

Press release: Fish stocks boost for north east rivers

Thousands of fish were released into the River Pont at Ponteland and Matfen as well as tributaries of the rivers Wear and Tees.

It's part of the Environment Agency's ongoing plans to develop and restore rivers in the region.

The fish were reared at the Environment Agency's fish farm near Calverton, Nottinghamshire, using funding from rod licence sales.



Fisheries Technical Specialist Phil Rippon was out releasing some of the grayling in the south of the region today. He said:

We're pleased we can provide these fish for restocking as part of our commitment to rod licence paying anglers and to help the process of natural recovery in impacted waters.

While it's a really important aspect of our work, it's one of many things we do together with our partners to develop fisheries, including reducing the effects of pollution, improving habitat and removing barriers to migration.



Rivers have improved dramatically

The Environment Agency releases fish into our waterways annually. Fisheries officers target fish stocking activity in response to impacts on local rivers and using data from national fish surveys to identify where there are problems with poor breeding and survival.

Many of our industrialised rivers have improved dramatically in water quality in the last 30 years and targeted and appropriate restocking has helped the restoration of natural fish stocks and viable fisheries.

Angling is a great way for everyone to keep healthy and enjoy the natural environment. All rod licence income is used to fund work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries.

[Anyone who wants to go fishing needs to buy a fishing licence. A full annual licence costs £30 \(short term and some concessionary licences are also available\) and are available online](#)

[News story: Judicial Review supports Brighton Marina licence decision](#)

A decision by the Marine Management Organisation to grant a marine licence relating to development in Brighton Marina has been upheld in the High Court following a Judicial Review.

On Friday 23 June the Hon. Mr Justice Holgate handed down his judgement at the High Court, London, following a hearing which took place on 22 and 23 March 2017. In doing so he concluded the MMO had fulfilled its obligation under section 69(1) of Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) 'admirably'.

In bringing a Judicial Review lawyers acting on behalf of a local resident challenged the way in which the MMO reached its decision in February 2016 to grant a marine licence for phase 2 of the development under section 71 of the 2009 Act.

Lawyers claimed that MMO had acted unlawfully in giving consent to the Brighton Marina Company Limited whose subsidiary, the Outer Harbour Development Company Partnership LLP, is carrying out the development. In particular they argued that MMO failed to consider whether phase 2 of the Brighton Marina development would amount to an actionable interference with public rights of navigation.

They also claimed that in instances where works unlawfully interfere with public rights of navigation MMO is not empowered to issue a marine licence unless a harbour revision was also made, extinguishing public navigation rights or permitting interference with the same.

The judgement

In his judgement Mr Justice Holgate stated that 'the Claimant's argument involves a fundamental misunderstanding of MCAA 2009, and of section 69(1) in particular...' finding that MMO had gone to 'substantial lengths to collect evidence on the relevant navigation issues' and 'had consulted and re-consulted on the relatively narrow points raised by the claimant'.

The judgement made clear that the MMO's decision that the proposed activities would not interfere with navigation or safety of navigation in the entrance to the marina so as to justify refusing the application was a correct application of the relevant legislation. It also set out that 'there was no statutory requirement or need to consider whether the effect on public rights of navigation would also be actionable'.

The judge also denied the claimant the right to appeal the judgement.

More information

The marine licence and related documents are available to view on the [public register](#) (case reference MLA/2015/00349/2). The MMO has also updated the relevant [selected cases page](#) of its website.

The Judicial Review process considers the lawfulness of a decision or action made by a public body. They are a challenge to the way in which a decision has been made, rather than the rights and wrongs of the conclusion reached. More information about the Judicial Review process is available on the [Courts and Tribunals Judiciary website](#).

[News story: Fine of £5,753 imposed for fisheries offences](#)

On 21 June 2017 James West, owner of the vessel Replenish and its master Stanley Ross pleaded guilty to a breach of the Fisheries Act 1981 at Bodmin Magistrates' Court.

The court heard that in May 2016 when the vessel was fishing in a Biologically Sensitive Area (BSA) in the Celtic Sea targeting nephrops, it was boarded by officers from the Royal Navy vessel HMS Tyne which was carrying out fisheries enforcement duties in the area. During a gear inspection it was found that both port and starboard net codends were within a prohibited mesh size for the BSA, contrary to Section 30(1) Fisheries Act 1982 as read with Article 5(2) of Council Regulation (EC) 494/2002. .

The vessel owner James West was fined £1,000, with £2,051.50 costs and a victim surcharge of £100.

The vessel master Stanley Ross was fined £500, with £2,051.50 costs and a victim surcharge of £50.

A spokesman for the MMO said:

“Nets used in this kind of fishery can shrink over time; as a result nets that were made in permitted mesh size range may shrink to a size that is considered damaging to juvenile fish stocks. It is the responsibility of the vessel master and owner to allow for this and ensure the gear is correct according to the fishing area the vessel is operating in.

The Replenish was fishing in a Biologically Sensitive Area and it is therefore critical to ensure the appropriate fisheries regulations are adhered to in order to protect juvenile fish. This prosecution shows that when they are not the Marine Management Organisation will take the appropriate action.”

Decision: ABLE Marine Energy Park variation

On 4 April 2017 and 10 May 2017, the MMO received requests from ABLE UK Limited to vary the deemed marine licence contained within Schedule 8 of the ABLE Marine Energy Park Order 2014. MMO's decision was to vary the deemed marine licence, effective from 23 June 2017.

During this variation the MMO imposed variations to the Deemed Marine Licence (DML) contained within Schedule 8 of the ABLE Marine Energy Park Order 2014. These changes were administrative changes.

Press release: New Chief Scientific Advisor appointed by the MMO

Professor Selina Stead of Newcastle University has been appointed Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) it has been announced.

Prof. Stead is [Dean, Public Orator and Professor of Marine Governance and Environmental Sciences at Newcastle University](#) and has held a number of senior marine-related appointments.

She joins the MMO with a wealth of skills and experience having worked on developing innovative marine policy programmes underpinned by interdisciplinary statistical evidence. In her work at Newcastle University she combines natural and social science methods and leads international teams to tackle complex problems such as poverty in coastal areas and marine food insecurity.

Her current and recent research spans marine science and governance of coral reef ecosystems; fisheries management and piracy in East Africa, Oman, Somalia and the UK; sea cucumber biology in South Africa; seaweed aquaculture in Malaysia; community based management in Nigeria, and; marine governance of Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, South Pacific, and the western Indian Ocean.

The post is part-time and Prof. Stead will continue working independently in her outside career to encourage sharing of the latest thinking and learning in marine science, subject to the usual conflict of interest criteria.

Professor Selina Stead, Chief Scientific Advisor to the MMO, said:

I have my dream job as a marine biologist. I have a passionate belief that seas and oceans should be accessible to all.

My career aims are to improve how and why decisions are made for sustainable marine resource management. I look forward to progressing these with the MMO.

John Tuckett, Chief Executive of the MMO, said:

I'm pleased to welcome Professor Stead to the MMO. Her wealth of knowledge and experience will be of great benefit to our ambitions for the future of marine management in UK waters and beyond.

This appointment also represents our commitment to further strengthening our links with the marine science and academic community.

Professor Stead takes up post in June 2017, succeeding Stuart Rogers, Chief Scientist and Executive Director of the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), who fulfilled the role from Spring 2016.

More details about Selina's background and experience are available on [the MMO's website](#).

The MMO is a non-departmental public body. It licences, regulates and plans marine activities in the seas around England so that they're carried out in a sustainable way. The MMO is required by the [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009](#) to appoint a CSA.