

Press release: Cooperation the key to tackling pennywort

The Environment Agency has called on Thames river users to keep working together to control floating pennywort. More than 63 tonnes of the invasive water plant has been removed from the Thames over the winter and spring but there is still more to do.

Because of the efforts of the Environment Agency and some local groups, where there were large rafts of the plant in some areas, there are now only a few small traces of regrowth. The Environment Agency continues to monitor and remove new growth of this very invasive and destructive plant. However, the summer is the peak season for floating pennywort growth which can have detrimental impacts on watercourses. Large blooms of the plant affect the oxygen content of rivers, reduce biodiversity, can damage important habitats and potentially increase flood risk.

As part of the annual maintenance programme, the Environment Agency has been managing floating pennywort for several years in locations such as the River Wey and the Foudry Brook. But more help and support is needed from the public and river users if we are to succeed in controlling the spread of this destructive plant.

Daryl Buck, from the Environment Agency, said:

We actively monitor more than 200km of the River Thames. Our aim is to eradicate floating pennywort from the main River Thames completely, but we can only achieve this with the continued cooperation of key members of the community.

Early intervention is the most efficient way to keep on top of this damaging plant as it can grow up to 20cm per day! We are urging riverside owners to keep an eye on their watercourse and report any new growth to us. We also would like to hear from river users such as anglers, boaters and canoeists who may come across the plant when out and about enjoying the river.

One success story so far has been the work undertaken earlier this year in the Abbey River near Chertsey. Floating pennywort established itself last season in the popular watercourse, causing all kinds of issues for river users like anglers and kayakers as well as landowners.

Ian Penny, secretary of a local angling club, said:

This non-native plant is very aggressive and plays havoc for fish and plant life. The Environment Agency did an absolutely fantastic

job of totally removing the floating pennywort from over a mile stretch of the river. Everyone who enjoys the river has a responsibility to help the situation by reporting any new sightings via www.plantracker.org.uk.

Richard Atkinson, Policy Officer for British Canoeing, said:

British Canoeing takes its environmental responsibility very seriously and wants all water users to have fun and enjoy the natural environment. Non-native invasive species like pennywort have a significant impact on biodiversity, the environment and paddling.

We will be encouraging our members to report any sightings via the app and by reinforcing the importance of the check, clean, dry procedure after paddling.

People can visit www.plantracker.org.uk or download the Plant Tracker app co-developed by the Environment Agency to enable river users to record sightings of floating pennywort to help concentrate removal efforts where they are most needed.

Floating pennywort was introduced into the UK as an ornamental plant. For more information pond owners are encouraged to go to the plantwise campaign at <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/beplantwise/pondowner/index.cfm>

Ends

Notes to Editors

Photographs available on request

Floating pennywort is an aggressive invasive non-native species of plant, introduced to this country as an ornamental aquatic plant. It tends to favour slower moving watercourses. It is now widespread in southern and eastern England, including parts of the River Thames and its backwaters between Reading and Kingston and the River Wey. The Environment Agency is under no obligation to remove floating pennywort, however we do have discretion to remove it under our statutory powers. Riparian owners are also not obliged to remove it, unless it can be shown that they planted it, though if it is on their land they do have a duty to take reasonable action to ensure it does not cause damage to neighbouring properties. What you can do to help Please continue to help us. If you see floating pennywort in the river Thames or its tributaries please report its location by:

- Emailing us: enquiries_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk

Not sure if it is floating pennywort?

- Look at the plant tracker website or download the app at www.planttracker.org.uk
- You can also report sightings using the plant tracker app. Are you a boater?
- Don't pass through clumps of the plant. It can break off and spread downstream or carry it upstream.
- Visually check your craft regularly and, if safe to do so, remove any visible weed, placing it well away from any river or other water body.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743. Or e-mail us at southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk Follow us on Twitter at @EnvAgencySE

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[Press release: Recall – SAM XT Extremity Tourniquet](#)

First responders and people who participate in outdoor activities, such as mountaineering and hiking, should check if they have a SAM XT Extremity Tourniquet and return it to their distributor for a new one.

A problem in the sewing operations has been identified which could cause the seam holding the buckle to the belt to fail when used on a patient to stop blood flow. Although not widely used in the UK, tourniquets are used for critical, emergency situations, and so it's important people are aware if they own an affected product.

Only a small number of lots are being recalled. This product has been sold worldwide since March 2017. No other types of tourniquets are affected.

The SAM XT devices affected by the recall can be identified by:

- The absence of a “Box X Stitch” on the Instructions For Use (IFU)
- The absence of a “Box X Stitch” on the device
- Any Lot Number with XT1812 or higher

John Wilkinson, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency’s (MHRA) Director of Medical Devices, said:

Check if you have the listed tourniquet and if you do so, please separate the device from your pack and take them back to where you bought them from.

Our highest priority is making sure medical devices are safe. This is why we are supporting the company to carry out this recall and why we want people to check their inventory.

As with any medical device, we strongly encourage anyone to report any suspected manufacturing faults to us via our Yellow Card Scheme.

Notes to Editor

1. MHRA is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgments to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). The Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health. www.mhra.gov.uk
2. [Link to Yellow Card Scheme](#)
3. [Medical Device Alert](#)
4. [SAM Medical company website recall](#)

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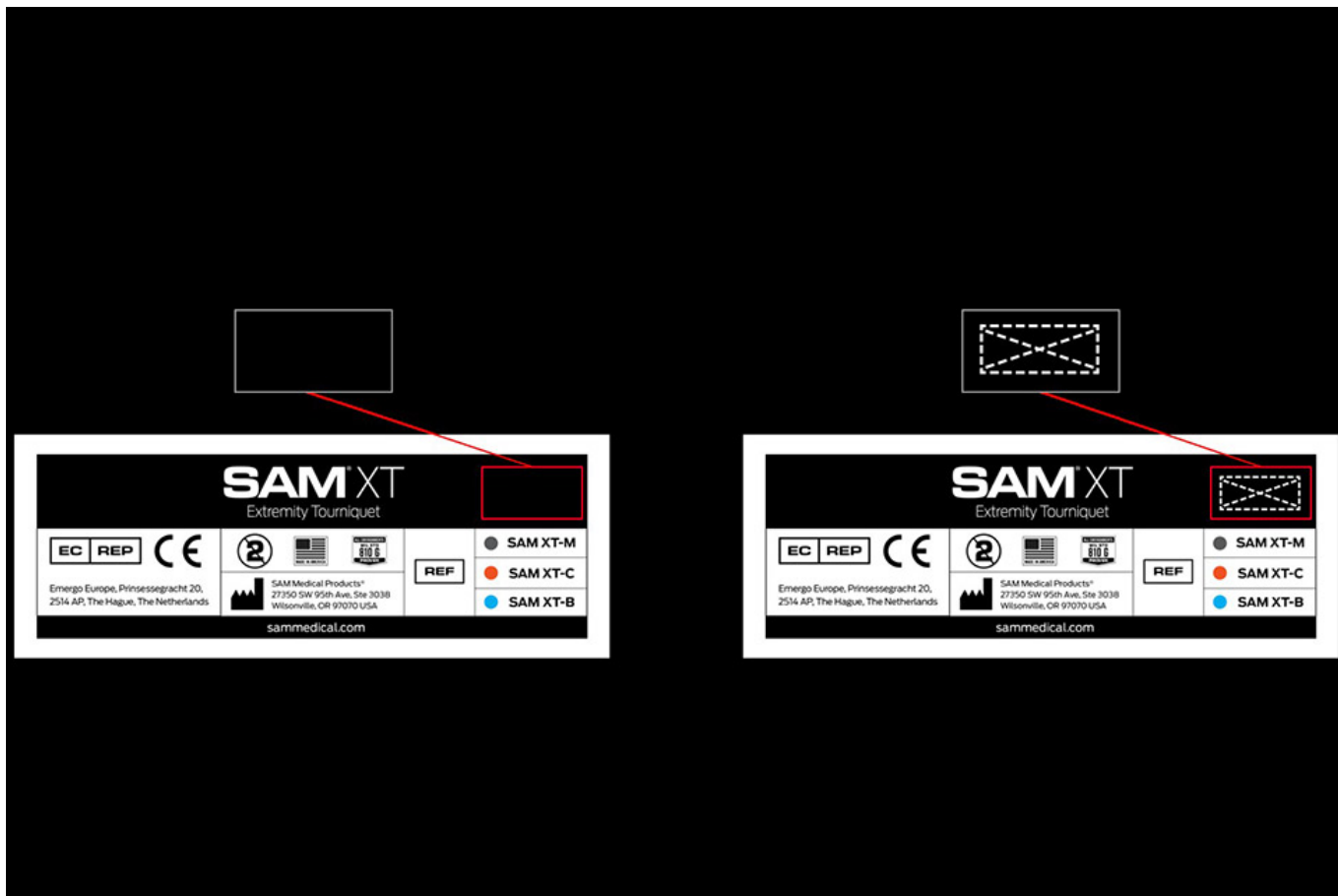
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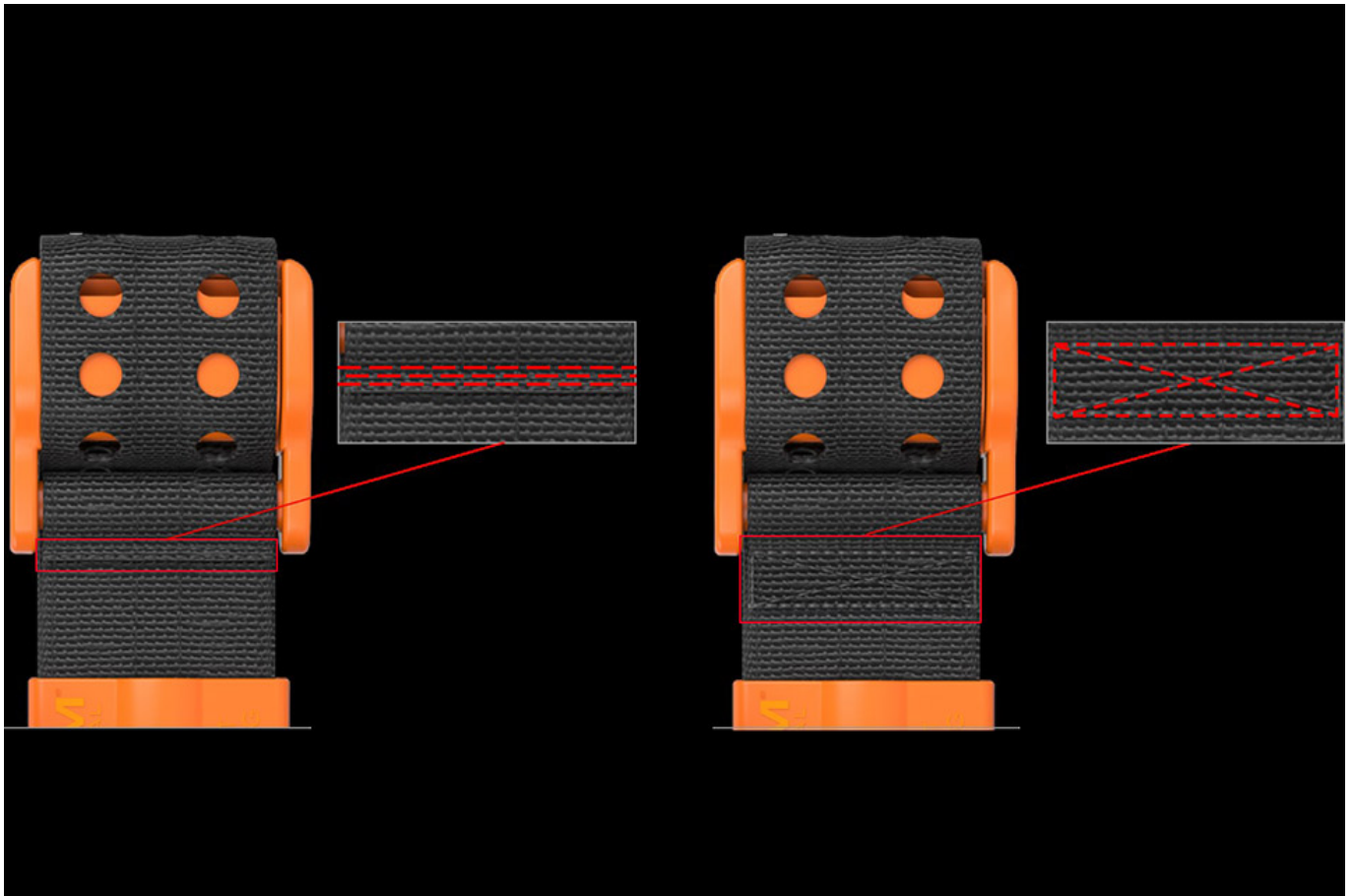
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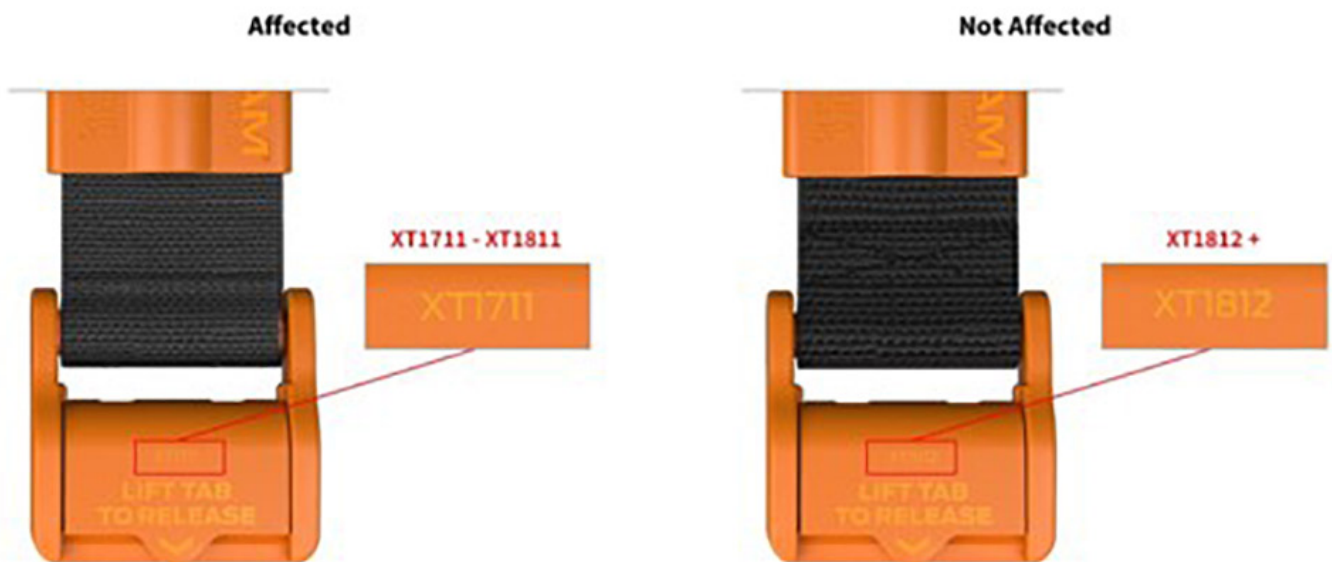
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Speech: Matt Hancock speaking at the Digital Colloque in Paris

C'est l'un de vos penseurs les plus célèbres, Voltaire, né ici, qui a dit autrefois: où est l'amitié, est la patrie.

[One of this city's most famous thinkers, Voltaire, once said friendship is our natural soil]

Et l'amitié entre le Royaume-Uni et la France n'a pas seulement duré à travers les siècles, mais est devenue de plus en plus forte.

[And the friendship between the UK and France has not only endured, but has grown stronger and stronger over time.]

Il y a cent cinquante huit ans, nos deux pays ont signé le premier traité de commerce moderne, déclarant au monde notre attachement à l'ouverture et à la prospérité.

[158 years ago, our two nations signed the first modern trade agreement, showing the world our commitment to openness and prosperity.]

Il y a cent ans, lors de notre plus grand défi, nous combattions côte à côte. J'aurais l'honneur de joindre la commémoration de la bataille d'Amiens le mois prochain.

[And a century ago, we were at each other's side during our toughest times, as I will see first hand when I attend the Commemoration for the Battle of Amiens next month.]

Cette amitié continue jusqu'à nos jours. Le président Macron a récemment désigné notre capitale la sixième plus grande ville de France, en raison des quatre-cent-mille Londoniens nés ici en France.

[This friendship has continued right up until the present day. President Macron recently described our capital as France's sixth largest city, due to the 400,000 Londoners that were born here in France.]

Mais c'est le progrès que nous avons réalisés ensemble, voisins, grâce à la technologie, dont je veux vous parler aujourd'hui.

[It's the progress that we have forged, together, through technology, that I want to talk about today.]

Si vous voulez, je peux continuer en anglais. Oui, vous le voulez...

Our two nations have worked on some of the world's most pioneering inventions, like the Channel Tunnel and the Concorde.

And we have found common ground on issues, both big and small, because we share value.

When we were working on Concorde, there was a disagreement about whether or not there should be an 'e' on the end of its name. The spelling was even discussed at the British Cabinet.

Eventually there was a compromise. The French spelling would be used but it would be announced that the 'e' stood for England, Europe and the entente cordiale.

The British Minister for Technology was then asked why the E stands for England when the nose of the plane was made in Scotland. He paused and replied 'The E also stands for Ecosse...'

On both sides of La Manche, we are continuing to embrace new technologies and the benefits that they bring.

And in the UK we are seeing our own tech renaissance, as we are increasingly recognised across the world as a place where ingenuity and innovation can flourish.

We have a tech landscape that combines major players like Uber and Apple, alongside thriving new start ups and scale ups.

The results have been exhilarating. The UK is the home of four in ten of Europe's tech unicorns.

And London is the AI capital of Europe.

And we want to keep this momentum going. A few weeks ago, during London Tech Week, we announced a landmark package of support.

This includes support for our Digital Catapult and it's great to see the leadership of the Digital Catapult here and engaged in the relationship with France.

And opening up our visa system to support accelerators with a new start-up visa, to help bring business founders to the UK.

And a 2.5 billion pound Patient Capital Fund to help promising UK companies to go global.

I want the message to go out loud and clear: we want to be the natural home for the world's top tech talent.

And my fundamental belief that brings me here is that this is strengthened by strong neighbours.

And I admire the great work that Monsieur Mahjoub and President Macron have been doing on this.

I've seen it first hand. For instance, take a great French company that is

competing on a global scale as a platform.

Deezer is a real French tech success story and it has now expanded to 180 countries across the world. And as a platform, it is taking on the American giants globally.

And at the other end of the scale, Station F shows the energy that is being put in to fostering the tech pioneers of the future.

One of the things I like to say about the UK is we're at our best when we're combining the best of the old and the best of the new. And here in France you do this brilliantly too.

And I strongly believe at the core of my being that this is great news for us all. Because the strength of European tech ecosystems is no zero sum game.

A strong France begets a strong Britain. They are two sides of the same coin.

So I am thrilled, for instance, that this year Samsung has announced both a new world-leading AI centre in Cambridge and a research and development hub here in France.

And that Entrepreneur First, the London based start up accelerator, is opening a new international office here in Paris. And over breakfast I was talking to a company that wants to do the same in the other direction.

Partnerships like these show the strength and depth of our tech industries.

And just as has been the case throughout history, this prosperity been underpinned by a constant exchange of ideas.

Victor Hugo's career was inspired by a six shilling copy of Shakespeare's King John.

And Charles Dickens' most celebrated works were inspired by his frequent trips to Paris.

We need to summon this spirit for our newest frontier. Making sure technology is harnessed for the greater good.

And the path that we chart over the next few years is so important in making this happen.

Over centuries, our nations have been beacons for liberal values like freedom, consent and the rights of the individual.

And I want our two nations to be working together, to make sure these values are writ large and in the underpinning architecture of new technologies as they are developed.

In the UK we have recently established our new Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation.

A world-class advisory body to make sure data and AI delivers the best

possible outcomes for society, in support of its innovative and ethical use.

I am delighted that Roger Taylor, who is leading this, is here today.

This is not a trade off between the ethical use of modern technology and the innovative use of modern technology.

Get it right and strong ethics underpin strong innovation. And an architecture that thinks in advance about how the technology will be made and used for the good of humanity will lead to more and not less innovative use of this technology.

And this is an issue for us all, transcending borders and nation states.

We will only retain what makes technology great if we work together, to keep it great and working for humanity.

So I was delighted to see that a new agreement is being signed today, between the UK's Alan Turing Institute, our cutting edge research institute, and France's DATA I A.

They are both doing vital work in data science and AI and this agreement is the first stage in a closer and stronger working relationship.

And of course, the free flow of data is just as important as its ethical use.

Data is such an important part of our infrastructure. For AI systems, data is the experience needed to be able to develop and interact usefully with the world around us.

So transferring data across borders is essential for a prosperous modern economy.

In the UK, we have applied GDPR standards, to give citizens control over their data, ensure common rules and help our businesses trade abroad.

We will maintain these standards when we leave the EU. Not because we have to but because we want to, because we think that they are a strong basis for the protection of data.

And on that basis, we are seeking a deal that supports cross-border data flows. And I'm delighted that France is such a strong supporter of that goal too and I am confident that we will reach it.

And a word on regulation. Ultimately freedom exists in a framework of rule of law and of norms.

Some of these norms are statutory, like regulations, but many of them are also designed by and come from society. The norms and standards that we abide by in able to interact.

And this is as important for the new technology today and tomorrow, as it was for the old etiquette of the last centuries.

The norms and standards of behaviour, both at a high ethical level, and at a technical detailed level, do not always have to be borne of Government, but they strengthen our ability to work together and to innovate together.

This co-operation is crucial, socially and economically. But I just wanted to mention something even bigger than that.

Liberal democracies must stick together in the face of threats from around the world.

These threats are now not only physical, but to our technology, and ultimately they threaten our way of life.

And so believers in the freedom and dignity of humankind must progress together.

We seek to ensure that this technology is advancing so fast, and giving so many benefits, works for the benefit of humankind, within a democratic structure.

Au cours de l'histoire, les nations qui saisisent les technologies de leur époque sont celles qui gagnent

[Because throughout history, the nations who get the technology right in their era are the nations who succeed.]

Le défi majeur de notre époque est celui des technologies basées sur les données: une technologie extraordinaire qui transforme notre économie et notre société de façons inattendues.

[And in our era, our challenge is these data-driven technologies that are transforming our economy and society beyond recognition.]

Si nous gagnons, deux voisins travaillant en partenariat, nous poserons les fondations de notre future productivité, prospérité, et de meilleures conditions de vie pour tous.

[If we get them right, and work with other nations to do so, it will lay the path for productivity, prosperity, and a better quality of life.]

C'est pourquoi ce colloque est si important, rassemblant nos éminents chercheurs et dirigeants afin d'aborder des questions fondamentales et de saisir les opportunités qui nous attendent.

[That is why this colloque is so important. Bringing together some of our greatest minds, to discuss the big issues and opportunities that lie ahead.]

Donc s'il vous plaît: continuez à créer, à innover et surtout, à rendre l'impossible possible.

[So please keep creating, innovating and making the impossible possible.]

C'est nous qui avons développé ces technologies. C'est donc à nous d'a-

rer qu'elles fonctionnent pour toute l'humanité.

[Because technology was forged by humankind. So we need to make it work for humankind.]

Ca c'est notre mission, ensembles.

[This is our mission, together.]