

# [New consultation on civil penalties to tackle illegal migration](#)

The government has today (18 July 2022) launched an industry [consultation on proposals for tougher penalties to tackle illegal migration](#), including increasing the maximum penalty for hauliers and vehicle drivers who are found carrying a clandestine entrant from £2,000.

As part of the continued fight against illegal migration and the criminal gangs behind it, changes to the existing clandestine entrant civil penalties scheme will be made through the Nationality and Borders Act.

These include new civil penalties for hauliers and vehicle drivers who fail to adequately secure their vehicle and conduct proper checks, regardless of whether a clandestine entrant is found, as part of efforts to prevent dangerous journeys which risk serious injury or even death.

Since 2020, the number of clandestine entrants coming to the UK via HGV and goods vehicles has continued to increase year on year. The government is determined to stop this, including via these refreshed penalties for hauliers and vehicle drivers who leave themselves vulnerable to exploitation.

Ahead of implementation, we are seeking the views of vehicle drivers, companies and other interested parties on all these new measures.

The consultation with the industry will run for 8 weeks and will close on 12 September 2022.

Alongside the consultation, the Home Office will be running a series of engagement events to explore these issues in more detail.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Simon Baynes MP said:

We are determined to do all we can to prevent illegal entry into the UK.

Criminal gangs who risk the lives of desperate people for profit are taking advantage of those whose vehicles travel in and out of the country.

Far too many vehicles are currently not adequately secured, and we will seek to increase penalties on those who are negligent and prosecute those who are complicit.

This consultation is the next vital step in achieving this, and we look forward to working with the haulage industry and other interested parties to ensure that they are aware of the necessary requirements.

The recently enacted Nationality and Borders Act is part of the government's New Plan for Immigration to make it fairer for those in genuine need, deter illegal entry into the UK, break the business model of people-smuggling networks and remove those from the UK with no right to be here.

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## [BSL users to advise government on key issues for Deaf people](#)

- Minister for Disabled People, Chloe Smith, launches recruitment for the British Sign Language Advisory Board
- Launch follows BSL Act recognising BSL as an official language in England, Scotland and Wales, which c. 151,000 people in the UK use
- For the first time in government applications will be accepted in BSL, and the Board will have both BSL and English as official languages

The Minister for Disabled People, Chloe Smith, has today launched recruitment for the newly formed British Sign Language (BSL) Advisory Board, which will see BSL users advising the government on key issues impacting the Deaf community.

Recognising BSL as an official language in England, Scotland and Wales for the first time, the BSL Act 2022 will make a considerable difference to people across the country. The new Board will provide personal and expert advice to the government on the implementation of the Act.

The Board's remit will be:

- advising on the use of BSL in public communications and policy delivery
- advising on how to tackle key issues facing Deaf people, such as how to increase the numbers of BSL interpreters

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work Chloe Smith said:

The British Sign Language Act is helping to remove barriers faced by Deaf people in daily life and the Advisory Board is a key element of this important work.

The Board will help deliver better outcomes for the Deaf community by advising government on how to tackle key issues facing Deaf people, such as how to increase the number of BSL interpreters and making sure BSL is at the heart of government policy.

I would urge anyone with a passion for helping us create a more inclusive and accessible society to consider applying for a position on the Board.

Guidance will also be published on making public services more accessible to BSL users, and departments will report on how they are ensuring their communications are accessible.

The Board will be co-chaired by one external and one senior civil servant chair. The Board membership will comprise of at least 16 members plus the co-chairs, with a majority of Deaf BSL signers including Deafblind people and/or those who use tactile sign. For the Board members and the independent co-chair the main criteria for appointment will include a lived experience of BSL, alongside a willingness to work collaboratively in assisting the government to be more accessible.

The British Sign Language Bill, a Private Member's Bill introduced by Rosie Cooper MP, recognises BSL as a language of England, Wales and Scotland in its own right. It is supported by a duty on the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to report on what each relevant government department has done to promote or facilitate the use of British Sign Language in its communications with the public.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 2 September 2022.

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- Full details on [how to apply to the Board](#).
- Recruitment is also open for the [Regional Stakeholder Network](#). Each of the 9 chairs will work with networks in their region and the Cabinet Office to ensure the voices of disabled people throughout England are heard and valued in a way that informs policy and strategy.
- Figures from the British Deaf Association suggest that 151,000 people use BSL in the UK, 87,000 of whom are Deaf.

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## [Able Marine Energy Park Material Change 2](#)

Press release

Today, 18 July 2022, the Able Marine Energy Park Material Change 2 proposed changes have been authorised by the Secretary of State for Transport.



The application involves two amendments to the layout of the quay that was authorised by the Able Marine Energy Park Development Consent Order 2014 and one amendment to a footpath diversion to go around the end of a railway rather than crossing it.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Able Humber Ports Limited on 25 June 2021.

Following an Examination during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to respond to the Examining Body, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 16 May 2022.

This is the first material change application to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the legislation.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"The Planning Inspectorate has now examined more than 100 nationally significant infrastructure projects since the Planning Act 2008 process was introduced, ensuring local communities have had the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them.

"The Examining Body listened and gave full consideration to local views and the evidence gathered during the Examination before making its recommendation."

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Body to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Body in reaching its recommendation are publicly available on the project pages of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/yorkshire-and-the-humber/able-marine-energy-park-material-change-2/>

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## Yorkshire Water fined £1.6M for sewage pollution

Yorkshire Water has been fined £1,600,750 for polluting a Bradford watercourse in a prosecution brought by the Environment Agency. It was also ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £170 and £22,112.79 in costs.

The company appeared at Leeds Magistrates' Court for sentence on Monday, 18 July, where it pleaded guilty to unauthorised sewage discharges into Bradford Beck, and breaches of its environmental permit.

The court heard its George Street detention tank in Bradford was full for up to eight months during 2018, leading to 25 unauthorised sewage spills into Bradford Beck.

The city centre tank collects and stores a mixture of rainfall and sewage from the sewer network during times of heavy rainfall. Once storm conditions have passed the tank operates its pumps to return the mixture back into the sewers. If it's a prolonged event and the tank fills to capacity, it's designed to overflow into the watercourse. When operating correctly the tank should be empty in dry weather.

Over two days in August 2018, the Environment Agency received four reports of sewage pollution in Bradford Beck. An officer attended and an investigation, combined with additional information from the community, led to a request for further data from Yorkshire Water. The investigation revealed one or both of the two pumps that emptied the tank were at various times not working between August 2017 and September 2018. The Environment Agency concluded the tank was full between January and August 2018, with spikes in the data showing the tank spilled 25 times.

Yorkshire Water was aware the storm pumps were out of action and of the fact the tank was full. It failed to fix the pumps as soon as practical, to provide a stand-by pump, to maintain its pumps and to maintain the overflow.

Information from the community suggested an impact on the wildlife, including invertebrates and fish in the immediate time after the August 2018 unauthorised discharge.

Bradford Beck at Ambler Mill, upstream of George Street

District Judge Kitson confirmed that Yorkshire Water knew from August 2017 that there were significant problems with the George Street Detention Tank and that it was 100% full from January 2018. He was satisfied Yorkshire Water knew the pumps were not in operation and had no means of pumping sewage back

into the network. The Judge concluded that the company would have known a discharge into the tank would cause an unlawful discharge into the Beck. District Judge Kitson found that Yorkshire Water were reckless in this offending due to the fact they were taking some steps but not with sufficient urgency.

Yorkshire Water in mitigation stated that Chief Executive, Nicola Shaw, was present in court because the company took its environmental responsibilities seriously. The company was remorseful and indicated remedial steps were taken to address the issues. It recognised it had failed to get a grip of the problem, but it had co-operated with the investigation.

Ben Hocking, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency in Yorkshire, said:

We take our responsibility to protect the environment very seriously. Water companies are aware that their activities have the potential to cause serious environmental impacts and they have a legal duty to avoid pollution. The regulations are clear.

Yorkshire Water was aware the tank was full and likely to illegally discharge into the beck and failed to take action to prevent it from happening. They undermined the permitting regulations, which are in place to protect the environment.

Our officers carried out a thorough investigation, with the support of the community, to put the facts before the court as part of our continuing commitment to hold water companies to account.

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## [Illicit drug users to face tougher consequences](#)

So-called recreational drug users will face a fine and could have their passports and driving licences seized under new proposals announced today (Monday 18th July).

The tougher penalties will help tackle the scourge of substance abuse in society which devastates lives and tears communities apart, as well as make our streets safer.

The government is committed to reversing the rising trend of drug use in society, protecting vulnerable people from harm and exploitation. These measures are a step towards changing the damaging culture of drug use and the consumption of drugs such as cannabis and cocaine.

The proposals have been published in a white paper entitled [‘Swift, Certain, Tough. New Consequences for Drug Possession’](#). The escalating tougher penalties that so-called recreational drugs users in England and Wales could face include:

- first-time offenders required to pay for and attend a drug awareness course or, if they don’t, pay an increased fixed penalty notice or face prosecution
- those found using drugs for a second time given a caution, sent on a further drug awareness course and face a period of mandatory, random drug testing for a period of up to three months
- offenders caught for a third time would likely be charged for their offence, and upon conviction, as part of a civil court order, could be subject to an exclusion order banning them from a specific location, such as a nightclub

They could also be given a drug tag monitoring their usage, and have their passports and driving licences confiscated.

The measures follow the publication of the 10-year drugs strategy in December and come after statistics which show over three million people in England and Wales in 2019 to 2020 reported using drugs in the last year, putting themselves at risk and handing lucrative profits to criminals running a violent and exploitative supply chain.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Drugs are a scourge across society. They devastate lives and tear communities apart.

Drug misuse puts lives at risk, fuels criminality and serious and violent crime and also results in the grotesque exploitation of young, vulnerable people.

We are cracking down on drug use with tougher consequences for so-called recreational drug users who will face the consequences of their actions through sanctions including fines and conditions to attend rehabilitation courses, while drug offenders could have their passports and driving licences confiscated.

In line with our strategy to tackle the harmful consequences of drugs, we aim to reverse the rising trend of substance use in society, to protect the public from the harm and violence of drug misuse.

The proposals will now be subject to a 12 week public consultation.

More people die every year as a result of drug misuse than from all knife crime and road traffic accidents combined. The total cost to society and taxpayers in today’s prices is nearly £22 billion.

Overall prevalence of drug use has increased since 2012 to 2013 with drugs being used by a higher percentage of young adults and children.

The government is committed to reversing this trend and making our streets safer by stamping out drug supply in its 10-year drugs strategy, which is backed by an additional £900 million of funding for enforcement, treatment and recovery, taking the total investment on combating drugs over the next three years to £3billion.

Published last December, the strategy focuses on three key priorities – reducing demand for drugs, delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system and breaking drug supply chains. Today's proposals are a core part of delivering this strategy.

Police activity funded by the Home Office's County Lines Programme has already closed over 2,400 lines, made over 8,000 arrests and engaged over 9,500 individuals through safeguarding interventions since November 2019.