, including £2 million for body-worn cameras

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# [News story: Measles outbreaks confirmed in 5 areas across UK](#)

## **Latest update**

As of 11 December 2017, there have been 28 confirmed cases in Leeds, 18 confirmed cases in Liverpool, 7 confirmed cases in Surrey and Sussex, 4 confirmed cases in Manchester and 13 confirmed cases in Birmingham. All of the cases have been reported in children and adults who have not received 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

## **Previous update**

As of 29 November 2017, there were 16 confirmed cases in Leeds, 11 confirmed cases in Liverpool and 9 confirmed cases in Birmingham. All of the cases have been reported in children and adults who have not received 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

Measles is a highly infectious viral illness that can be very unpleasant and can sometimes lead to serious complications.

Children and young people who have not received 2 doses of MMR vaccine are at risk. Unvaccinated people travelling to Romania and Italy, where there are currently large outbreaks of measles, are at particularly high risk.

Anyone planning to travel to Europe over the Christmas period should check [NaTHNaC travel health advice](#).

PHE local health protection teams are working closely with the NHS and local authorities to raise awareness of the outbreaks in England and Europe with health professionals and local communities.

The MMR vaccine is available to all adults and children who are not up to date with their 2 doses. Anyone who is not sure if they are fully vaccinated should check with their GP practice.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at PHE, said:

The measles outbreaks we are currently seeing in England are linked to ongoing large outbreaks in Europe. People who have recently travelled, or are planning to travel to Romania, Italy and Germany and have not had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine are particularly at risk.

This serves as an important reminder for parents to take up the offer of MMR vaccination for their children at 1 year of age and as

a pre-school booster at 3 years and 4 months of age. Children and young adults who missed out on their MMR vaccine in the past or are unsure if they had 2 doses should contact their GP practice to catch-up.

We'd also encourage people to ensure they are up to date with their MMR vaccine before travelling to countries with ongoing measles outbreaks.

The UK recently achieved WHO measles elimination status and so the overall risk of measles to the UK population is low, however due to ongoing measles outbreaks in Europe, we will continue to see cases in unimmunised individuals and limited onward spread can occur in communities with low MMR coverage and in age groups with very close mixing.