

News story: Blue Belt representatives to visit Tristan da Cunha and St Helena

The Blue Belt Programme is a 4 year initiative delivered in partnership with the UK Overseas Territories, the UK Government and stakeholders to provide long term protection for over four million square kilometres of marine environment across the UK Overseas Territories.

The purpose of the visit is to discuss how the local communities of Tristan and St Helena will benefit from the implementation of the Blue Belt Programme. The Programme aims to ensure that, as well as providing greater environmental protection to globally important ecosystems, these benefits are delivered in tandem with social and economic opportunities for the local communities.

For example, by reviewing options for a Traffic Separation Scheme around Tristan da Cunha, identifying areas to be avoided around the islands/seamounts and introducing a compulsory reporting system for certain hazardous cargo, we can look at how best to mitigate the very real risks to the environment and to local fisheries that were brought into sharp focus with the 2011 MS Oliva grounding on Nightingale Island.

The Blue Belt Programme has also recently undertaken a survey of bluenose fishing stocks to ensure the long-term sustainable management of the fisheries business.

We are working with the St Helena Government on a range of projects to fulfill the objectives of their Marine Management Plan, including projects to determine the movements and growth of the local tuna populations, to establish the sustainability of grouper and lobster. We are also looking at other human impacts on the marine environment and how we can manage them.

The Blue Belt Programme are working closely with the Tristan da Cunha and St Helena Governments on a number of separate projects, but are also keen to hear direct from local communities whilst they are on the island, to answer their enquiries regarding the Programme.

Craig McGarvey, Programme Director will be joined by Dr Martin Collins, Lead Scientist for the Blue Belt Programme and Oliver Yates, Senior Marine Science Advisor.

Speaking today, Mr McGarvey said: "My colleagues and I are very much looking forward to meeting with the local communities of Tristan da Cunha and St Helena as well as meeting local officials and representatives of the Governments, to discuss how specific parts of the Blue Belt programme will be implemented in practice, to ensure that the social, environmental and economic benefits are realised."

Notice: NR21 0NR, Ralph Harrison & Company Limited: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)

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Notice: DE6 3DJ, Moy Park Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: Moy Park Limited
- Installation name: Alkington Poultry Unit
- Permit number: EPR/BP3434DM/V002

Press release: Rural crime crackdown in north east

The Environment Agency has joined forces with Durham Constabulary in a Christmas crackdown on rural crime.

Fisheries enforcement officers supported police on patrols in the operation in Weardale on Wednesday night, 20 December.

It follows previous joint partnership operations in the north east to disrupt travelling criminals and gather intelligence about rural crime, including illegal fishing.

Also joining police and the Environment Agency was Weardale and Teesdale Mountain Rescue team and local Weardale farmers.

During the operation police used Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to target vehicles suspected of being linked to crime, as well as checking vehicles in suspicious circumstances and focusing on key locations.

The operation resulted in a number of suspected lamping activities in relation to game poaching – where a light is used to hunt animals. And intelligence was passed between police and fisheries officers about suspicious activity and vehicles.

‘We always act on intelligence’

Kevin Summerson, Fisheries Enforcement Specialist for the Environment Agency in the north east, said:

This operation is another example of the close relationship that has developed over a number of years with Durham Constabulary.

We work together every day to tackle many aspects of rural, environmental and wildlife crime. It's a co-ordinated effort to disrupt potential illegal activity, identify offenders and gather intelligence.

Illegal fishing damages fish stocks and the environment and is unfair on anglers who abide by the law and buy their rod licences – the income from which is used to improve fisheries and habitats.

We always act on intelligence we receive and I'd urge anyone with information about suspected illegal fishing to contact us.

Sergeant Simon Rogers, from Durham Constabulary, added:

We regularly work with partners such as the Environment Agency on operations to tackle rural crime. Wednesday's operation was part of our ongoing commitment to tackle and disrupt those who choose to commit crime in rural areas.

Anyone who believes they have been a victim of crime should contact us on 101, or dial 999 in an emergency.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing is asked to contact the Environment Agency's 24-hour Incident Hotline on 0800 807060 or the police on 101. In an emergency or to report a crime ongoing always dial 999.