

Press release: Progress continues on new North East fish pass

New fish pass 'baffles' to help fish get across a barrier in the River Wear have been installed this week in a significant step forward for the new Stanhope Fish Pass.

The Environment Agency resumed work on the fish pass in June after it was postponed in November due to health and safety concerns about high river levels, and to allow for fish to spawn.

The £260,000 project at Stanhope Weir includes a Larinier fish pass to open up the river and make it easier for salmon and sea trout to move up the River Wear to spawn.

Baffles are a series of metal plates which are fixed to a sloped concrete channel – they slow the flow of the water so that fish can swim over the top of them easily.

The Environment Agency is also carrying out repairs to the weir which will improve the river flow and level monitoring capability of the Stanhope River Gauging Station.

'Significant step forward'

Daniel Magee Project Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

It's a significant step forward for the new fish pass to see the baffles going in – this is going to make it so much easier for fish to reach their natural spawning grounds and is good news for the River Wear.

By also improving the monitoring capabilities of the gauging station we can continue to provide an accurate and timely flood warning service to around 400 homes at risk of flooding from the River Wear.

When the work is complete it safeguards the flood warning system for the future as well as creating environmental improvements. We appreciate the community's continued patience while this work has been ongoing.

Stanhope Gauging Station is ranked in the top 10 most important flow sites in the North East area. Opened in September 1958 it has an almost continuous record of flow data, making it one of the longest flow records in the North East area at 60 years.

Work is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

[Press release: Anglers urged to take care when fishing during hot conditions](#)

With the hot weather set to continue for the next few weeks, the Environment Agency and the Pike Anglers' Club (PAC) are asking people to take extra care while fishing to help protect vulnerable fish stocks.

Prolonged hot weather can cause problems in rivers, lakes and drains such as low oxygen levels, low river flows, elevated water temperatures and algal blooms, which in turn can lead to increased levels of stress on fish populations and even fish deaths in extreme conditions.

Steve Lane, Fisheries Technical Specialist at the Environment Agency said:

The hot weather and high water temperatures can make life difficult for fish.

We're asking anglers to take particular care while fishing as the dry weather continues to help us protect fish stocks.

Please return fish to the water as quickly as possible and avoid using keepnets if practical to do so, particularly on lakes, the Broads and rivers with low flows.

Some species such as pike and barbel can be particularly vulnerable in hot conditions.

John Currie, General Secretary of the Pike Anglers' Club and Chairman of the Broads Angling Services Group's (BASG) Pike Strategy Group and Environment Sub Group, said:

PAC would ask anglers to consider the conditions caused by the very hot weather before deciding to fish.

The shallow waters of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, the Fens and the Somerset Levels are of particular concern, though we are also aware of problems further north.

It's not just oxygen levels that can cause fish problems in warm conditions, so we urge anglers to think carefully before fishing.

Steve added:

As ever, anglers can help us protect fish by reporting signs of dead or distressed fish, pollution or illegal fishing to the 24 hour Environment Agency Incident Hotline number 0800 80 70 60.

Anglers can find further advice and guidance from the [Pike Anglers' Club](#).

[Press release: Sewage effluent permit application for proposed Hinkley Point C](#)

The Environment Agency has received an application for a permit to discharge treated sewage effluent during construction of the proposed nuclear power station at Hinkley Point C near Bridgwater, Somerset.

The application has been made by NNB Generation Company (HPC) Limited, a subsidiary of EDF Energy.

The company already has a number of environmental permits issued by the Environment Agency to operate the proposed Hinkley Point C nuclear power station on the North Somerset coast near Bridgwater.

The application is for the discharge of up to 1,150 cubic metres of treated effluent a day from a sewage treatment plant serving the campus construction welfare facilities that include wash basins, toilets, showers, a kitchen and a canteen, during the early stages of the construction at Hinkley Point C.

Domestic sewage effluent will be treated via a new British Standard sewage treatment plant before being pumped to the Severn Estuary. In order to minimise the impact on the receiving environment, the applicant proposes that the effluent will be subjected to disinfection by ultra violet irradiation before being discharged.

The applicant is proposing to discharge the effluent via an existing submerged outlet location near the seaward end of the Hinkley Point C jetty (known as Outlet 12).

[People can view the permit application and submit comments online.](#)

Comments can be made by email to psc-waterquality@environment-agency.gov.uk or by post, quoting application number EPR/XP3321GD/A001, by 5pm on 5 September 2018, to:

P&SC – WQ Team, Quadrant 2

99 Parkway Avenue

Sheffield

S9 4WF

This information is also held in a register at:

The Environment Agency

Public Register

Rivers House

East Quay

Bridgwater

TA6 4YS

You can look at our register 9.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. Please phone the National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 to arrange an appointment. You may get a copy of documents on the register. We may charge to cover copying costs.

Normally we must put any responses we receive on the public register. Please tell us if you don't want your response to be public.

We must decide whether to grant or refuse the application. If we grant it, we must decide what conditions to include in the permit. [Our guidance explains what factors are relevant to our determination.](#)

Press release: Construction starts on North East flood scheme

Contractor Balfour Beatty is carrying out flood protection work across Monkton and Hebburn with work expected to be complete by the end of the year. It will protect around 100 homes and businesses from surface water flooding.

To minimise disruption, work that needs to take place close to local schools will be done during the school summer holidays, with construction in areas less affected by travel to and from school being completed in the autumn.

The main construction work follows a project in March this year to open up a section of the Bede Burn running underground – known as 'daylighting' – to the rear of Toner Avenue School. This was part of the 'Living Waterways'

scheme to restore the burn and create a green space for the community to enjoy.

The Monkton Flood Alleviation Scheme is being delivered by South Tyneside Council and its partners at the Environment Agency and Tyne Rivers Trust.

Main engineering work

Tom Pitman, Project Manager for the Environment Agency and South Tyneside Council, said:

The work in the Spring to open up the Bede Burn and create a green space was really well received by the community and we're pleased it will be a great facility for them to use in the future.

We're now on to the main engineering work which will include improved drainage, swales to collect surface water run-off and an attenuation basin which is designed to collect water and slowly release it into the Bede Burn.

While there will inevitably be some disruption while we complete this work, we are working hard to keep it to a minimum. In particular the bulk of the work we need to do near to schools will be done during the school summer holidays.

'Delighted' construction is underway

Councillor Nancy Maxwell, Lead Member for Area Management and Community Safety, added:

I'm delighted to see the construction phase of this project get underway. The work done earlier this year behind Toner Avenue School has created a wonderful open space, which the community will be able to enjoy once the main flood alleviation works have been completed. We would ask residents to bear with us during this short term disruption.

Once complete, around 100 properties are going to reap the benefits of this scheme, with not only reduced flood risk but enhancements to the local environment too.

The scheme involves managing surface water where problems have been identified around the Monkton Burn, Lukes Lane Estate and Leam Lane area, Mill Lane, Lilac Walk/College Road, Devon Road, Campbell Park Road/ Thirlmere Court and Mountbatten Avenue areas.

The project will have wider social and environmental benefits, encouraging local people and children to get involved in creating valuable new habitat.

The project is largely funded by the Environment Agency, as well as a contribution from the local levy – which is money raised by local authorities for flood projects.

Motorists and pedestrians are advised there will be some diversions. The latest information on the scheme – including details of timescales and the required traffic management – can be found at the [Monkton Flood Alleviation Scheme website](#)

Press release: Plastic pollution could stop horse riders in their tracks

Plastic granulate, sold as an alternative surface for equestrian centres, could place Yorkshire's horses and riders at risk, present a pollution hazard and lead to owners falling foul of the law.

Plastic granulate is a waste material derived from the recycling of cable sheathing and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). It's being marketed by some waste producers and brokers as a base material for horse maneges and track surfaces. However, there is no legal route available for its use for this purpose except in accordance with an Environmental Permit.

Furthermore, the plastics contained within this material can contain Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's), phthalates and lead stearate. Weathering can cause leaching of these toxic substances into the wider environment, potentially causing contamination to land and groundwater. Some plastic granulate may even be cross-contaminated with non-plastic elements such as metal fragments and glass, making surfaces where it's used potentially harmful for horses and riders.

Environment Agency officer, Greg Deakin said:

We're determined to eliminate avoidable waste and crack down on plastics as part of the government's 25-year environmental plan.

We're therefore urging those with equestrian facilities to carefully consider the use of this material. It might be offered free of charge or for a small delivery fee, but it is an offence under the Environmental Permitting Regulations to use this waste without appropriate environmental controls.

If you're found to have plastic granulate waste deposited on your

land without the appropriate Environmental Permit awarded by the Environment Agency, you could be fined and be liable for the cost of its disposal.

Producers or brokers of plastic granulate have a legal duty of care to ensure plastic granulate is disposed of at a permitted facility. If you are approached and offered this material and you do not have an appropriate Environmental Permit, please let us know on 03708 506 506 and ask to speak to your local waste team. Alternatively you can email the details to enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

If you are aware of any deposit of this waste please report it, anonymously if you prefer, to our 24-hour National Incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.