

# South West fisheries get a New Year boost

This week Fisheries Officers have introduced more than 8,000 fish – including tench, bream, crucian carp, roach and rudd – into a number of fisheries across Cornwall and south Devon. The restocking will enhance angling opportunities and help fisheries to have sustainable and healthy fish stocks.

Fishing clubs across the counties benefitting from restocking include, for Cornwall – Bude Canal Angling Association, Roche Angling Club in mid Cornwall, and further west we are supporting Threemilestone Angling Club and Marazion Angling Club. And as we would not want to leave out our Plymouth clubs, we are also delivering to Club Brunel, Plymouth and District Angling Club and Devonport Services Angling Association, all in and around the city.

Every year, the Environment Agency's Calverton Fish Farm near Nottingham breeds coarse fish for release into rivers and still waters across England to help boost fish populations.

Sally Gallop, Environment Agency Fisheries Officer, said:

Cornwall has a variety of excellent fishing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy, from rivers and canals to still water venues. Sometimes they can benefit from a helping hand by adding excellent quality fish from our national fish farm.

The work of our national fish farm is funded by income from rod licence fees, so it shows how vital it is that anglers get the necessary rod licence when thinking of fishing, as all of these funds are reinvested back into angling and improving fisheries and the environment.

Restocking occurs in winter because water temperatures are lower and this minimises any stress on the fish during the stocking process, giving them the best possible survival rates.

Restocking is done where numbers are low, have been depleted following a pollution incident or to create new fisheries and opportunities for anglers.

Winter is a good time to introduce the fish, as it enables them to acclimatise to their new surroundings, ahead of their spawning season which usually begins in the spring and goes through to the summer for some species. Fish also play a critical role in sustaining a river's finely-balanced ecosystem, so the wider natural environment will also get a festive boost.

You need a rod fishing licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel with a rod and line in England. Get yours from <https://www.gov.uk/fishing-licences>

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# PM virtual meeting on Ukraine: 24 January 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson held a virtual meeting to discuss the situation in Ukraine.



The Prime Minister held a virtual meeting with the leaders of the US, Italy, Poland, France, Germany, the European Council, the European Commission and NATO to discuss the situation in Ukraine.

The leaders agreed on the importance of international unity in the face of growing Russian hostility. The Prime Minister underlined the real human cost of any Russian aggression and the need to take all steps within our power to prevent that outcome.

The leaders stressed that diplomatic discussions with Russia remain the first priority, and welcomed talks that have already taken place between Russia and NATO allies.

They also agreed that the international community should not tolerate any action which undermines Ukrainian sovereignty. The Prime Minister outlined the steps the UK has taken to increase Ukraine's defensive capacity. He emphasised the need to support Ukraine's defences against the full spectrum of malign Russian activity.

The leaders agreed that, should a further Russian incursion into Ukraine happen, allies must enact swift retributive responses including an unprecedented package of sanctions. They resolved to continue coordinating closely on any such response.

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# Prime Minister declares UK one of the most open countries in Europe and ready for an international tourism boom

- 2022 to be a blockbuster year for the nation, with Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and Unboxed: Creativity in the UK
- PM rallying cry comes as VisitBritain launches £10 million campaign to encourage international tourists to visit

Prime Minister Boris Johnson today calls on international tourists to visit the UK and enjoy the sights and sounds of one of the most open countries in Europe.

As testing and quarantine restrictions end for fully vaccinated visitors, the UK is ready to welcome visitors from around the globe for a blockbuster year of events showcasing the breadth of culture, creativity and innovation on offer, including Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and Unboxed: Creativity in the UK.

It comes ahead of a new VisitBritain £10 million international marketing campaign targeting the UK's most valuable visitor markets of Europe and the USA which will launch in February.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Thanks to the phenomenal success of our booster campaign and the extraordinary efforts of the public, the UK is officially one of the most open countries in Europe and ready to welcome visitors from across the globe.

The UK is home to thousands of world class attractions, unbeatable hospitality and incredible history and culture. 2022 also promises a host of unmissable events – from Her Majesty's Jubilee to the Commonwealth Games.

Now is a fantastic time to book a trip and enjoy the best the UK has to offer.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

There is huge pent up demand from international tourists to visit

the UK and my message is clear: our brilliant tourism, hospitality and leisure businesses are ready and waiting to welcome people back.

2022 is set to be a blockbuster year with an unmissable opportunity to see world-class sports in the Commonwealth Games, culture and creativity through the Unboxed events and royal pageantry as we mark the Queen's 70-year reign.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We made the right calls at the right time and thanks to our vaccine and booster rollout it's paying off – allowing us to safely remove nearly all COVID-19 travel restrictions for vaccinated travellers.

We already have one of the most open economies in Europe with the least restrictions, and because of these changes we now have a travel sector to match it.

This final step in our stable and safe full return to international travel is a major boost for UK tourism, setting Britain free ahead of the crucial half term and spring holiday season.

VisitBritain's multi-million pound campaign will spotlight cities across the UK including London, Edinburgh and Cardiff which have been hit hard by the lack of international visitors.

It will encourage visitors to see another side of Britain promoting new and exciting experiences such as kayaking on London's iconic River Thames, Edinburgh's famous Fringe Festival and sampling some of the world's finest gins at Cardiff Distillery.

VisitBritain CEO Sally Balcombe said:

We know there is pent up demand for travel and our priority is to build back demand for Britain and visitor spending as quickly as possible, competing hard for international visitors who contribute billions to our economy.

As well as messages of welcome and reassurance, we're shining the spotlight on our vibrant and diverse cities. Telling the stories of our renowned heritage with a modern twist, our buzzing contemporary culture and innovative food and drink scene, we are showing that Britain is packed full of fresh and exciting experiences to come and see today.

This year's landmark events, set to be global tourism draws, also present exciting and timely opportunities to highlight once-in-a-lifetime experiences that visitors can only have here, and to

promote our welcome and creativity to the world.

VisitBritain's campaign will build on the government's ambitious Tourism Recovery Plan published in June 2021 which aims to get domestic and international tourism back to pre-pandemic levels a year faster than independent forecasts predict.

The government has backed tourism, hospitality and leisure organisations through the pandemic with more than £37 billion in funding and support.

This includes the ongoing cut to VAT, furlough and 100 per cent business rates relief for leisure, retail and hospitality businesses which have saved thousands of jobs and prevented many business closures. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme at its peak supported 87 per cent of hospitality and entertainment businesses and a UK-wide VAT cut for the tourism sectors from 20 per cent to 5 per cent was in place until September 2021. It will remain at 12.5 per cent until the end of March 2022 to provide ongoing support for businesses.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The VisitBritain campaign goes live in the major European markets of Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands in the week of 14 February and launches in the USA on 10 February.

Plans for Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee are as follows:

Thursday 2 June

- The Queen's Birthday Parade (Trooping the Colour): Over 1,400 parading soldiers, 200 horses and 400 musicians will come together in the traditional Parade to mark The Queen's official birthday, usually held on the second Saturday in June.
- Platinum Jubilee Beacons: The United Kingdom's long tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, Weddings and Coronations with the lighting of beacons will be continued to mark the Platinum Jubilee. Beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories. For the first time, beacons will also be lit in each of the capital cities of the Commonwealth countries to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Friday 3 June

- Service of Thanksgiving: A Service of Thanksgiving for The Queen's reign will be held at St Paul's Cathedral.

Saturday 4 June

- The Derby at Epsom Downs: Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by Members of the Royal Family, will attend the Derby at Epsom Downs.

- Platinum Party at the Palace: The BBC will stage and broadcast a special live concert from Buckingham Palace that will bring together some of the world's biggest entertainment stars to celebrate the most significant and joyous moments from The Queen's seven decade reign.

## Sunday 5 June

- The Big Jubilee Lunch: Every year since the idea began in 2009 The Big Lunch has encouraged communities to celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better, coming together in a spirit of fun and friendship. In 2022 The Big Lunch will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community.
- The Platinum Jubilee Pageant: A pageant featuring over 5,000 people from across the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth will take place against the backdrop of Buckingham Palace and the surrounding streets. It will combine street arts, theatre, music, circus, carnival and costume and celebrate the service of Her Majesty's reign, as well as honouring the collective service of people and communities across the country.

## Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will take place from 28 July to 8 August 2022 and will be the biggest sporting and cultural event ever held in the city featuring thousands of world-class athletes and over a million spectators. Home to more than 187 nationalities, Birmingham 2022 will be a home Games for every nation.

Backed by £778 million of public funding, Birmingham 2022 will deliver 11 days of amazing sport. Alongside the sport programme, the Games will be accompanied by a six-month cultural festival and the Queen's Baton Relay will travel around the Commonwealth and the UK before arriving in Birmingham for the Opening Ceremony. A £24 million business and tourism programme will convert the excitement and interest generated by the Games into increased trade, tourism and investment opportunities for the West Midlands, promoting the region and the UK to the world.

## UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK

Unboxed: Creativity in the UK – a once-in-a-lifetime celebration of our world-leading creativity taking place from March to October. Drawing on a £120 million government investment, Unboxed will lift the lid on 10 very different creative projects shaped by some of the brightest minds from across science, technology, engineering, arts and maths. Millions of people across the UK are invited to watch, experience and participate in an extraordinary series of events, installations and activities throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – as well as online, which will bring people together and showcase the UK's creativity globally.

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# £60 million boost for floating offshore wind

- More than £31 million in government funding to drive forward plans to place turbines in deep-sea areas, including in areas where winds are at their strongest
- matched by more than £30 million from industry it will help accelerate renewable energy deployment that reduces UK exposure to volatility in global fossil fuel prices
- research will help maintain UK's position as a world leader in offshore wind, generating green energy investment in all parts of the UK and levelling up across the country

Floating offshore wind projects will receive more than £60 million in public and private investment to develop new technologies that will enable turbines to be located in the windiest parts around the UK's coastline.

The UK government is today (Tuesday, 25 January) announcing 11 successful projects that will each be awarded up to £10 million as it puts forward £31.6 million to boost the amount of clean renewable energy generated in the country. In addition to this, industry will match the investment bringing the total to over £60 million – driving green energy investment and levelling up parts of the country including in Aberdeen, Swansea and Yorkshire.

The cash boost will further research and development in floating offshore wind with projects across the United Kingdom set to receive funding that will accelerate the deployment of turbines in seas around the UK. Research will focus on areas such as how turbines are moored to the seabed, undersea cabling and developing foundation solutions.

The UK is already home to the world's largest deployment of offshore wind, however floating turbines, which can be deployed in deeper waters than conventional turbines, will boost energy capacity even further by allowing wind farms to be situated in new areas around the UK coastline where wind strengths are at their highest and most productive.

With global gas prices at record highs, the UK is determined to strengthen energy security further by deploying home-grown renewable technologies to reduce our dependency on volatile fossil fuels.

Energy Minister Greg Hands said:

We are already a world leader in offshore wind and floating technology is key to unlocking the full potential of the seas around Britain.

These innovative projects will help us expand renewable energy further and faster across the UK and help to reduce our exposure

volatile global gas prices.

By stimulating development now through the Floating Offshore Wind Demonstration Programme, the costs of building and locating floating turbines in deep-water areas will come down faster, growing the UK supply chain and supporting the target in the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan of delivering 1GW of energy through floating offshore wind by 2030.

One such project receiving more than £9.6 million is a collaborative scheme with bases in Edinburgh, Belfast, London and Doncaster, developing and demonstrating new technologies for mooring floating turbines to the seabed, cable protection, a floating turbine base design and an advanced digital monitoring system.

Another project with bases in Cambridge, Feltham, Aberdeen and Blyth, will get £10 million for bringing forward a compact floating turbine foundation and anchors that will likely enable a 2MW, or larger, turbine to be demonstrated in UK waters.

Today's announcement follows support for floating offshore wind in the fourth allocation round of the Contracts for Difference scheme – the government's flagship renewable energy auction scheme – where £24 million a year has been ringfenced for this emerging technology. It also follows the announcement by the Prime Minister in October for £160 million funding to develop and build new large-scale floating offshore wind ports and factories in the UK.

Director of the Supergen ORE Hub Professor Deborah Greaves said:

I am delighted that the Floating Offshore Wind Demonstration Programme will support new projects in key areas of research and innovation for the ORE sector.

The new projects are well aligned with the Research Landscape of the Supergen ORE Hub and demonstrate the great benefit to the sector of academics and industry experts working closely together – utilising their combined knowledge and expertise – to advance the UK's Net Zero Strategy.

- Funding for the Floating Offshore Wind Demonstration Programme competition is part of the £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio which aims to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative low-carbon technologies, systems and processes in the power, buildings and industrial sectors
- the government has previously supported innovation in the UK's floating wind sector through the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio, with £2 million being provided over 2 years to the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult's Floating Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence



## **Floating Offshore Wind Demonstration Programme funding recipients**

1. JDR Cables (Hartlepool) and the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult (Blyth): £1,606,711 for developing and testing electric cabling systems.
2. Buoyant Production Technologies (Farnham) and the University of Southampton: £238,724 to demonstrate that a patented design can be used for supporting substation equipment connecting floating wind farms to the energy grid.
3. AWC Technology (Aberdeen): £760,874 to take forward development of an articulated wind turbine column designed to reduce construction, installation and maintenance costs.
4. Reflex Marine (Aberdeen) the University of Exeter, Bridon Bekaert Ropes Group (Doncaster) and Wood Thilsted Partners (Godalming): £882,283 for development of a novel anchoring system that will secure floating turbine cables to the seabed at a fraction of the weight of some existing anchors.
5. London Marine Consultants and the University of Plymouth: £264,924 to bring to market a mooring system which will simplify the initial installation of floating turbines and enable simple disconnection when maintenance is required.
6. Copenhagen Offshore Partners (Edinburgh), SSE Renewables (Belfast), Maersk Supply Service Subsea (London) and Bridon Bekaert Ropes Group (Doncaster): £9,656,980 to develop and demonstrate new mooring system technologies, cable protection, floating turbine base design and an advanced digital monitoring system.
7. Marine Power Systems (Swansea): £3,466,083 to develop a floating foundation with a small footprint and integrated wave energy generator to improve power quality.
8. Cerulean Winds (Guildford): £825,692 for developing an integrated system between the mooring, floating foundation and wind turbine for deployment at an offshore oil and gas facility in the North Sea or West of Shetland.
9. SenseWind (Cambridge), Geodis FF (Feltham), Xodus Group (Aberdeen) and the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult (Blyth): £10,000,000 for a project combining a compact floating foundation with a novel anchoring system attaching it to the seabed and advanced monitoring technology that allows for maintenance to be planned and performed offshore, saving on costs of towing back to shore. A 2MW or larger turbine will be demonstrated in UK waters.
10. Aker Solutions (London): £690,454 for applying cable manufacturing techniques that simplify and cut the cost of offshore installation and developing a subsea substation design connecting floating wind farms to the energy grid.
11. Trivane Ltd (Newquay), London Marine Consultants, Keynvormorlift (Newquay) and Ledwood (Pembroke Dock): £3,268,058 for developing a trimaran mounting system for wind turbines.

[Read more detail about the projects,](#)

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## [Public urged to sign-up to world-first COVID-19 antiviral study](#)

- Recruitment drive backed by charities including Kidney Care UK, Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Diabetes UK and the British Liver Trust as antivirals help protect most vulnerable from hospital
- At least 6,000 more participants needed as soon as possible so the life-saving treatments can be rolled out more widely
- People can sign up here: [www.panoramictrial.org](http://www.panoramictrial.org)

Adults over the age of 50 or with an underlying health condition who test positive for COVID-19 are being urged to sign up for a world-first COVID-19 study which is providing life-saving antivirals to thousands of people.

The government and leading charities, including Kidney Care UK, Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Diabetes UK and the British Liver Trust, are calling on at least 6,000 more participants to come forward for these cutting-edge treatments through the PANORAMIC study. This is so that expert scientists can understand more about how to deploy these treatments in the NHS more widely later in the year – including who would benefit most from receiving antiviral treatments for COVID-19.

Antivirals are medicines which can be swallowed as a tablet to help treat people with COVID-19 infections to reduce the risk of hospitalisations and death. Molnupiravir, which is currently being deployed through the study, has shown to reduce this for at risk, non-hospitalised adults with mild to moderate COVID-19 by 30% – potentially saving thousands of lives once the drugs are available to the NHS.

Anyone over the age of 50 or between 18 to 49 with an underlying health condition can sign up to the study as soon as they receive a positive PCR or lateral flow test result. They need to be experiencing COVID-19 symptoms that began in the last five days to be eligible to enrol.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The vaccines are critical as a first line of defence, but antivirals form a vital part of our approach as we learn to live with COVID by preventing the most vulnerable from being hospitalised.

If you're eligible, please step forward for the PANORAMIC trial and play your part in a vital mission – helping us to learn more about medicines which could save thousands of lives.

The UK-wide study, run by the University of Oxford and supported by the

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), launched at the start of December 2021 and currently has around 4,600 trial participants signed up, but needs thousands more to sign up as soon as possible to gather the data necessary. This will ensure medical experts can learn more about the potential benefits these treatments bring to vaccinated patients, and will help the NHS to develop plans for rolling out the antivirals to further patients later this year.

It is open to anyone living in the UK who meets the following criteria:

- Have received a positive PCR or lateral flow test for COVID-19 and feel unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 that started in the last five days; and
- are aged 50 and over, or 18 to 49 years old with an underlying medical condition that can increase the risk of developing severe COVID-19.

While vaccines remain the most important first line of defence against the virus, antivirals are used after someone contracts the virus to slow it down, make symptoms less severe and complications less common.

The antiviral, molnupiravir, that is part of the PANORAMIC trial, was granted approval for use by the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Authority (MHRA) in November 2021, and so far no unexpected safety findings have been reported in clinical trials.

The government, through the Antivirals Taskforce, has procured 4.98 million courses of antivirals – including 2.23 million courses of molnupiravir and 2.75 million courses of PF-07321332/ritonavir.

Professor Sir Jonathan Van-Tam, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England, said:

If you're eligible for PANORAMIC please give some serious consideration to taking part. This will help us decide how to use COVID-19 antiviral drugs for many years to come.

Eddie Gray, Chair of the Antivirals Taskforce, said:

Antivirals are a hugely important addition to our response to COVID-19 and we have secured access to two important products for NHS patients.

Getting people enrolled onto this study is vital, not just in protecting the most vulnerable now, but in ensuring we can deploy these medicines more widely as soon as possible.

## **Case studies**

Pippa Erskine, double lung transplant recipient who lives with Cystic Fibrosis, accessed antivirals after testing positive for COVID-19 at the

start of January. Pippa said:

Even after three vaccines, testing positive for COVID-19 after avoiding the virus for more than 18 months was worrying. Knowing antivirals would help ease my symptoms and help prevent potential complications was a huge relief.

With restrictions easing, it's so important that those vulnerable to COVID-19 have the best possible chance of staying protected against the virus and, most importantly, staying out of hospital. Antivirals are essential to this.

I'd urge anyone eligible for the trial to put themselves forward to help make antivirals more widely available, and to protect themselves and others.

Mr Harkishan Mistry, age 58, is General Secretary of Bradford Hindu Council said:

After testing positive for COVID-19 last Monday on a lateral flow, a friend recommended I look into the antivirals trial. As I'm over 50 and was experiencing symptoms such as sore throat, headache, and achiness, I was eligible and was selected to receive the antiviral treatment by Monday afternoon.

The whole process was so simple – a courier delivered the capsules the next morning and I began taking the course straight away. While I'm still testing positive and remain in isolation, my symptoms eased daily and I feel much better.

I'd really recommend anyone who's eligible for the trial to sign up – why would you not if we can help others and ease pressure on the NHS.

Hazel, a pharmacist from Whitley Bay, got COVID-19 early in January and so signed up to the trial immediately to help find antiviral medicines to treat the virus. Hazel said:

I enrolled online when I got COVID-19 and the process was really simple. I got a call from a nurse right away who took me through everything and since then I've just had to keep a short online daily diary which takes less than a minute to do.

The process really couldn't be simpler, and it's so exciting to be part of this world leading effort to find a treatment for COVID-19.

Both as someone who got COVID-19 and as a pharmacist, I know the damage this virus can do and would urge anyone eligible to visit

the website and really consider getting involved as it could save lives.

## **Stakeholder quotes**

Fiona Loud, Policy Director at Kidney Care UK, said:

We welcome the development and provision of antiviral treatments for people who are vulnerable to COVID-19.

This trial is one of the ways to make them more widely available so we would like to encourage everyone who is eligible, including those with kidney disease, to take part in this study.

While we continue to encourage people to take up the offer of vaccinations, antiviral treatments are going to be a vital tool to give more protection to people who are most at risk from COVID-19, including those with kidney disease.

Vanessa Hebditch, Director of Policy at the British Liver Trust, said:

The introduction of new treatments for COVID-19 for the most vulnerable is an important and welcome development in the tackling of the pandemic. People with liver disease and liver transplant recipients are among the highest risk from COVID-19 and have less immunity from vaccines so treatments are vital to reduce their risk of hospitalisation should they catch the virus.

We urge people living with a liver condition to consider signing up for trial to protect themselves and ensure that more people can access these treatments.

David Ramsden, chief executive of Cystic Fibrosis Trust, said:

It is vital for that we continue to focus on the development and evaluation of new treatments for COVID-19.

This is a really important study and we would encourage all eligible people with cystic fibrosis to get involved.