

# 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.

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## **Notice: CH65 4HB, Essar Oil (UK) Limited: Environmental permit draft decision advertisement**

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. In some cases it also consult on draft decisions for environmental permits. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- the Environment Agency's proposed decision and the reasons and considerations on which it's based this
- additional relevant information available since the application was advertised
- any information or guidance provided by the Secretary of State relevant to the application

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## **News story: Grouse moors: Working together to achieve shared outcomes**

The National Gamekeepers Organisation has provided an industry-led free grouse moor training day at [Snilesworth Estate](#) on the North York Moors (02 August) to help improve land management and enhance local wildlife.

The day gave new Natural England upland staff an insight into the day-to-day management of a driven grouse moor to better equip them with the skills and understanding to work together with land managers, farmers and gamekeepers on the restoration of upland habitats. Organised by John Clarke from the National Gamekeepers' Organisation and Simon Lovel from Natural England, the training was delivered by Snilesworth Estate head keeper, Jimmy Shuttlewood and his team. Natural England is now considering organising a future training day for hill farming later in the year.

The training looked at grouse moor management from an industry perspective, focusing on the life cycle of grouse, habitat management, predator control, medicated grit, which activities take place at different times of year, considerations keepers make in the siting of grouse butts and other infrastructure, and what happens on a typical shoot day.

Natural England uplands policy advisor Simon Lovel said:

Conservation is ultimately about people and by increasing our understanding of those who manage the land, the easier it is to find genuine shared outcomes that can be delivered utilising the local knowledge and traditional skills of the practitioners on the ground. We are planning upland ecology training for gamekeepers and farmers later in the year.

John Clarke from the [National Gamekeepers Organisation](#) added:

This has been a fantastic step towards working together in the future.

Those attending had a greater understanding of how driven grouse moors are managed and the associated range of environmental benefits, including the restoration of upland habitats. Going forward, Natural England staff, gamekeepers, farmers and land managers will be able to work better together to achieve healthy and resilient upland ecosystems, that will support thriving local communities off the back of sustainable land uses.

Natural England's Chairman, Andrew Sells, recently spoke at [the Game Fair and highlighted the benefits for conservation of moorland from partnership working](#).

He said:

We are also seeing more estates coming into partnership agreements with Natural England, voluntarily finding ways to enhance the environment. These deepening relationships will be vital in joining up prime wildlife sites and achieving goals of the [25 Year Environment Plan](#).

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## **Chief Geologist for Scotland**

I am delighted to announce that Helen Bonsor has been appointed as our new Chief Geologist for Scotland from 1 September 2018