

# News story: Matt Hancock: shake-up of GP IT will remove outdated systems

The GP IT Futures framework will create an open, competitive market to encourage the best technology companies to invest in the NHS. All systems will be required to meet minimum standards to ensure they can talk to each other across boundaries.

The current market is dominated by 2 main providers, which slows down innovation and traps GP practices in long-term contracts with systems that are not suited to the digital age.

The framework will look at how patient data will be moved to modern cloud services to allow clinicians and patients to securely access crucial, life-saving information in real time.

By 2023 to 2024 we want every patient in England to be able to access GP services digitally, with practices able to offer online or video consultations.

The changes will free up staff time and reduce delays by allowing seamless, digitised flows of information between GP practices, hospitals and social care settings. It builds on Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock's [tech vision for the NHS](#).

The new standards, developed by NHS Digital, will introduce minimum technical requirements so systems can talk to each other securely and are continuously upgradable.

Any system that does not meet these standards will not be used by the NHS and the government will look to end contracts with providers that do not understand these principles for the health and care sector.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Too often the IT used by GPs in the NHS – like other NHS technology – is out of date. It frustrates staff and patients alike, and doesn't work well with other NHS systems. This must change.

I love the NHS and want to build it to be the most advanced health and care system in the world – so we have to develop a culture of enterprise in the health service to allow the best technology to flourish.

I want to empower the country's best minds to develop new solutions to make things better for patients, make things better for staff, and make our NHS the very best it can be.

Sarah Wilkinson, Chief Executive at NHS Digital, said:

The next generation of IT services for primary care must give more patients easy access to all key aspects of their medical record and provide the highest quality technology for use by GPs. They must also comply with our technology standards to ensure that we can integrate patient records across primary care, secondary care and social care.

In addition, we intend to strengthen quality controls and service standards, and dramatically improve the ease with which GPs can migrate from one supplier to another.

We are committed to working with existing and new suppliers to deliver these extended capabilities for the benefit of GPs and patients. We're very excited about the huge opportunities that will arise from improving the sophistication and quality of these services.

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## [Press release: Busy 40th year for Kielder Salmon Centre](#)

Around 360,000 salmon and 20,000 sea trout have been released into tributaries of the River Tyne this year as the Environment Agency's Kielder Salmon Centre celebrated its 40th anniversary.

The centre was built in 1978 to compensate for the building of Kielder Reservoir – the biggest man-made lake in Northern Europe – which cut off around 7% of the River Tyne catchment including some of the best spawning streams for salmon.

This year has also seen it create a new £100,000 visitor centre which opened to the public in September as the centre focuses on becoming an education and conservation centre of excellence. This received the Royal seal of approval during a visit by the Prince of Wales the same month.

### **Helping hand for Tyne fish**

Richard Bond, who has been the centre's hatchery manager since 2005 said:

Over the 40 years we have released millions of salmon and sea trout into the River Tyne's tributaries to compensate for the fact they cannot reach their natural spawning grounds.

We just give them a helping hand, and it helps to contribute to the now thriving River Tyne. The river has gone from being heavily industrialised to one which is now one of the best salmon rivers in the country.

It is a real success story and one which has happened for a number of reasons, predominantly due to improvements in water quality as well as work by ourselves and our partners to make improvements to fish passage and habitat.

In fact, work to build a fish pass on the River Derwent at Shotley Grove – a final piece of a jigsaw which will see more of the river opened up for fish access – is due to be complete in the coming weeks and is an example of partnership projects which have helped bring the River Tyne and its tributaries to life.

The recovery of River Tyne salmon stocks started in the late 1960s and was coincident with improvements to estuarine water quality and was aided by changes to environmental legislation, changing attitudes to conservation and a decrease in industrial pollution.

Through the centre, the Environment Agency now works on academic research projects, including innovative work to hand rear one of the UK's most endangered species, the freshwater pearl mussel. Richard added:

The new visitor centre has created a more interactive experience for visitors and allows them to get up close with species we aim to protect – including the iconic salmon and the critically endangered freshwater pearl mussel. It gives people the chance to understand the fascinating world that lies below the surface of the river.

## **Role of Kielder Reservoir**

Kielder Reservoir plays an important role in preserving drinking water for the North East as well as supporting other abstractions along the River Tyne. It also has the capability to support flows in the rivers Wear and Tees if required and plays a role in reducing the risk of flooding on the North Tyne.

This summer, during particularly hot and dry weather, it played a vital role in reducing the risk of fish deaths in the upper reaches of the Tyne estuary. Additional releases made by Northumbrian Water at the Environment Agency's request between 22 June and 10 August amounted to 35 billion litres of water – a whopping 14 billion Olympic-size swimming pools.

During summers such as in 2018 a lack of freshwater flow coupled with high water temperatures in the Tyne estuary can lead to a lack of oxygen in the water. These conditions make it difficult for adult salmon returning to the River Tyne from the sea to survive. This is an occasional seasonal issue affecting migrating fish which has occurred in the past during prolonged dry and hot weather.

Phil Rippon, Fisheries Technical Specialist for the Environment Agency in the North East said:

We continuously monitor the oxygen levels in the estuary during conditions such as we saw this summer and do what we can to help migrating fish reach their spawning grounds.

This includes additional releases of water from Kielder reservoir to increase freshwater flows when oxygen levels in the estuary become critical. Previous research from similar summer conditions has shown that releases from Kielder sometimes triggers upstream movement of salmon and sea trout, helping them during hot and dry conditions. These additional releases have undoubtedly saved many salmon in 2018.

The Environment Agency will continue to work with Northumbrian Water to monitor the conditions in the Tyne estuary.

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## [News story: Proposed bass measures for 2019](#)



The new TAC regulations are expected to be published in January 2019. In the meantime [current regulations](#) still apply.

This means that in January 2019 for:

- commercial fisheries the limits stay as outlined in the bass authorisation letter
- recreational fisheries it is catch and release only

The 2018 bass guidance can be [viewed here](#).

Following the December Council of Fisheries Minister of the European Union we expect:

- For recreational fisheries, including from shore, in ICES divisions 4b, 4c, 6a, 7a to 7k: a bag limit of one fish per day from 1 April to 31 October 2019
- For any commercial fisheries in ICES divisions 4b, 4c, 7d, 7e, 7f and 7h and in waters within 12 nautical miles from baselines under the sovereignty of the United Kingdom in ICES divisions 7a and 7g:

Only fishing vessels with a bass authorisation issued by the MMO based on a track record of bass landings in the reference period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2016 or a bass authorisation obtained via transfer onto a replacement vessel with no increase in tonnage or engine power will be able to land bass

Bass will continue not to be subject to the landings obligation. Any bass caught above the quantity a vessel is authorised to land must be discarded.

A total closure period for months of February and March 2019 will apply to all methods of fishing.

There will be changes to the limits that can be landed by authorised vessels:

- Change for trawl by-catch with an increased by-catch cap (though the 1% per day remains in place). The cap (increased from the 100kg per month this year) is for 400kg over 2 months
- Change for seines – increase in the monthly cap from 180kg to 210 kg, and the 1% per day limit still applies
- Increase for hook and line from 5 tonnes to 5.5 tonnes per annum
- Fixed gillnetting – increase from 1.2 tonnes to 1.4 tonnes in 2019

For further information please contact: [bass@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:bass@marinemanagement.org.uk)

Published 28 December 2018

Last updated 15 January 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 15 January 2019 Bass guidance updated
2. 28 December 2018 First published.

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## [News story: Scarborough to be affiliated with HMS Duncan](#)

HMS Duncan is a cutting-edge Type 45 destroyer that was brought into Royal Navy service in 2010. She recently featured in hit documentary Warship: Life at Sea, which followed the personnel on board as they were buzzed by 17 Russian fighter jets in the Black Sea and supported Syrian air strikes.

The ship is armed with the Astor air defence missile system and has a radar capable of tracking thousands of targets while simultaneously coordinating multiple missiles in the air at once. She is also equipped with the state-of-the-art Harpoon Anti-Ship missile.

The ship's affiliation with the town will build on the Scarborough's strong sea cadet links and historic support of the Armed Forces, and will also see the ship's company make regular visits to the area.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson, who was born in Scarborough, made the announcement during a visit to the town's Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) station to meet sea cadets.

He said:

HMS Duncan has already proved her might on the world stage, from her deployment to the Black Sea leading a NATO task force to her crucial work patrolling home waters.

The ship's new affiliation will not just honour this great town right across the world, but also pay tribute to thousands of Yorkshiremen and women who have served in Armed Forces.

With more than 14,000 members of the Armed Forces and Reserves hailing from Yorkshire, the region already has a strong affiliation to the military.

Scarborough also has a thriving sea cadet unit, which celebrates its centenary next year, and provides outstanding support to veterans through the Heroes' Welcome scheme.

Leader of Scarborough Borough Council, Cllr Derek Bastiman, said:

We are extremely honoured and delighted to have HMS Duncan affiliated with the Borough of Scarborough. It couldn't be a more fitting match as the son of one of our Cabinet members, Seaman Phillips, who is a serving member of the Royal Navy, has joined the ship's crew. The direct connection to our council and borough communities gives us immense pride.

Armed Forces personnel carry out their duties in a most professional way to ensure our safety and that of others at all times and for that we are truly grateful. We wish the crew of HMS Duncan every success in their active service and we hope that we will get the opportunity to welcome the ship on a visit to the Yorkshire coast at some point in the future.

The son of Cllr Heather Phillips, Leading Seaman Tim Phillips, joined HMS Duncan in August this year.

And the town's military ties will continue to strengthen as it prepares to host more than 200,000 people for Armed Forces Day in 2020.

The national event will see thousands of serving sailors, soldiers, airmen and women, alongside cadets, veterans and charities, descend on the town to celebrate the important work done by British forces across the world.

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## [Press release: HMRC announces top 10 prosecutions of 2018](#)

This year's list once again demonstrates HMRC's relentless pursuit of tax criminals and shows the lengths some will go to steal money destined to support important public services.

It demonstrates the sheer diversity of crimes HMRC deals with, including stealing Gift Aid money from charities, smuggling illicit tobacco in fridge freezers, breaching weapons of mass destruction controls and buying top-end sports cars with the proceeds of crime.

From high-flying business people to tax consultants, church leaders to organised criminals, HMRC's fraud investigations have led to 671 people being convicted over the last 12 months for their part in tax crimes. In addition, HMRC has charged another 919 people and taken on 746 new criminal investigations.

This year's top 10 prosecutions include:

- [one of the UK's most wanted tax fugitives](#), who spent more than 11 years on the run and owes more than £53 million, ending up behind bars after he was caught in Canada
- [five fraudsters who falsely claimed £13 million in tax repayments](#) and facilitated around 900 bogus visa applications, and were sentenced to a total of more than 31 years in jail
- [an 8-strong tobacco smuggling gang](#) that brought more than 2 million illegal cigarettes into the North East hidden among fridge freezers – its members were jailed for a total of more than 26 years
- [a tax consultant, who fled the UK](#) before he could be arrested for masterminding a conspiracy to steal £6.9 million from construction workers' pay packets, going to prison. David Michael Hughes travelled to Chile, Dubai and Cyprus to evade justice and was eventually arrested at

Heathrow airport after arriving from Istanbul

- [father and son tax fugitives](#) who are finally behind bars after being captured in Spain and extradited to the UK. The £1 million VAT fraudster son tried to avoid jail by fleeing to France in a light aircraft, while his accomplice father escaped by ferry, before they both headed to Spain
- [a company boss](#) who was jailed for trafficking fighter jet parts to Iran in violation of weapons of mass destruction controls. Alexander George shipped military items, including Russian MiG and US F4 Phantom parts, to Iran through various companies and countries
- [the manager of a well-known male stripping troupe](#), who was sentenced in her absence for tax and benefit fraud and is behind bars after more than a year on the run
- [a church leader from Luton](#) who lied about charity donations to fraudulently claim £150,000 Gift Aid repayments, and was jailed for 4 years
- [a high-flying businessman](#) who masterminded a sophisticated £9.8 million international VAT fraud to fund his lavish lifestyle of flash cars and a luxury Spanish home, and was jailed for 9 years. Jason Butler used money from the fraud to fund his collection of supercars, including a Ferrari Fiorano FI, a Ferrari 360, a Mercedes SL350 and a Lamborghini Murcielago. He also owned a Rolls Royce Silver Shadow, a speedboat, a luxurious home in Marbella, Spain, and 96 properties in Leeds
- [a Hemel Hempstead company director](#) who funded his hobby, racing high-powered sports cars in races across Europe, through a £450,000 tax scam. Simon Atkinson was already under investigation by HMRC for anti-money laundering offences when officers unearthed the 6-figure tax fraud, which he used to finance his passion for racing Lamborghinis in competitive motor tournaments

HMRC's Fraud Investigation Service continues to bring in around £5 billion a year through civil and criminal investigations.

Mel Stride, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

HMRC's investigative teams have been working hard to crack down on tax crimes in the UK, and hold those who would cheat the public revenue to account. The range of cases in this year's list demonstrates how HMRC will always tackle fraud and can prosecute anyone who steals from the public or breaks the rules – from smugglers to potential arms dealers.



Simon York, Director of the Fraud Investigation Service, said:

As these cases show, HMRC can and will tackle the most serious tax crime and breaches of sanctions whether committed by organised criminals, professional advisors or wealthy individuals.

We remain resolute and relentless in our determination to level the playing field and bring tax criminals to justice on behalf of the majority of citizens who pay their tax to fund vital public services.

HMRC uses the full range of both criminal and civil powers to investigate tax cheats and continues to be successful in around 90% of criminal cases it brings to trial. However, work doesn't stop there – HMRC always looks to recover the proceeds from any crime committed to secure the funds for the public purse.