

News story: Hilary Florek appointed Chair of the Marine Management Organisation

The Environment Secretary Michael Gove has appointed Hilary Florek as the Chair of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Hilary joins the MMO with a wealth of knowledge from previous board-level appointments, recently serving as Chairman of the Port of Tyne Board of Directors from 2014-2017. She is a strategic communications and marketing specialist with extensive experience in both the public and private sectors.

Hilary will join the MMO as a member of the Board from 1 January 2018 and formally take over her duties as Chair on completion of the Board meeting on 8 February 2018. Her appointment is for three years. She will be paid £40,459 per annum based on eight days work a month.

The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body established in April 2010 and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Its mission is to enable the sustainable development of our seas. It carries out a wide range of activities such as marine planning, marine licensing and work related to nature conservation and fisheries management.

Hilary Florek, Chair of the Marine Management Organisation, said:

I am delighted to be taking up this appointment as Chair of the MMO and looking forward to working with the team at an exciting and challenging time for the organisation.

Hilary succeeds the Outgoing Chair, Sir Bill Callaghan, who [was appointed on 1 May 2011](#).

Sir Bill Callaghan said:

I am delighted that Hilary has been appointed as my successor. Her wide range of experience and skills will be a valuable asset to the MMO.

The recruitment was carried out in accordance with the 'Ministerial Code of Practice for Appointments to Public Bodies'. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, there is a requirement for the political activities of appointees to be made public. Hilary Florek has not declared any significant activity.

Biographical details:

Hilary Florek is a strategic communications and marketing specialist with extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. Having initially joined the Port of Tyne Board of Directors in 2008, she was Deputy Chairman for over three years before taking on the position of Chairman from 2014-2017.

Previously PR and Communications Director for the Vaux Group PLC, she established her own marketing consultancy, HFPR Ltd, in 2000. She currently serves on the Board of social housing association, Karbon Homes, the Board of North East Access to Finance and she is also a Trustee of the North Music Trust at the Sage, Gateshead. She is also a Director of the BE-UK Employee Ownership Trust Co Limited.

Hilary has served as non-executive director on the boards of the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland and the County Durham Foundation. She is a former Trustee of the Sunderland Youth Enterprise Trust and was a Board Member of Project North East.

[National Statistics: Monthly sea fisheries statistics October 2017](#)

The monthly landings statistics will be released at 9.30am on the 4th Friday of each month, or the next working day if this is a bank holiday.

[Press release: New raptor persecution maps to help tackle wildlife crime](#)

Updated: Photo change

[Raptor persecution maps for England and Wales](#) have been published to enable the police to clearly see where the highest incidents are taking place and focus enforcement efforts in the areas that need it most.

The maps present the number of shootings, trappings, poisonings and nest destructions that took place across England & Wales between 2011 and 2015 and will be updated annually, providing an invaluable intelligence tool to help fight crimes against birds of prey.

North Yorkshire will be a priority area as the most incidents occurred there (39), followed by Norfolk (17), Cumbria (11), Derbyshire (11), Lincolnshire (10), Suffolk (8) and Northumberland (8).

Wildlife Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Birds of prey are a vital part of our animal landscape, icons of our cultural heritage and key to boosting local economies by attracting visitors to England and Wales.

These maps highlight hotspots across the country for crimes against these precious birds, enabling the police to crack down with increased enforcement in areas where it's needed most – building on the valuable work land management, conservation and shooting organisations are already doing to help protect iconic birds of prey.

There are already strong penalties in place for committing offences against birds of prey and the unlawful use of traps and all wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The Government takes all wildlife crime very seriously and raptor persecution has been identified as a UK wildlife crime priority. Each priority has a delivery group to consider what action should be taken, develop a plan to prevent crime, gather intelligence on offences and enforce against it.

The [National Wildlife Crime Unit](#) also monitors and gathers intelligence on illegal activities affecting raptors and provides assistance to police forces when required.

These maps build on this valuable work and will help boost the fight against those who continue to commit crimes against raptors. In the five year measurable period there have been 262 incidents in England and Wales: 146 of these caused by shooting and 66 by poisoning.

The majority of incidents took place against buzzards (108), followed by owls (40), red kites (39) and peregrine hawks (34).

In January 2016 the government published the [Hen Harrier Action Plan](#) and the new maps will help support the six positive actions outlined in the plan, which are already underway. Today's maps show one incident involving Hen harriers.

The maps were developed by the [Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group](#), which includes Defra, the Devolved Administrations, [Natural England](#), National Wildlife Crime Unit, the police, [British Association for Shooting and Conservation](#), [RSPB](#), [Country Land and Business Association](#), [Moorland Association](#), [National Game Keepers' Organisation](#), [National Parks England](#), [Crown Prosecution Service](#) and [the Countryside Alliance](#).

Image credit Allan Drewitt, Natural England

[Press release: Don't throw plastic or other items at Matlock raft racers](#)

With this year's annual Matlock Boxing Day Raft Race given the go-ahead once again, the Environment Agency is urging the thousands of spectators expected to turn out to watch the popular event to leave their flour-filled plastic bags and other objects at home.

In previous years, spectators have thrown eggs, flour, plastic or paper bags, and other products at the raft racers from various points along the 3.5 mile course of the race on the River Derwent, which poses a real threat to the environment and wildlife.

Paul Reeves, Environment Officer at the Environment Agency, said:

We realise the Matlock Raft Race is an important social event for the area, which attracts a large number of local residents as well as visitors from further afield, has a positive impact on the local economy, and raises funds for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

However, we are appealing to spectators to consider the environment by not throwing flour-filled plastic bags or other objects at the raft racers and into the water this year.

If plastic or paper bags enter the watercourse, they pose a real threat to wildlife both locally and further afield. Last year there were sightings of water birds trying to eat floating flour-filled bags, and the deadly impact of plastics on river and sea life is well known and currently in the news.

Councillor Lewis Rose OBE, Leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council, said:

The Boxing Day raft race has become something of a tradition here in the Derbyshire Dales and long may it continue. However, we absolutely support the Environment Agency's plea to spectators to refrain from activities that threaten the environment and wildlife, as well as littering our waterways and streets.

Kath Stapley, Living Rivers Officer, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, added:

On behalf of the 60 partner organisations which make up the Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership, we're asking people to

spare a thought for the wildlife in and around the River Derwent.

We're constantly working to improve the rivers in the catchment, from Howden Moor above Ladybower Reservoir, down into Derby, but we can only make a difference with support from members of the public. If plastics and other items are thrown into the river at Matlock, they may travel out of sight, but will inevitably affect the watercourse and wildlife downstream in Belper, Duffield, Derby and even down into the River Trent.

Press release: Don't throw plastic or other items at Matlock raft racers

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