

# [News story: The Environment Agency Publishes Annual Report 2017-18](#)

**Today the Environment Agency has published its Annual Report and Accounts for 2017-2018 outlining what has been achieved in the last financial year.**

This report lays a positive foundation for the government's 25 Year Environment Plan which has a clear ambition for our generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it. The Environment Agency was closely involved in shaping the Plan, and it is now one of our main responsibilities to deliver it.

This year's report highlights considerable progress that the Agency has made towards fulfilling the goals set out in our Action Plan up to 2020.

Over the past year the Environment Agency has:

- Invested 1.3bn into protecting the environment.
- Reduced its carbon footprint by 45% against the 2006 – 2007 baseline year.
- Enhanced over 2,000km of river habitats.
- Created over 1,500 acres of new habitat for wildlife.
- Better protected over 45,000 additional homes from flooding this year.
- Informed over 1.4 million people about our free Flood Warning Service.
- Trained 6,500 staff to respond to flooding.
- Reduced the number of serious and significant pollution incidents to their lowest levels since 2011.

**Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:**

The report demonstrates the commitment of all those who work for the Environment Agency to do the right thing for the environment, to create a better place for people and wildlife, and to go the extra mile for the communities we serve.

Over the course of the past year the Environment Agency has made good progress towards the goals set out in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan, reducing pollution, enhancing habitats, protecting more homes from flooding and strengthening our incident response capabilities.

The Environment Agency is here to create a better place for people and wildlife, delivering flood protection and water security, regulating industry and supporting sustainable growth across the country.

To read the report click [here](#).

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## **[News story: Waddington to operate Protector, with best of British air power on show at Air Tattoo](#)**

RIAT this year saw the arrival of the Protector from the US, paired with the announcement that RAF Waddington will be the main operating base for the aircraft, which continuing the foundations of flying Reaper, will operate this next generation, world leading aircraft.

The Defence Secretary also presented two British pilots with 1,000 flying hour certificates after they reached the milestone in the submarine hunting P8-A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft being purchased by the UK. Squadron Leaders Mark Faulds and Ian Tuff reached the achievement as part of their time training in the Seedcorn crew with the United States Navy.

The UK has ordered nine of the aircraft, investing £3 billion over the next decade in its Maritime Patrol Capability, building upon the principle of collective defence and security and strengthening US-UK interoperability. The Defence Secretary recently cut the first turf on a £132 million facility for the new fleet at RAF Lossiemouth.

Speaking at RIAT, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The Royal International Air Tattoo is a perfect example of how Britain continues to lead the way in airpower, showing the story from the historic Lancaster, to the stealthy F-35 Lightning and now the incredible arrival of the Protector.

Not only are we continuing to invest in our own people and capabilities, but we are fostering partnerships with close friends, working with our American allies as we bring the Protector on board and set the way forward for the future of our submarine-hunting capabilities. Today's show embodies how our RAF continue to have the equipment they need to protect our country and our interests around the world.

Protector, a new Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) ordered for the Royal Air Force. Crown copyright.

Marking the Protector's arrival into the UK in time for RIAT, Defence Minister Guto Bebb was also at Fairford to see the latest addition to the

Royal Air Force.

In a historic first, the aircraft flew non-stop from North Dakota, United States to Gloucestershire in a flight that took over just over 20 hours, setting the record as the first Medium Altitude Long Endurance Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) to transit across the Atlantic.

Designed to double the RAF's Reaper capability, the Protector will provide world leading capability, able to persist for over 40 hours. The aircraft will contribute to Homeland and Defence tasks across the spectrum of operations, including but not limited to, military aid to civil authorities, and armed intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and target acquisition at long range and for long periods until beyond the mid-2030's. The aircraft will be based at RAF Waddington, with planned investment of £93 million to construct a new purpose-built hanger as well new facilities and accommodation for crews.

Speaking at RIAT, Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

Protector's arrival in the UK marks a significant milestone in our determination to target future threats that we face. The Protector will bring us an opportunity to enhance our armed surveillance abilities and increase our weapons payloads to deter those who seek to do us harm.

RAF Waddington is renowned as the home of the UK's eyes and ears in the sky, providing critical information about activity on the ground, in the air and at sea. Protector will help reinforce this capability and will not only give us a decisive advantage on the battlefield but will help us reach new heights to keep us safe at home and overseas.

The Protector is designed with anti-icing and lightning protection ensuring an unmatched ability to operate in adverse weather conditions. It will be able to contribute to an array of homeland defence tasks, including search and rescue, disaster monitoring or flood prevention activities. The Protector is also the world's first RPAS to be designed, built and certified against stringent NATO and UK safety standards.

It was also announced yesterday by the Chief of the Air Staff Sir Stephen Hillier that the first RAF Squadron to be equipped with this latest technology will be Number 31 Squadron, passing on the baton for the Squadron's proud operational record from the Tornado Force.

For the first flight across the Atlantic to succeed, the RAF provided guidance, advice and supervision of UK airspace procedures. To support bringing the aircraft into Service, the Protector Combined Test Team was recently established in the United States and is working closely with colleagues from industry and the United States Air Force to coordinate testing and evaluation of the vehicle.

The aircraft will be placed on static display at the Royal International Air Tattoo, demonstrating a key component of the future fleet the next generation aircraft.

As well as the demonstration of future equipment capabilities, RIAT featured the next generation of engineers and pilots. A cadet crew as part of a scheme sponsored by Boeing, showed off their fully working aircraft that they built.

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## **Press release: Operation CLAMPDOWN and licence blitz target illegal fishing**

The close season campaign was supported by nearly 500 volunteers from the Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS), whose 'eyes and ears' coverage on the riverbank is invaluable in supporting Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officers.

The volunteer bailiffs undertook 6555 man hours of patrols as part of Operation CLAMPDOWN 6, reporting 111 incidents to the Environment Agency and 34 to the police. A total of 77 intelligence logs were submitted to the Environment Agency and police.

The latest national fishing licence blitz, covering the first two weekends of the new season, checked 1461 licences and reported 88 fishing illegally without a licence. Those found guilty of unlicensed fishing by the courts face a criminal conviction and a fine of up to £2500.

Graeme Storey, Fisheries Manager, Environment Agency said:

Environment Agency fisheries enforcement patrols continue all year round. Anyone tempted to fish illegally should know that they are likely to be challenged at any time of the day or night. With the support of our partners and the VBS there is an increased likelihood of being caught out – don't risk it.

Dilip Sarkar MBE, National Enforcement Manager with the Angling Trust said:

This is our most successful Operation CLAMPDOWN yet, with a record number of volunteers trained and available and over 70 joint patrols with the Environment Agency or police. The VBS is now making a tangible contribution to tackling illegal fishing, which is welcomed by the Angling Trust and our partners.

For more information on the Voluntary Bailiff Service and the six free

Fisheries Enforcement Workshops that will be held around England this autumn, please go to the [Angling Trust's website](#).

- Enjoy fishing and make sure you fish legally
- Annual fishing licences from only £30
- It's easy to buy online. [Get a Fishing Licence](#)
- All fishing licence income is used to fund work to protect, improve and develop fisheries, fish habitat and angling.
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