

# Thames staycationers urged to become #WaterWarriors this summer

- Record numbers expected to holiday at home this summer
- Visitors urged to 'know before you go' to the country's blue spaces

Staycationers are being urged to become #WaterWarriors and make the right choices when visiting beaches, rivers and lakes this summer in a new Environment Agency campaign launched today.

Record numbers are expected to holiday at home this summer due to ongoing coronavirus uncertainties, with an estimated 30 million people expected to visit our beaches (source: [RNLI](#)), and still more visiting rivers and lakes across the country.

Staycationers are being encouraged to consider how their actions, whether at home or on holiday, can affect water quality and to remember some simple actions they can take to protect blue spaces for everyone:

- only flush the 3Ps – pee, poo and paper
- never pour fats and oils down the sink
- never flush wet wipes and sanitary products down the loo
- always take your rubbish away from the beach
- always bag and bin your dog's poo
- never pour waste liquids or throw litter down surface water drains

Visitors to bathing waters are being encouraged to 'know before you go' by checking the Environment Agency's [Swimfo website](#), which provides instant, easy access to information on over 400 bathing waters in England, including the latest water quality classification – and, for some bathing waters, when warnings are issued due to the temporary effects on water quality after a rainy day or high tides.

Having this information at the fingertips ensures people have the most up-to-date information before they take the plunge. Joint advice with Public Health England is also available on open water swimming – that's swimming anywhere that isn't a public pool – at [Swim healthy](#).

Julia Simpson, Deputy Director, Environment Agency, Thames area said:

It's great to take time out to enjoy our environment around us. Whether you're spending time at home, visiting the countryside or travelling to the coast we're asking people to be aware of their actions.

By taking some simple steps we can all help protect the quality of water in our rivers, lakes and bathing waters – our blue spaces – for everyone to continue to enjoy this summer.

David Dangerfield, Director for Water, Land and Biodiversity for the Environment Agency, said:

With more people than ever taking a staycation and enjoying time in and around England's blue spaces, be it beaches, rivers or lakes this summer, it's vital to know how we can all protect them.

That's why this summer we're calling on people to check the Swimfo site for bathing water quality and follow #WaterWarriors on our social media channels.

Although the standard of bathing water quality in England is very high, it is always a good idea to check the water quality and whether any pollution warnings are in force. With the potential for some beaches being very crowded this summer, it's also an opportunity to search out some of the quieter spots. We want people to use the water safely, be aware of the risks and seek the right advice before taking the plunge.

As the environmental regulator, the Environment Agency plays a key role in protecting and enhancing blue spaces, but it's important to remember that individual actions really do count. Small actions in the home or at holiday accommodation can have a damaging impact on water quality. Wet wipes, kitchen towels, sanitary products, fats, oil and grease don't belong down the drain, but are still found in huge quantities, leading to build-up, blockages and poor water quality.

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## [Traffic officers helping to keep staycation traffic moving on key holiday route](#)

Highways England traffic officers have been drafted in to patrol key sections of the A30 in Cornwall and Devon during the busy summer months, and are on hand to deal with everything from live lane breakdowns and road traffic collisions to debris clearance.

This is the third season that traffic officers have assisted Devon and Cornwall Police in keeping traffic moving on the main route into Cornwall. And this year patrols started even earlier as high-profile visitors from around the globe headed to Cornwall for the G7 summit at Carbis Bay.

Since May traffic officers have dealt with a variety of incidents; including a motor home fire near Fraddon and clearing the debris of a boat from both sides of the A30 near Okehampton after a car towing it was in collision with the central reservation barrier.

Last year traffic officers attended a total of 126 incidents in just two months and 2021 could be even busier. Record amounts of traffic headed into Cornwall for the late May bank holiday and – with the school holidays now under way – this summer could be the busiest on record if that trend continues.

South West Regional Director Andrew Page-Dove said:

With the end of lockdown, the number of people taking domestic holidays has rocketed and Cornwall is a key destination. We've already been busy keeping routes flowing for G7 traffic and we're now providing support and assistance to drivers in what could be our busiest summer yet.

We're delighted we can provide seasonal support and this year we've added even more patrols on the A30 when holidays will be especially important to people. It's likely to be a very demanding season but our traffic officers are more than ready to deal with whatever comes their way.

Our patrols provide real value, to both our police and the travelling public, and to the Cornwall economy as a whole, and we are already planning how we can continue this service in the future.

The patrols cover the A30 between Lifton Down to Carland Cross, and help Devon and Cornwall Police to meet the demands of increased traffic volumes and related incidents on the A30 in Cornwall and neighbouring Devon.

Traffic officers currently assist drivers in any difficulty, co-ordinate the resources of the emergency services, manage traffic to reduce incident-related congestion and clear debris from the carriageways.

Superintendent Adrian Leisk, Alliance Roads Policing Strategic Lead, said:

We are delighted to be again closely working in partnership with Highways England's traffic officers in Cornwall with the aim of keeping the A30 running as smoothly as possible. Traffic Officers play a key role in dealing with collisions and incidents on the route, reducing congestion and delays to journeys as a result.

We really do need the motoring public's support in ensuring that their vehicles are roadworthy, as these simple checks can reduce the chances of you being involved in a breakdown.

Alison Hernandez, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, chairman of the Vision Zero South West road safety partnership and national APCC lead for road safety, has also welcomed the A30 patrols. She said:

It's fantastic to have this vital route supported by Highways England officers. Tourism is the lifeblood of the South West economy which makes us the No 1 domestic tourist destination in the country. Increasing any visible presence on our roads that can help make journeys safer is to be warmly welcomed.

As a partner in Vision Zero South West, Highways England traffic officers will also be an important source of post-crash care, which is a key theme in the partnership's ambition to make our roads completely free of serious and fatal collisions.

Highways England's Traffic Officer service patrols England's motorways and major A roads, helping to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

Traffic officers are not an enforcement agency, but they do have the power to stop and direct traffic, close lanes and carriageways and manage traffic. Road users must obey their directions.

As well as incident management, they also deal with broken down and abandoned vehicles on the strategic road network, recovering vehicles that are causing a blockage or hazard, and ensure that the scene of an incident is safe, for road users and working partners.

As the nation's Covid-19 national lockdown comes to an end, Highways England is advising drivers to carry out essential vehicle checks before making long journeys.

Given the current restrictions around overseas travel restrictions, families are taking more domestic holidays this summer, and with most cars driven considerably less frequently during a year of lockdown, vehicle checks are more important than ever.

Poor tyre pressure and over-worn tyres cause accidents and according to research commissioned by Highways England:

- one in five (20%) motorway breakdowns are caused by tyre problems
- only 1 in 6 (17%) drivers check tyre pressure before long journeys
- nearly a third of drivers (31%) are not confident checking tyre pressure

The advice from Highways England is simple: check your tyre pressure and the condition of your tyres, including the spare, before you set off on a long journey.

Look out for cuts or wear and make sure the tyres have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm, which is the legal limit. To check your tyre pressure, visit fuel and service station forecourts, most of which have an air machine for

checking and inflating your tyre pressure.

If you are stopped by the police and found with illegal tyres, you could receive a £2,500 fine and 3 penalty points per tyre.

You'll find more information on how to check over your vehicle on the [Highways England website](#).

Find out more about the [roles and responsibilities of a Highways England traffic officer](#).

## General enquiries

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

## Media enquiries

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

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- Check water quality before taking the plunge

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Record numbers are expected to holiday at home due to ongoing coronavirus uncertainties, with an estimated 30 million people expected to visit our beaches (source: [RNLI](#)), and still more visiting rivers and lakes across the country.

Many will flock to popular English beaches and lakes designated as bathing waters to swim and enjoy the country's blue spaces.

Visitors are being encouraged to 'know before you go' by checking the Environment Agency's [Swimfo website](#), which provides instant, easy access to information on over 400 bathing waters in England, including the latest water quality classification – and, for some bathing waters, when warnings are issued due to the temporary effects on water quality after a rainy day or high tides. Having this information at the fingertips ensures people have the most up-to-date information before they take the plunge.

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Sally Harvey, Deputy Director, Environment Agency, Kent, East Sussex & South London Area, said:

The stunning county that is Kent will see more people than ever taking a staycation and enjoying time in and around our blue spaces, be it beaches, rivers or lakes this summer; it’s vital to know how we can all protect them.

As the environmental regulator, the Environment Agency plays a key role in protecting and enhancing blue spaces, but it’s important to remember that individual actions really do count. Small actions in the home or at holiday accommodation can have a damaging impact on water quality. Wet wipes, kitchen towels, sanitary products, fats, oil and grease don’t belong down the drain, but are still found in huge quantities, leading to build-up, blockages and poor water quality.

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**[New £53 million funding for UK](#)**

# manufacturers to boost competitiveness through digital tech

- £53 million of government funding to help propel the latest breakthroughs in digital manufacturing and support adoption by businesses of all sizes
- five new research centres, a new digital supply chain innovation hub, and 37 individual projects will benefit from new funding to help digitalise and transform manufacturing supply chains
- investment to support manufacturers right across the UK, helping them build back better by increasing productivity and boosting competitiveness

Five brand new digital manufacturing research centres and projects to help supply chains become more productive are among recipients of £53 million of new government funding to drive the development of the latest digital manufacturing technologies, Investment Minister Lord Grimstone announced today.

The funding has been awarded through the national Made Smarter programme, a collaboration between UK government and industry designed to support the development and increase use of these emerging technologies. Adoption of the latest data-driven innovations, such as use of AI and blockchain in supply chains, or advanced robotics and smart machines in manufacturing, will help manufacturers to increase productivity, become more sustainable and build back better from the pandemic.

Nearly £25 million will be invested in five new industry-sponsored research centres set up around the UK, including at the University of Strathclyde and University of Nottingham, to accelerate the development of cutting-edge digital solutions that can transform manufacturing businesses across many sectors.

Based in universities throughout the UK, they will help to make supply chains faster, more efficient, and more resilient. Each centre will focus on a different area of manufacturing and include:

- Digital Medicines Manufacturing Research Centre, based in Strathclyde, Cambridge and Loughborough Universities, aims to create digital supply chains that enable medicines to be supplied on demand and enable clinical trials to operate more flexibly
- Research Centre for Smart, Collaborative Industrial Robotics, based in Loughborough, Strathclyde, Cranfield, Bristol and Warwick Universities, will look to eliminate barriers to adopting robotics and accelerate their widespread use in manufacturing
- Research Centre for Connected Factories, based in Nottingham, Cambridge and Sheffield Universities, will work to create a 'Morphing Factory' where production can be easily repurposed in response to changing market

demand, for example, during the pandemic when drinks manufacturers have transformed their production lines to make hand sanitizer

- Materials Made Smarter Research Centre, based in Strathclyde, Cambridge and Loughborough Universities, will work on overcoming technological challenges preventing adoption of new materials and manufacturing processes needed to become more sustainable and help achieve net zero emissions
- People-Led Digitalisation, based in Bath, Nottingham and Loughborough Universities, aims to achieving the highest level of manufacturing productivity by increasing the digital knowledge and awareness of manufacturers

Minister for Investment, Lord Grimstone, said:

As we embark on a digital manufacturing revolution, we want to make sure our manufacturers are bolstered by the latest cutting-edge technology as we all work to build back better from the pandemic.

Improving productivity and becoming more competitive is not just about sophisticated manufacturing, but also about smarter manufacturing, and we want to make it as easy as possible for companies large and small to make the changes needed to take full advantage of the innovative technology being developed.

A further £18 million has been awarded through the Digital Supply Chain Competition to 37 winning projects to support their development of innovations designed to help manufacturing supply chains become more productive and sustainable. Some of the winning projects under the collaborate research and development funding are:

- Automotive company Jaguar Land Rover's project, investigating the use of blockchain technology when tanning leather to improve traceability and reducing environmental, social and economic risks
- Durham-based Pragmatic Printing SORT-IT project, aiming to use digital technology and intelligent automation to track and sort packaging waste for recycling
- Technology provider Circular, which has developed a blockchain platform enabling businesses to monitor and track the origin and quality of raw materials in their supply chain, including dynamic tracking of CO2 emissions
- Armagh-based Food for Thought's project, which is planning to improve the use of robotics and technology to increase food traceability and better use of cold storage infrastructure
- Perpetual Labs's project, which aims to create a digital model-driven approach to manufacturing which makes information accessible in one place in one standard language for all involved in the supply chain, allowing for improved work methods

£10 million in funding has also been awarded today to the new Made Smarter Innovation Digital Supply Chain Innovation Hub to develop breakthrough



solutions that create supply chains that are fully connected, resilient and sustainable.

Delivered through a collaboration led by Digital Catapult, and bringing together businesses, universities and research technology organisations, the new Hub network will help make innovation more accessible for a wide range of potential businesses, including manufacturers and technology providers large and small. The hub will provide them with access to clusters of test beds and other practical laboratories.

Made Smarter Innovation Challenge Director, UKRI, Chris Courtney, said:

Digital technologies have the power to radically transform how we manufacture and deliver the products and services of today and the future delivering a productive, sustainable and flexible manufacturing sector and enhancing the future of work within it. There are enormous opportunities to innovate in this area, we have world leading industries, a powerful scientific and research community and a vibrant technology sector. It is vital we form a vibrant connected ecosystem from applied research to industrialisation in order to fully capitalise on that potential.

We have seen tremendous demand for this area across all sectors, company sizes and locations, and real evidence of the vibrant community of innovators in the areas of digital manufacturing and supply chains. I'm excited to see how this powerful coalition transforms the future of manufacturing and its supply chains.

Jeremy Silver, CEO of Digital Catapult, said:

The opportunity for innovation in manufacturing supply chains is incredibly broad. The Made Smarter Digital Supply Chain Innovation Hub will demonstrate how the tangible impact of emerging digital technologies can affect the nation's supply chains, mitigating against the kinds of component shortages experienced during the pandemic, boosting efficiency, reducing waste, and supporting some of the UK's most important industrial sectors through fostering a culture of innovation.

Digital Catapult brings to the Hub its significant experience in driving ambitious innovation programmes and creating opportunities for businesses right across manufacturing sectors, as well as extensive experience in building major testbed facilities that provide real hands-on technology experience for businesses. Through this groundbreaking, UK-wide collaboration with leading organisations in industry, we hope to provide a lasting boost for the UK's world-leading manufacturing industries as they accelerate back to growth.

Today's announcements follow on from the £300 million joint government and industry funding made available through the Manufacturing Made Smarter Challenge and the £8 million government funding given to help small and medium sized manufacturers take advantage of industrial digital technology under the UK government's Made Smarter Adoption programme. The Made Smarter Adoption programme includes free impartial, expert advice, funded digital internships, access to specialised leadership and management training, as well as match funding for digital transformation projects.

Made Smarter was formed following a nationwide review into UK manufacturing that recommended three key changes:

- more ambitious leadership
- more innovation in developing new technologies
- faster implementation and adoption of those technologies

It will be boosting the digital skills of industry leaders, bringing businesses and research development together to develop new technology, and helping makers embrace new digital tools. In doing so, we'll inspire the next industrial revolution and make the UK a leader in digital technologies.

[Visit the Made Smarter website for more information.](#)

The next round of collaborative research and development, focusing on Sustainable Smart Factories, will be open to applications in late 2021. For updates on opportunities, sign up to Made Smarter Innovation Network newsletter on the Made Smarter website to keep up to date on upcoming funding opportunities.

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## **Regulator warns against purchasing inaccurate infrared thermometers**

Press release

The public and healthcare professionals are being warned to take care when purchasing infrared thermometers online and to familiarise themselves with warning signs for poor quality products.



- The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is warning the public and healthcare professionals to take care when buying infrared thermometers and to know what to look for when purchasing online
- There has been an increase in the number of unreliable infrared thermometers which are available in the UK
- Infrared thermometers, like all medical devices fit for sale on the UK market, will carry a distinct CE or UKCA mark

The MHRA has seen an increase rise in the number of inaccurate infrared thermometers making their way onto the UK market –this is believed to be caused by the COVID-19 pandemic creating a massive increase in demand for these products.

Contactless infrared thermometers are widely used to check people's temperature as a method for screening for a raised temperature, and possible COVID-19 infection. Products marketed with claims that they can be used for a medical purpose are medical devices and therefore regulated by the MHRA.

**Graeme Tunbridge, Director of MHRA Devices division said:**

People in the UK are unknowingly buying poor quality infrared thermometers which do not meet the required standards of safety and performance.

It is important that people know what to look out for when purchasing these products, or any other medical devices online. You should always look for the CE or UKCA mark on any medical device – this will either be on the device or on its packaging, and that includes when you are buying these products online.

The MHRA advises that anyone considering purchasing an infrared thermometer should follow the guidance set out in the information for the public and professional users [here](#). People can also read our general advice and tips on purchasing medical devices [online here](#).

In addition, people should be aware that temperature screening is not a reliable method for detecting SARS-CoV-2 infection. In July 2020, the MHRA

issued a warning to manufacturers and suppliers of thermal cameras which cautioned them against making claims which directly relate to COVID-19 diagnosis.

The MHRA is responsible for enforcing the law on medical devices in the UK and has a range of a range of investigatory and enforcement powers to ensure their safety and quality. If suppliers fail to comply with the regulations then they may be subject to prosecution.

## Notes to editor

1. [The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#) is responsible for protecting and improving the health of millions of people every day through the effective regulation of all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
2. The [MHRA](#) is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). MHRA is an executive agency of the [Department of Health and Social Care](#).
3. Further detailed information on medical device regulation in the UK and CE / UKCA mark can be found on [this page](#)
4. For general advice and tips on purchasing medical products visit our web pages for [buying medical devices](#) and [buying medical products online](#)..

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