

National Highways' funding stream helps fish crossing under the A38 in Devon

In time for the autumn migration season for salmon, the company, as part of its commitment to reduce the impact of its roads on the environment, has funded a £168,000 improvement scheme to modify a culvert under the A38 near Newton Abbot.

The culvert carries the River Lemon under the dual carriageway but following studies by the Environment Agency and environmental charity Westcountry Rivers Trust, it was found that fish were unable to navigate the culvert to reach their traditional spawning grounds.

Thanks to its Designated Funding programme, National Highways (formerly Highways England) funded the trust to carry out work to install dedicated and specially designed fish passes – making it possible for fish to swim upstream during their October to May spawning season – and local specialist fish pass designers, Fishtek Consulting, were brought in to design the most appropriate solution.

Installed baffles will help the flow of water, and to the right, a special pass of 'eel tiles' to help eels swim upstream

Mark Fox, National Highways' Head of Scheme Delivery for the South West, said:

At National Highways, our work goes beyond operating, maintaining and improving roads, and through our Environmental and Well-Being Designated Funds, we're investing in the environment and communities surrounding our network.

We've worked closely with the Environment Agency and Westcountry Rivers Trust, together with Kier, Fishtek Consulting, ID Verde and Castleford Engineering, to realise this project which will help support aquatic biodiversity at a location close to the A38.

It also underlines our commitment to reducing the impact of our roads on the environment – in this case by modifying a structure originally provided during the construction of the road.

The scheme has involved some low cost, low maintenance solutions – the installation of large oak baffles and the creation of small pools – to help bigger fish and eels to navigate the sloped culvert and for smaller fish to swim up in sections.

And it also includes measures to reduce the speed of the flowing water, making it easier for more fish to move upstream, as well as multiple depths and surfaces to give a wider variety of species the capability of passing through the culvert.

Further work is planned in the coming years, including the nearby Ashburn Check Weirs, and Olivia Cresswell, Westcountry River Trust's Aquatic Team Leader, said:

Historically, the River Lemon has struggled to achieve good status, with ecological discontinuity due to barriers to fish migration a main issue.

We were delighted to work together with Fishtek Consulting to scope, design, assess and solve this significant barrier to fish and eel migration on the River Lemon, and using our collective specialist knowledge and experience, we and our partners were passionate to deliver this scheme that is right on our doorstep.

Environment Agency Project Manager James Cooper added:

The River Lemon is currently failing its Water Framework Directive objectives, with barriers to fish migration considered to be one of the key pressures facing migratory fish populations in the catchment.

This project provides a vital contribution towards unblocking the whole river for migratory fish and eels, and it supports ongoing work being carried out by the Environment Agency and other partners to tackle all of the significant barriers to fish migration on the River Lemon, which will significantly improve the status of fish populations.

National Highways manages four designated funds, allocated by the Government, to deliver benefits above and beyond building, maintaining and operating England's strategic roads.

From protecting the environment and enhancing the landscape around roads, to improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting communities, the aim is to make a positive difference to people's lives.

[Find out more information on National Highways' designated funds.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP): New partner announcement

News story

AWTTC joins the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway as a permanent partner



From Monday 4 October, the All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC) will join established partners, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) in the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP).

Following agreement by Welsh Ministers, the AWTTC will join these partners in the ILAP activities, including considering if a product meets the criteria for an Innovation Passport. To date, partners have made effective joint decisions and are awarding Innovation Passports to products that will benefit patients.

Read more about the [Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway](#)

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[Report 07/2021: Freight train derailment at Sheffield station](#)

[R072021_211005_Sheffield](#)

PDF, 13.3MB, 50 pages

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Summary

At 02:44 hrs on Wednesday 11 November 2020, 16 wagons of a freight train that was conveying cement powder from Hope, Derbyshire, to Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, derailed at the north end of Sheffield station. A number of wagons were damaged and there was significant damage to the track, resulting in a partial closure of the station. No one was injured.

The train was coasting through the station at a constant speed of around 12 mph (19 km/h) when the leading right-hand wheel of the twelfth wagon dropped into the space between the two running rails, because the rails were too far apart: a problem known as gauge widening. The train stopped when the signaller observed a number of signalling equipment failures indicated on a display screen, and alerted the driver to a problem.

The track gauge had widened because a number of track screws, that secured the rails and baseplates to the wooden bearers, had broken, allowing the rails to spread apart under the loads from passing trains. The track screws had failed several weeks, or perhaps months, before the derailment, but the failures had not been identified by Network Rail's maintenance inspection activities.

Although this was a location with a potentially high risk of derailment, it had not been recognised as such because Network Rail's guidance for identifying such risk had not been applied. Additional mitigation had therefore not been considered.

Recommendations

RAIB has made four recommendations to Network Rail concerning the implementation of processes for identifying high derailment risk locations,

the implementation of safety-critical changes to its processes, standards governing fitment of check rails, and track geometry data formats.

RAIB has also identified three learning points for track maintenance staff alerting them to the need for effective management of track gauge in tightly curved track, the limitations of geometry alerts provided by static measuring equipment, and the importance of monitoring track geometry trends for the identification of track deterioration.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

Newsdate: 5 October 2021

[FCDO Minister Milling attends OECD annual Ministerial Council Meeting](#)

On her first overseas visit since being appointed an FCDO Minister in September, Amanda Milling will attend the OECD's annual Ministerial meeting today at their headquarters in Paris.

The high-level forum brings together ministers of finance, economy, foreign affairs, trade and other government departments from the Organisation's Member and Partner countries, as well as by representatives of other International Organisations.

Marking its 60th year in 2021, the OECD has served as an effective international group for likeminded, market-based democracies to work together and find solutions to the most pressing economic challenges.

The UK was one of the founding members of the OECD in 1961 and the organisation has played a major role in the enormous growth in living standards in all regions of the world since it was formed.

The theme for the two day forum (5-6 October) is 'Shared Values: Building a Green and Inclusive Future' and will be chaired by the United States, with

Korea and Luxembourg as Vice-Chairs.

Minister Milling will take part in a session on shared values, chaired by the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken. The UK intervention will cover climate change ahead of the UK hosting COP26 next month, our G7 Presidency, closer engagement with the Indo-Pacific region and the UK's Integrated Review.

Speaking ahead of the Ministerial meeting Minister Milling said:

As a founding member of the OECD 60 years ago, the UK has played a pivotal role in working with our international partners to find solutions to major global challenges and support sustainable growth in the world's emerging as well as developed economies.

The Ministerial meeting will be an opportunity to further explore cooperation between OECD members on the climate crisis, promote the transition to net-zero, and build an inclusive digital transformation for all.

The Minister will also attend a session to promote the UK's COP26 and climate objectives at a building a green future and getting to net zero session. She will participate in a discussion on building an inclusive digital future, focusing on closing the digital divide for women and underrepresented groups. She will also attend a session on promoting trade for all which will focus on tackling the challenges posed to the international trading system.

Amanda Milling was appointed FCDO Minister for Asia on 15 September, with her ministerial portfolio including economic, cooperation and growth.

- The [UK Delegation \(UKDEL\)](#), based in Paris, represents the United Kingdom at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
- The [OECD Ministerial Council Meeting](#), taking place on 5-6 October, is part two of the annual meetings between members. Part one took place virtually on 31 May and 1 June and marked the handover in leadership of the OECD, reflected on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and shared priorities for the near-term recovery.
- The UK will host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties ([COP26](#)) in Glasgow on 31 October – 12 November 2021. The climate talks will bring together heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change.
- The UK government's [Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#) was published on 16 March.

98th session of the Executive Council of the OPCW

Mr Chairman,

The United Kingdom is committed to keeping the OPCW informed of developments around the use of a chemical weapon in 2018 in Salisbury. On 21 September 2021, UK Police and the Crown Prosecution Service announced the authorisation of charges against a third individual, Denis Sergeev, for his role in the poisonings. Sergeev, like the other two suspects, is a member of the Military Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation.

The charges are the result of an ongoing, independent police investigation into the use of a chemical weapon from the novichok group on UK soil. A coroner's inquest is also now underway into the death of Dawn Sturgess, following her exposure to novichok in Amesbury in July 2018. This independent process is being conducted by the former Lady Justice of Appeal, Lady Hallett.

The attack led to the death of a British citizen and recklessly endangered the lives of many more. The United Kingdom again calls on Russia to fulfil its obligations to this Convention and to this Organisation. We urge Russia again to declare in full its stock of chemical weapons and to work with the OPCW to destroy them.

Mr Chairman,

Independent laboratory analyses confirmed that a novichok agent was also used to poison Alexey Navalny on the territory of the Russian Federation in August 2020. The Russian Federation must disclose in full the circumstances surrounding the attack.

Mr Chairman,

The United Kingdom is grateful to the Technical Secretariat for the briefing on Syria on 30 September 2021. What is clear from this briefing and the monthly reporting is that Syria is continuing to disregard its obligations under the Convention. This cannot continue.

It is imperative that Syria issues visas for Technical Secretariat staff as required by this Council and without obstruction or delay. Syria must also explain why – contrary to instructions from the Technical Secretariat – the cylinders identified as evidence in the Douma chemical weapons attack were purportedly moved around 60km from where they were supposed to be stored and then, allegedly, destroyed. While the regime deliberately avoids telling this Organisation the complete truth about its chemical weapons programme, this Council must conclude that Syria prefers not to respect its treaty

obligations.

Mr Chairman,

Faced with such challenges, it is incumbent on all States Parties to ensure the OPCW has the resources required to fulfil its mandate. Recognising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on all activities, the United Kingdom welcomes the stated commitment to return to the agreed level of 241 annual Article VI inspections in 2024. The United Kingdom is grateful for the detailed discussions held on the proposed Programme and Budget for 2022 and 2023. We recognise that a long period of zero nominal growth has put pressure on the Organisation's ability to deliver and with that in mind the UK is able to support the proposal before the Council. The effective functioning of the OPCW, including delivering effective capacity building support, relies on payment of assessed contributions in full and on time. The United Kingdom encourages all State Parties to fulfil this obligation.

Mr Chairman,

This Council meets again under constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. We look forward to restrictions continuing to ease. The United Kingdom welcomes the German initiative to forge agreement on ensuring OPCW business continuity in emergency circumstances and calls on others to join consensus on the proposal.

Mr Chairman,

This Executive Council has the important task of considering the re-appointment of Director-General Arias. The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the Director-General's candidacy for a second term, and will join other Council members in making a positive recommendation to the Conference. D-G Arias can be assured of the full support of the United Kingdom now and into the future.

The next few years are of great importance for the Organisation. The new Centre for Chemistry and Technology should allow the Technical Secretariat to reinforce its knowledge base in support of Verification, as well as to build a durable International Cooperation and Assistance offer that meets the needs of States Parties. As we look towards the end of destruction of declared stockpiles and the Review Conference, we should celebrate the successes. But we must also ensure the Organisation is equipped with both a strong vision for its future, and the capability to implement it on behalf of all States Parties. The United Kingdom will play a full and constructive role in these discussions.

Thank you Mr Chairman.