

## [SEPA stresses importance of checking staff ID](#)

✘24 August 2018

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is reminding people in Perthshire, Clackmannanshire and Stirling of the importance of checking staff credentials, after a homeowner in Greenloaning was visited by a man impersonating a SEPA officer.

They were visited on Saturday 17 August by an individual who told them he was from SEPA. He wanted to inspect trees on their property to see if work, which they would have to pay for, was required. They refused his request and informed SEPA.

SEPA's Chief Executive, Terry A'Hearn, said:

"We understand that this was a worrying incident for those involved and have reported the matter to Police Scotland. SEPA officers do not carry out work on people's property, and if anyone else has a similar experience I encourage them to contact the Police straight away."

"All SEPA staff carry appropriate photographic identification and should always show it to you. If you are approached by someone claiming to be from SEPA ask to see their ID, especially if you don't recognise them.

"Anyone with any concerns, can always call SEPA's 24 hour Contact Centre on 03000 99 66 99 to check out the details of any officers visiting them."

Ends

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## [Press release: PLANS HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD FOR HULL'S £42M TIDAL FLOOD SCHEME](#)

Proposals for a multi-million scheme to protect thousands of properties from flooding from the Humber has been put forward to Hull's planning chiefs.

Planning permission is being sought for a £42 million Humber Hull Frontage Improvement Scheme to improve a 7-8 kilometre stretch of tidal flood defences in the Humber Estuary.

Led by the Environment Agency, the scheme has been designed to better protect 113,000 homes and businesses that are at risk from tidal flooding.

If the scheme gets planning approval, work will start at the end of the year and will be completed by the end of 2020.

Nine sites have been identified as part of the scheme including St Andrew's Quay, Albert Dock and Victoria Dock Village for improved defences.

Contractor BMM JV – a joint venture between BAM Nuttall and Mott MacDonald – are set to deliver the project which will help improve flood risk along the city's 19 kilometre waterfront.

[Residents can view the detailed plans by visiting Hull City Council's website:](#)

If you have any questions about the scheme please email:  
[humberhullfrontage@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:humberhullfrontage@environment-agency.gov.uk)

[More information is available on our dedicated web pages:](#)

In the past 65 years, there have been three major tidal events in Hull, the last was in December 2013 when 264 properties were flooded due to the overtopping of the existing defences. During high tides, water levels have the potential to rise to around 1 – 3m above some parts of the city.

Over the last few years, the Environment Agency has reviewed the existing Humber flood defences from Fleet Drain to the west of the city, through Hull, to Lord's Clough in the east. This work has identified the nine sites where work is now being proposed.

Helen Tattersdale, project manager at the Environment Agency, said:

“It is vital for Hull to have improved defences to protect against the potential devastating tidal flooding from the Humber Estuary.

“This investment has enabled us to assess a significant length of the current flood defence walls and embankments that run along the Hull frontage to come up with a scheme that will better protect the city both now and in the future taking into account climate change.”

“Over the past few months, we have been gathering feedback on aspects of the design from local residents and landowners, and other interested organisations including Natural England, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Hull City Council which have been taken into account in our proposals.”

These improvements in Hull are supported by a further four kilometres (2.5 mile) of new and raised tidal defences on either side of the city in the East Riding of Yorkshire, at Hessle and Paull, delivered by East Riding of Yorkshire Council in partnership with the Environment Agency.

The Humber Hull Frontage Improvement Scheme is one of a number of tidal flood

alleviation projects that form part of the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Environment Agency and local partners are now in the process of developing an advanced approach to managing flooding in tidal areas by the River Humber for the next 100 years.

It will be a long-term investment that will contribute to securing the viability of Hull and the wider Humber region, ensuring it retains its place as the eastern gateway to the UK economy.

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**[News story: Changes anticipated for](#)**

# marine licensing fees and charges

*Updated:* Bullet point added

The costs associated with marine licence applications made to the Marine Management Organisation are planned to change from 1 September 2018.

This follows a consultation held by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) [on proposals](#) to revise marine licensing application fees, held between December 2017 and February 2018. The consultation outlined changes needed in order to maintain marine licence applicant fee rates in-line with the costs incurred by the MMO in determining a marine licence application.

The fee rate for a marine licence has not been changed since 2014. Since that time, the cost of determining a marine licence application has increased. These changes will help to ensure that the cost of a marine licence is not subsidised by the UK tax payer.

Defra has now published its [response to the consultation](#) and [laid a Statutory Instrument in Parliament](#) to provide the legal basis for the changes to take place.

## **Marine licensing fees from 1 September**

The planned implementation date for the changes to marine licence application fees is 1 September 2018. The impact of the changes depend on the band of marine licence applied for and when the application is received/determined.

The MMO will soon [update its guidance](#) to reflect the new proposed fees. The main change is a revision of the hourly fee rate from £94 to £122 for Band 2 and 3 applicants.

From 1 September 2018 onwards:

- new Band 2 and 3 applications received by the MMO will be charged the new hourly rate. This includes pre-application cases, applications and discretionary charges.
- marine licence variations and post-consent work on marine licences will remain at £94 per hour
- travel costs will be charged at the new hourly rate and will no longer be capped. Travel and subsistence costs will also be charged. MMO will publish details of their travel and subsistence policy shortly.

There will be a number of Band 2 applications ongoing at 1 September 2018 where the MMO has not yet made a determination. The MMO will introduce transitional arrangements for these and will provide bespoke advice and calculation of fees to applicants.

Band 2 applicants will continue to be charged under the old fee regime until they are determined. However the cap on total costs payable for the existing 2E category will be based on the new arrangements as this is set at a lower level than under the existing scheme.

There will be no transitional arrangements for Band 3 applications, ongoing cases will be charged at the new rate from 1 September.

## **Improvements to the marine licensing service**

The consultation and Government response explain how the MMO has continued to improve marine licensing systems and processes and is committed to further enhancing these. Such changes, introduced since 2015 as part of a marine licensing improvement programme, are estimated to have collectively saved businesses around half a million pounds a year.

One such change was a [self-service approach for some low-risk applications](#), which was included in the consultation.

In responding to the consultation the Government has made a number of commitments to further improve the marine licensing process and systems to make them more transparent and efficient. These commitments include:

- Ensuring service standards are published on the MMO website and the delivery against these standards is monitored and reported
- Ongoing monitoring of the marine licensing regime, with any opportunity to pass on efficiency savings to be considered under the next review of marine licensing application fees
- Reviewing and publishing guidance on travelling relating to marine licence applications, using comments received as part of the consultation to inform this
- Considering whether other specific activities could be added to the list of Band 1 activities when regulations are next reviewed.

The MMO welcomes feedback from marine licensing customers in order to further improve the system to meet their needs and continue to offer value for money.

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## **[News story: The Ivory Bill: A Huge Tusk](#)**

*Updated:* Corrected musical instrument exemption to:

## Musical instruments with less than 20% ivory made before 1975

Government Legal Department (GLD) lawyers have been providing crucial legal advice to the Government, helping bring about legislation for one of the toughest bans on ivory sales in the world.

The GLD legal team, based in Defra, have worked very quickly to progress the Bill. It was introduced on 23 May and it has already completed its stages in the House of Commons, and will be debated further in the House of Lords after summer recess.

The Bill concerns dealing in elephant ivory (including buying, selling and hiring) which, when passed will be an offence punishable by a custodial sentence of up to five years and/or an unlimited fine, or a civil penalty of up to £250,000.

The Ivory Bill follows the result of a consultation which concluded in December 2017, for which more than 70,000 people and organisations responded. Over 88% of responses were in favour of bringing in legislation to ban ivory sales in the UK.

Defra legal advisor Jane Beeko who led on the Bill said:

Since joining Defra last year, I've been fortunate to have had a mixed portfolio, which means I've worked on a variety of interesting pieces of work. This has included advising on the Aarhus Convention which concerns access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision making and access to justice in respect of environmental matters; the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the EU Timber Regulations.

Working on the Ivory Bill has been a fantastic experience. It took real team-work to get this Bill through to its current stage, and I feel very proud to work as part of a team producing the legal framework for such land-mark legislation.

Under the proposed legislation, dealing in an ivory item is prohibited under the Bill unless the items fall under one of the following exemptions:

- Pre-1918 item of outstanding artistic value or importance
- Pre-1918 portrait miniature
- Items with a small amount of ivory (less than 10%) and made before 1947
- Musical instruments with less than 20% ivory made before 1975
- Dealings to and between accredited museums

The Bill will continue its path through Parliament in September and if it faces no opposition could come into effect next year.