

# Press release: How to fish responsibly during Somerset's elver season

With the 2017 elver season under way, the Environment Agency is reminding Somerset's elver fishermen to stay the right side of the law.

Eels are an endangered species and recognised by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) as in need of protection. Fishing for elvers is allowed in England and Wales, but under strict conditions to ensure stocks are not over-exploited.

The elver season runs from 15 February – 25 May inclusive and is largely limited to the Rivers Parrett and Tone. There are approximately 200 licenced elver fishermen in Somerset who must register with the Environment Agency at the start of the season.

Sustainable fishing includes the capture of elvers for re-stocking in countries across Northern Europe where eel stocks have declined and cannot be replenished naturally.

All elver fishing in Somerset is done with hand held nets known as 'dip nets'. They are restricted in size to 1m long, 0.8m wide and 0.45m deep. Handle lengths should be no longer than 4m. Fishing from boats is prohibited and no other large nets or traps are allowed. As a further precaution, all nets must be tagged and fishermen have photographic ID.

Elvers are attracted to fresh water so to protect stocks, no fishing is permitted within 10m of any river obstruction, dam, inlet, outlet or fish pass that hinders the passage of elvers. A full list of rules can be found in the elver fishing bylaws.

Richard Dearnley for the Environment Agency said:

We recognise the majority of elver fishermen operate responsibly and respect the law. We work closely with the police in detecting illegal fishing and, where we have evidence, won't hesitate to prosecute offenders.

Any illegal or suspicious activity can be reported to the Environment Agency or Crimestoppers. If you would like to report information on environmental crime anonymously, call 0800 555111.

---

# Pembrokeshire company awarded £5.8m contract for new fisheries patrol vessels

The awarding of the contract follows a competitive international bidding process and means the vessels will be built in Wales, by a local company and provide skilled employment in Pembrokeshire.

The new vessels will replace the current ageing boats, to effectively protect from illegal fishing activity in Welsh waters and safeguard Wales' fishing industry and coastal communities in the years ahead.

Since its inception in 2014, Mainstay Marine has safeguarded 30 jobs and created 50 new positions, with 98% of its employees based in Pembrokeshire. The company also employs 10% of its direct workforce as apprentices.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, announced the contracts during a visit to Mainstay Marine Solutions' facilities in Pembroke Dock to see the workshops where the vessels will be built.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The Welsh Government takes very seriously its responsibility for managing and protecting Welsh seas and it's important we have the capability to do this. I am pleased we are replacing our ageing fleet and proud a Welsh company has been successful in winning the contract to complete this work.

“Mainstay Marine Solutions has shown a commitment to up-skilling and developing its workforce locally and it is anticipated the continued success of the company will help create further jobs locally, which is excellent news for the local economy.”

Philip Hilbert, Sales Director of Marine Specialised Technology Limited, based in Liverpool said:

“We are delighted to be part of this prestigious project supplying the Cabin RIB which is a flagship project for us. Fisheries enforcement is a key market for us and this craft will be the pinnacle of small craft technology.”

The awarding of the contract to Mainstay Marine Solutions follows a European-wide competitive procurement exercise.

The replacement vessels are expected to be in service by Autumn 2018. It will include a 26m Mono-hull Patrol Vessel, South Fisheries and a 19m Catamaran Patrol Vessel, North Fisheries.

---

## [China eyes more rural infrastructure investment with PPPs](#)

China will use public-private partnerships (PPP) to boost under-funded rural infrastructure and narrow the urban-rural gap, according to a State Council guideline.

A dynamic financing program that enlists multiple public and private entities will be established by 2020, said the guideline made public on Friday.

Under the program, government spending will be complemented by PPPs to maintain steady investment growth, while state-owned enterprises and other private market players will be encouraged to sponsor the projects.

China has launched many rural infrastructure projects over the last few years but the generally underdeveloped infrastructure in rural areas is holding back the goal to build a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way by 2020.

To improve water, road, electricity and communication facilities in rural areas, the government has promised some 3.4 trillion yuan (495.2 billion U.S. dollars) between 2016 and 2020, said Tang Renjian, deputy director of the central rural work leading group.

Only one third of this fund has been secured, however, meaning private investment and PPPs will need to step up, he said, in an earlier elaboration of China's first central policy document in 2017 on rural issues.

PPPs will stimulate investment as the country ensures moderate growth in fiscal support for agriculture and rural areas, Tang said.

---

## [Social media and mental health conference set to take place](#)

- [Home](#)
- [All News](#)

- Social media and mental health conference set to take place

17 Feb 2017



A conference on how social media can help young people access mental health support in Scotland is to take place on Monday.

The event will bring together social media organisations, MSPs, experts and charities to explore how online firms can do more to assist those seeking information on psychological matters.

It has been co-organised by Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs and Twitter, and will be attended by both leader Ruth Davidson and mental health minister Maureen Watt.

The Edinburgh event was organised after Mr Briggs called on social media firms to offer free mental health advertising on their platforms last October.

That sparked contact between the Lothians MSP and Twitter, with the firm saying it will support the best campaign ideas which emerge on the day.

**Scottish Conservative mental health spokesman Miles Briggs said:**

“Last year I called for social media companies to offer free advertising for mental health organisations so more of our young people would know where to access mental health information and support.

“Surveys have shown the vast majority of youngsters don’t know how or where to access such support.

“I am delighted Twitter took up my call and have worked with me to arrange this event.

“It will bring together mental health charities, youth organisations, academics, design experts, MSPs and the Scottish Government.

“It’s brilliant news that Twitter has pledged to support the best campaigns that come out of the day, ensuring they will reach young people across Scotland and potentially inspire other ideas around the UK and beyond.”

---

**DAY** – Monday, February 20, 2017

**TIME** – 10am-4pm

**PLACE** – The Hub, Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2NE

All media are invited to attend. Both Miles and Ruth will be available for interview and photographs.

Miles urged social media firms to do more to help youngsters coping with

mental health challenges last year:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2016/10/social-media-firms-should-offer-free-mental-health-adverts/>

For more information on the event visit:

<https://blog.twitter.com/en-gb/2017/how-can-social-media-help-address-mental-health-public-policy-goals>

---

**Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance Sh. Arun Jaitley gives away awards for excellence at the 11th Foundation Day celebrations of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd. (SPMCIL)**

Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance Sh. Arun Jaitley gave away awards for excellence at the 11th Foundation Day celebrations of Security