

[Notice: Environment Agency \(NPS/WR/028924\): application made to abstract water](#)

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

[Form: Check evidence and record keeping requirements: Countryside Stewardship](#)

Download the spreadsheet tool to check what evidence you need to provide for Mid Tier and Offers for Wildlife applications. It's for 2018 applications where agreements would start on 1 January 2019.

There are 2 versions of the tool:

- the XLSM file for use with Microsoft Excel
- the ODS file is an open standards format that should work with most spreadsheet software

Both versions include guidance for users.

If you cannot use the tool, you can still check what evidence you need to supply using the [Countryside Stewardship grant finder](#).

Contact

Contact Natural England if you have queries or difficulty using the tool:

Enquiries

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Email

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Telephone

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Opening times: 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Find out about call charges at www.gov.uk/call-charges.

[News story: Train firms and tech experts unite to revolutionise rail travel](#)

- more real-time data to support rail and tech industry collaboration and to better inform passengers
- intelligent travel apps to cater for passenger needs door-to-door
- action plan to be overseen by industry-led taskforce

Train companies are to publish more real-time information to enable tech firms to develop intelligent travel apps for the future, under new plans announced today (8 August 2018) by the Rail Minister Jo Johnson and Rail Delivery Group Chief Executive, Paul Plummer.

The aim is for closer working between rail and tech firms to bring about more seamless, hassle-free journeys, and better information for passengers on services and delays, as well as seats and on-board facilities, like toilets and refreshments. Better use of data could also allow rail companies to plan more effectively and to predict and fix issues before they arise, creating a more reliable railway.

Transport Minister Jo Johnson said:

This will speed the development of travel apps that provide passengers with helpful information about their journeys.

The government and the Rail Delivery Group, which represents the rail industry, have today published the '[Joint rail data action plan](#)' which sets out the obligations and deadlines for delivering on these ambitions, overseen by an industry-led taskforce.

Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group, Paul Plummer, said:

Technology gave rise to the railway, connecting Britain, and the rail industry wants to channel this spirit to help produce cutting-edge products and services that can be exported around the world.

Digital technology in rail already means more timely information and less time spent waiting, helping to put customers in charge, and as part of the rail industry's plan to change and improve we want to use technology to give customers more and more control.

Building on data that the industry has already made available, data will be released over the coming months to provide more consistent and timely information about train services, delays and disruption. Information will also be made available on the carriages that make up each train, enabling operators to more accurately communicate on board facilities, and to help passengers plan ahead and board in the most convenient place.

The plan will see the rail industry go further than this, by identifying and removing barriers to better information sharing by, for example, improving standardisation of how data is collected, stored and published, and improving clarity over which data is commercially sensitive and what data can be used for what purposes. The government and rail industry will also explore what incentives could be introduced to drive further innovation and data sharing, on top of that already planned.

Improving how rail companies and tech firms work together presents an opportunity for the UK to match its world class expertise in emerging technologies and address the transport challenges set out in the government's '[Future of mobility grand challenge](#)'.

The next 10 years will see significant changes in the way we travel and how we develop our transport infrastructure. This includes using digital technology to make journeys on our railways easier and simpler for everyone who wants to use them.

[Press release: Deaths from hepatitis C](#)

have fallen by 11 per cent in the last year

New [data published by Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) show that deaths from hepatitis C-related end-stage liver disease have fallen by 11% in 2017 compared to the previous year.

A fall has been sustained in 2017 after a continued rise in deaths over the last decade. This fall is most likely due to increased use of new antiviral medications now available on the NHS which have the potential to cure the condition in most cases and have fewer side effects than previously used medications.

More people are accessing treatment than ever before with an increase of 19% on the previous year and of 125% when compared to pre-2015 levels.

The new data also shows there was still an average of 1,974 new end-stage liver disease and cancer diagnoses per year, with the rate remaining stable between 2011 to 2015.

In the UK, around 200,000 people have a long-term infection with hepatitis C virus. People who have ever injected drugs are most at risk of infection, but around half of people living with hepatitis C are unaware of their infection.

PHE is urging anyone who has previously been diagnosed with hepatitis C or who has engaged in activities that may have put them at risk to get tested as they can benefit from this potentially curative treatment.

Two years ago, the UK government committed to a joint ambition with 193 other countries to eliminate the disease as a public health threat by 2030. As well as testing and treatment, prevention through needle and syringe exchange services and opiate substitution therapies need to be sustained to achieve and maintain elimination.

Dr Sema Mandal, Consultant Epidemiologist at PHE, said:

The fall in deaths from hepatitis C related advanced liver disease in the last year suggests that more people are accessing new, potentially curative treatments and shows we're making positive steps towards reaching our overall goal of elimination of hepatitis C as a major public health threat.

However, more needs to be done. We are urging anyone who has ever injected drugs, even once or a long time ago, had a tattoo or medical treatment overseas where proper hygiene procedures may not have been followed, or has had a blood transfusion before hepatitis C screening was in place, to get tested at their GP, community drug services or sexual health clinic. It could save your life.

If untreated, infection with the hepatitis C virus can lead to liver damage, cancer and even death. It is normally spread through blood-to-blood contact by sharing needles, but even sharing razors or toothbrushes with an infected person could pass the virus on.

The disease often has no symptoms until it causes serious complications many years later. Urgent testing and prompt treatment is needed in order to ensure infected people don't suffer from serious health complications in the future.

If people aren't sure about whether they are at risk, they can take a short quiz on the [Hepatitis C Trust](#) website to find out if they should get tested.

Background

1. Hepatitis C can be treated with medicines that stop the virus multiplying inside the body. These usually need to be taken for several weeks. Until a few years ago, most people would have taken 2 main medications called pegylated interferon (a weekly injection) and ribavirin (a capsule or tablet). Tablet-only treatments known as direct acting antivirals which have a short duration and fewer side effects are now available. Using these latest medications, more than 90% of people with hepatitis C may be cured.
2. PHE's hepatitis C Operational Delivery Network (ODN) profile tool provides estimates of hepatitis C prevalence, diagnoses, treatment and severe hepatitis C-related liver disease at local level to help with local planning and delivery of awareness-raising, testing and diagnosis and treatment services.
3. The introduction of widespread needle exchange programmes in the 1980s and 1990s, which provided sterile injecting equipment and opiate substitution therapies, helped to reduce the number of drug-related deaths and blood-borne virus infections. The sustained investment in these services since then has resulted in the UK having one of the lowest rates of hepatitis C among injecting drugs users in the world – but these services must continue for lower hepatitis C rates to be realised.

[News story: £50m boost for British pork as export market opens in Taiwan](#)

Updated: Added ministerial and AHDB quotes

British farmers and food producers are set to benefit from a valuable new market as Taiwan prepares to welcome British pork exports for the first time.

UK pork exports were worth £290 million to our economy last year, reaching over 80 export markets. This new agreement is expected to be worth more than £50 million over the next five years.

The deal also means UK exporters can further tap in to the overseas demand for parts of the pig carcass that are not commonly purchased in the UK, such as offal. This means UK farmers and pork processors will be able to generate income for the whole carcass.

The eagerly awaited deal has been secured by the UK government, working with the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) and UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP). Exporters can take advantage of the market as soon as the administrative listing process is completed and export certification is made available.

It follows a number of recent successes for UK food and drink exports, which reached a record level of £22 billion in 2017. Last month, [China lifted its two-decade long ban on UK beef exports](#) following the BSE outbreak. The agreement will allow official market access negotiations to begin, estimated to be worth over £250million in the first five years alone.

Food Minister George Eustice said:

Access to this new market in Taiwan is great news for our farmers and producers and gives a welcome boost to the pork production industry – already worth £1.3 billion to the UK economy.

This is a significant development for pork exporters and reinforces our reputation for producing high quality food and drink, guaranteeing quality from farm to fork.

International Trade Minister, George Hollingbery said:

Following years of hard work by UK government, the opening of the Taiwanese market to British pork will bring significant benefits to UK pork exporters. This follows a record level of UK food and drink exports last year.

This only goes to highlight the UK's world-famous reputation for high-quality produce, and we are committed to maintaining those high standards as we leave the EU next spring.

AHDB International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

We estimate the value to the UK to be in excess of £50m based on current UK export capacity but if this were to rise to match the

strong demand for pork imports in Taiwan, where last year alone imports rose by 26% to US\$178.3m, the opportunity could be worth more than £100m over the next five years.

This is an exciting development and a great step forward for the UK and Taiwan.

A team of the Government's leading trade experts continue to provide guidance to UK businesses as they enter into overseas markets for the first time or consider expanding their current global customer base – ensuring they are poised to take advantage of the increasing opportunities Brexit presents.

This is complemented by the government's [Food is GREAT campaign](#), which highlights the success of current exporters and showcases the UK's top quality food and drink.