

# [Interim general licensing regime for releasing gamebirds](#)

News story

General licence allows an authorised person to release common pheasants and red-legged partridges within European sites and a 500 metre boundary in England.



From 31st May 2021, any release of common pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) or red-legged partridges (*Alectoris rufa*) into the wild on European sites in England or within 500 metres of their boundary will only be lawful under the authority of a licence issued under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Defra has developed a [general licence](#) (GL43) that allows an authorised person to release a specified number of common pheasants or red-legged partridges into the wild in these areas providing the conditions of the licence are met. This follows a [Defra-led consultation](#) in early 2021.

Anyone unable to use the general licence can still [apply to Natural England for an individual licence](#).

An [online advice service](#) is available to check whether the general licence can be used, or an individual licence is needed.

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