

Deadly fish traps found in River Skerne

Enforcement officers have seized more than 20 illegal fish traps and other equipment in the past three months in the North East, including several in Darlington borough. The work is part of the Environment Agency's North East crackdown called Operation Creel that aims to protect species threatened by our changing climate; the white clawed crayfish and European eel.

Members of the public have reported illegal practices including crayfish trapping and fish theft, particularly in the River Skerne and nearby ponds, adding to other sources of intelligence and helping authorities to track the culprits.

Traps can prove deadly for river mammals including otters who may get stuck and drown after following prey.

Native white clawed crayfish are in decline in the North East due to invasive American signal crayfish. The American species is bigger and takes over habitat while also carrying a disease deadly to their native counterparts.

David Shears, Environment Agency Senior Fisheries Enforcement Officer, said:

"I'd like to urge people to contact the Environment Agency if they witness any signs of illegal activity.

"Climate change is putting many of our native species at risk and we need to protect habitats where they thrive.

"It's a serious crime to set these hazardous traps and horrific to see evidence of otters having drowned, as well as the other ecological impacts we risk. We are on the ground, remaining vigilant and will act on all intelligence we receive."

Councillor Andy Keir, Darlington Borough Council's cabinet member for local services, said:

"We're happy to continue to support the work of the Environment Agency's enforcement officers in tackling illegal fishing and would urge anyone with information to pass it on to the Environment Agency."

Traps used to take fish in England must be authorised by the Environment Agency and be safe for other wildlife. Because of the populations of rare native crayfish in the area, traps are rarely authorised other than for scientific reasons. Anyone who fishes must also have the permission of the landowner.

People fishing illegally or using illegal traps can expect to be prosecuted and face a substantial fine.

Everyone can play their part, by reporting any illegal activity to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60 or to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

[UK Government announces huge investment into Scottish tidal power](#)

Today's announcement will unlock the potential for a thriving Scottish tidal power sector, with the cash boost supporting marine technologies which could benefit the whole of Scotland and the rest of the UK.

As part of the fourth allocation round of the Contracts for Difference Scheme due to open next month, the UK Government will ensure that £20million per year will be ringfenced for Tidal Stream projects, giving Scotland's marine energy sector a chance to develop their technology and lower their costs in a similar way to its world-leading offshore wind industry. This will bring the total funding for this allocation round to £285million per year UK-wide.

Scotland has long been a pioneer for tidal technology, hosting the world's largest tidal stream generating station which was built in 2018 thanks to a £10 million innovation grant from the UK Government and extensive support under the Renewables Obligation mechanism – the highest level of support awarded to any technology.

In fact, the UK has the largest tidal stream deployment in the world, so much so that almost 50% of the world's installed tidal stream capacity is in Scottish waters. Furthermore, just this year Simec Atlantis Energy Ltd, a homegrown company used their expertise to export and install a tidal turbine – designed and built in Scotland – for piloting in Japan.

Over time Scotland's marine technologies have the potential to significantly contribute to the UK's decarbonisation commitments and will support hundreds of green jobs across the country, with projects currently in development in North-West Scotland, North Wales and the Southern coast of England.

Tidal energy has the potential to be a very reliable source of generation, given the clockwork predictability of the tides. Including this in Scotland's low-carbon energy mix will make it easier to match supply with demand, building on the UK Government's commitment to build a strong, home-grown renewable energy sector to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and exposure to volatile global gas prices.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

As a pioneer for tidal technologies, Scotland is perfectly placed to capitalise on clean marine energy, building on our booming

offshore wind sector which is now a British industrial success story.

We hope to see marine energy follow in the successful footprints of other renewable technologies, where we've seen costs fall dramatically in recent years thanks to UK Government support.

The investment today provides a major push for Scottish tidal power to become a key part of the next generation of renewable electricity projects needed to strengthen energy security as we work to reduce our dependency on volatile fossil fuels.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

This UK Government allocation of funding for the tidal industry in Scotland, and across the UK, is tremendous news. Harnessing the powers of our seas is a vital step in our transition to the use of greener, cleaner energy and underlines the UK Government's commitment to create and protect highly-skilled jobs while on our journey to Net Zero by 2050.

With strong wind and solar power industries in the UK it is the natural next step to explore our tidal energy capabilities. It's an exciting development in support of our domestically-produced renewable energy sources.

Full details of all Contracts for Difference scheme announcements will be released on Thursday 25 November where the UK Government will outline plans to launch the biggest ever Contracts for Difference (CfD) allocation round, with this new ringfencing for Tidal Stream expected to bring the total budget for the fourth allocation to £285 million per year.

The Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme is the Government's primary method of encouraging investment in low-carbon electricity. The scheme has helped to deliver substantial new investment and reductions in the costs of capital for some renewable technologies, such as helping to reduce the price of offshore wind by 65%.

This fourth round of the Contracts for Difference Scheme will open on 13 December 2021. The UK Government will launch this auction process with the ambition of supporting up to 12GW low-carbon electricity capacity – more than the last three rounds combined.

The costs continue to fall as green technology advances, with solar and wind now cheaper than existing coal and gas power plants in most of the world. This is thanks to clear government signals and investment made ahead and during the COP26 climate change summit, along with targeted support that boosts private sector investment, creates high-quality jobs and builds industries and technology as the UK builds back greener from the pandemic.

History has illustrated the effectiveness of the scheme's design in keeping costs down – between the first allocation round in 2015 and the most recent round in 2019, the price per unit (MWh) of offshore wind fell by around 65%.

Energy Minister Greg Hands, said:

The development of Scotland's renewables industry is a major UK success story, with our renewable energy auction scheme playing a vital role in the UK becoming a world leader in clean electricity generation and helping to bring down prices for consumers.

Today's dedicated backing for tidal stream power is opening up a new chapter for Scotland's coastal communities and advancing the possibilities for the Scottish marine energy sector to play a significant role in delivering the UK's green industrial revolution.

CEO of Renewable UK, Dan McGrail said:

This is a major step forward for the UK's world-leading tidal energy industry, allowing us to ramp up the roll-out of our cutting-edge marine technologies and increase the pace of innovation in the sector to become more cost competitive. Ring-fenced funding for tidal stream doesn't just unlock private investment and secure green jobs today – it also puts us in pole position to capitalise on exports to the global market in due course. That's why we've been calling for this dedicated pot of funding for tidal power.

We need a range of renewable technologies to get us to net zero as fast as possible. As an island nation with superb tidal energy resources to harness, it's clear that tidal stream should have a key role to play in our shift to clean energy.

Chair of the UK Marine Energy Council, Sue Barr, said:

The impact of this support cannot be overstated. Here in the UK we have the knowledge, skills, people and projects to lead the world in marine energy, but we have been missing a vital piece of the puzzle to unlock investment and allow the sector to scale-up and deliver. The marine energy sector stretches the length and breadth of the UK – from the Isle of Wight to Orkney and Shetland.

This dedicated ringfence will secure our domestic market, support decarbonisation and will enable tidal stream energy to develop; delivering export opportunities, green jobs, and economic growth in the process. We are grateful to Ministers and the broader UK Government for having listened, understood and acted. This new

support for tidal stream brings us one step closer to delivering a Great British success story that will provide both environmental benefits through the generation of renewable energy alongside UK-wide supply chain benefits.

TRA reconsiders recommendation on welded tubes and pipes measures

[The Trade Remedies Authority](#) has today (Wednesday 24 November) initiated a reconsideration of its recommendation in the [UK transition review of an anti-dumping measure on imports of certain welded tubes and pipes originating in the Republic of Belarus \(Belarus\), the People's Republic of China \(China\), and the Russian Federation \(Russia\)](#).

Reconsiderations are an established part of the UK's tax regime, with many different arms of the Government incorporating them as part of their standard operating procedures. They are one of the main ways businesses can continue to make their case once a decision that affects them has been made. If applicants meet the criteria required, a reconsideration will always be undertaken.

At the end of the reconsideration process, the TRA will reach a reconsidered decision either upholding or varying its recommendation and will notify this to the Secretary of State for International Trade.

The initiation today follows one submission received from a UK producer requesting that the TRA reconsider its recommendation. The TRA anticipates it will take several months to complete the reconsideration review.

About the TRA's original recommendation

In August, the TRA recommended to the Secretary of State for International Trade that the UK continue to apply existing anti-dumping duties to imports from China and Belarus but not to imports from Russia. The TRA also recommended that the scope of the measure be changed to exclude one of the four types of product covered by the measure, as no UK producer of that product was identified.

[This recommendation](#) was accepted by the Secretary of State for International Trade.

The reconsideration process

Following the Secretary of State's decision, the TRA received a submission

from one domestic steel producer asking the TRA to reconsider the original recommendation.

The steel producer originally advised the TRA that it did not manufacture the product in question, but after the TRA published its Statement of Essential Facts, it emerged that it was in fact involved in the production of some quantities of the goods. As such, it has argued that the measure on this product should not be revoked. In addition, it has argued that the duties should not be revoked on imports from Russia.

The TRA's reconsideration will cover the same remit as the original transition review. It will consider, within the rules set in the UK's regulatory framework and the underlying World Trade Organisation obligations, whether the application received and the additional information it contains necessitates a different recommendation to that originally given to the Secretary of State for International Trade.

Background

- [The Trade Remedies Authority](#) is the UK body that investigates whether new trade remedy measures are needed to counter unfair import practices and unforeseen surges of imports.
- The UK trade remedies regime is set by the Taxation (Cross-Border Trade) Act 2018 and the Trade Act 2021, which operationalise the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements covering trade remedies.
- Reconsiderations are part of the process that parties can use to ask the TRA to look again at its decisions. Many government departments, non-departmental public bodies and other government agencies (including decision-making bodies on taxation and benefits) provide for interested parties to request an internal reconsideration of a decision as part of their standard processes.
- For a reconsideration to be undertaken by the TRA, applicants must meet the following criteria:
 - set out the grounds for their application
 - explain the outcome they are looking for
 - demonstrate that they are eligible to apply for a reconsideration of this decision.
- If an application does not meet any or all of the three criteria set out above, the TRA will review this and may ultimately reject an application.
- [Further information on the TRA's process for reconsiderations can be found in the TRA's online guidance.](#)
- Anti-dumping measures are one of the three types of trade remedies allowed by the World Trade Organisation (WTO). These measures place duties on products when they are dumped – unfairly imported into a country at prices below what they would be sold for in the country where they are made. The other two measures are countervailing measures which counter unfair subsidies on imported goods and safeguard measures which address unforeseen surges of imports.
- When the UK left the EU, it transitioned across 43 trade remedy measures which were of interest to UK industries into UK law. The TRA was then

required to carry out a review of each measure. This is because the measures were originally put in place based on data from across all the EU member states. If the UK is to keep them, it needs to demonstrate that they are needed to protect against unfair trade practices which are damaging or could damage UK industries.

[New non-executive director appointment at GAD](#)

News story

GAD announces the appointment of a new non-executive director. Bev Messinger will join the department's Management Board for a 3-year term.



The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) announces the appointment of Bev Messinger as a non-executive director.

Bev is an experienced non-executive director, having held a range of non-executive roles within the public sector including Vice Chair, Committee Chair and Senior Independent Director. She has a background in HR and organisational transformation at senior executive level. Bev formerly held the role of Chief Executive at the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health.

Commenting on the appointment Martin Clarke, Government Actuary said: "I am delighted to welcome Bev to our Management Board and look forward to working with her. She has a wealth of experience and will bring a valuable perspective to the department."

Bev will join GAD's Management Board immediately for a 3-year term, ending in November 2024. Bev was appointed by the Financial Secretary following a fair and open competition, after the role was advertised on the Cabinet Office Public Appointments website for 4 weeks. She confirmed that she has not

undertaken any political activity within the previous 5 years.

Published 24 November 2021

[In praise of the UK Caldicott Guardian Council and Caldicott Guardians](#)

Caldicott Guardians play a valuable role in ensuring that data is used responsibly and ethically to support the delivery of better care. They help their organisations to maintain patient confidentiality, and to make wise decisions about data sharing.

As a young consultant, information governance wasn't an area I had much studied outside of the bounds of my own professional obligations. But a single experience changed that, when I found myself under mounting pressure from another organisation to share confidential information about a patient I was treating, against his wishes. They thought that he might be dangerous. Given my knowledge of him it was my professional judgement that he wasn't, and I felt very strongly about his right to privacy. With the wise counsel of my Trust's Caldicott Guardian, Dr Dele Olajide, I was able to navigate this stressful situation and stand my ground. And I did so with the confidence that his authority and expertise had afforded me.

Later, when I took on the Caldicott Guardian role myself, I was able to support others in the same way. But it is not an easy job. Sometimes staff approached me with the opposite problem, anxious about sharing information that they felt did need to be shared, but worried they'd 'get it wrong' and face legal and professional consequences. Caldicott Guardians are frequently called upon to unpick and resolve complicated information sharing issues, often in emotionally charged or pressured circumstances, where the right course of action isn't clear and may require nuanced balancing of competing factors and risks. The recommendations they make can have significant consequences, and so the pressure to 'get it right' often weighs heavy.

This is why it is sometimes referred to as a lonely role. But Caldicott Guardians are never alone, as the UK Caldicott Guardian Council (UKCGC) are there to provide support for Caldicott Guardians and others fulfilling the Caldicott function within their organisation. They are the national body for Caldicott Guardians and offer free, practical resources on the [UKCGC website](#), including the option to request advice from Council.

The UK Caldicott Guardian Council has a new chair

The National Data Guardian has always been proud of its strong ties to the UKCGC, and I recently helped them to recruit their new chair, Dr Arjun

Dhillon, to whom I would like to offer a very warm welcome. Arjun will be picking up the baton from Dr Chris Bunch. He is currently a practicing GP at the Argyle Health Group in West London, a clinical director at NHS Digital, and the Caldicott Guardian for both organisations. He has been a Caldicott Guardian at local, regional, and national levels, and a UKCGC council member for several years. Arjun will attend my monthly panel meetings as an observer.

I would also like to offer my sincerest thanks to Dr Chris Bunch, who has been a great support to me, and has done much to help Caldicott Guardians during his five-year tenure as chair, including the development of an online forum, workshops and other helpful information and resources. Chris will stay on as vice chair of the UKCGC, and as a member of my panel.

New elearning: The Role of the Caldicott Guardian

My office recently supported the UKCGC with the development of a new elearning programme, [The Role of the Caldicott Guardian](#).

The programme is for Caldicott Guardians and those interested in finding out more about the role Caldicott Guardians play in keeping people's data safe and ensuring that it is used appropriately. It was developed in partnership with Health Education England.

The elearning consists of three modules, each intended for a different audience. The first, 'Caldicott Guardians: sharing information and protecting confidentiality in health and care', is available now and is a general overview of the role, intended for a broad range of health and care staff. A further two modules will follow: one for new or existing Caldicott Guardians, and one for senior staff who may need to appoint or support a Caldicott Guardian.

To access the elearning, [visit the programme page](#) on Health Education England's elearning for healthcare website. The programme is free for NHS health and care organisations. Others may also qualify for access through OpenAthens and can [check their eligibility online](#).

Guidance about Caldicott Guardians

This elearning was developed to help those who need to implement guidance we published back in August about the [appointment, role and responsibilities of a Caldicott Guardian](#).

This guidance introduces a formal requirement that widens the type and number of organisations who need to appoint a Caldicott Guardian. It is published under the National Data Guardian's power to issue guidance described within the [Health and Social Care \(National Data Guardian\) Act 2018](#), and so those organisations it applies to must have regard to it, and are encouraged to become compliant by 30 June 2023.

This change was a response to a [public consultation held by the NDG in 2020](#) about the Caldicott Principles and Caldicott Guardians. People who responded

felt the role needed stronger emphasis across the whole of health and social care, and so the proposal to expand the types of organisations expected to have a Caldicott Guardian received strong support.

I would like to sign off by sending my thanks to all Caldicott Guardians across health and care who are fighting the good fight to uphold the fundamental importance of patient confidentiality so as to preserve trust in the privacy of our health and care system. Their work to ensure that data across their systems is safeguarded securely and used when appropriate – both for individual care and through research and planning to improve access, experience, and outcomes for all – really matters. It is at times a difficult job, but always an incredibly worthy one.