

# Surge testing to be deployed in Wakefield

Press release

Following the identification of a small number of confirmed cases of the Delta variant additional testing is being deployed in Wakefield.



NHS Test and Trace – in partnership with the local authority – is deploying additional testing and genomic sequencing in Wakefield.

Surge testing will commence on Thursday 24 June in Wakefield North, Wakefield South, Wakefield East, Pontefract North and Pontefract South, following the identification of a small number of confirmed cases of the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant. All the confirmed cases have been instructed to self-isolate and their contacts have been identified.

All adults aged 18 and over who live or work in these areas is strongly encouraged to take a COVID-19 PCR test, whether they are showing symptoms or not.

Enhanced contact tracing will be used for individuals testing positive with a variant of concern (VOC). This is where contact tracers look back over an extended period to determine the route of transmission.

By using PCR testing, positive results are sent for genomic sequencing at specialist laboratories, helping us to identify COVID-19 cases with a VOC and then prevent their spread.

If you have symptoms you should [book a free test online](#) or by phone. You can then go to a testing site or have a kit sent to your home. If you have no symptoms, you should visit your [local authority's website for more information](#).

People in this area should continue to make use of free twice-weekly rapid tests, commonly known as lateral flow devices, alongside the PCR test as part of surge testing.

## [Adoption of Marine Plans marks big step forward for England's seas](#)

The Government has adopted and published the North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans. The publication of these four marine plans follows the adoption of the [East Marine Plan](#) in 2014 and the [South Marine Plan](#) in 2018. This means all England's seas – an area of approximately 230,000 square kilometres – a third larger than the total land area of England – are covered by Marine Plans.

For the first time, England has a complete and integrated marine planning framework to manage how we use, develop, protect and enhance our marine environment. Marine Plans will guide developers, planning authorities and other decision-makers so that their activities happen in a sustainable and coordinated way.

The four latest Plans, produced by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, are the culmination of four years of engagement and policy development with businesses, wildlife and maritime charities, local authorities, representative organisations and individuals across communities around England's coasts.

The Marine Plan documents can be found at the following locations:

The full suite of Plans are covered in the MMO's digital system, Explore Marine Plans, which takes into account everything that exists in the local area, from wrecks and items of archaeological interest to marine wildlife, from existing uses such as cables to dredging or fishing, and applies the existing policies.

### **Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow said:**

The completion of a comprehensive set of Marine Plans to cover all of England's waters is a significant milestone in our ambition to create healthy and biologically diverse seas and oceans, achieving one of the key commitments of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

For the first time, England has a complete and integrated marine planning framework to manage how we use, develop, protect and enhance our marine environment, ensuring sustainable development in our seas.

## **MMO's Chief Executive Officer Tom McCormack said:**

Having Marine Plans in place to guide how we manage our seas is a massive step forward in this marine super year. Providing one comprehensive view of existing evidence, research and policy about the coasts, estuaries and tidal waters around England's seas, Marine Plans are now the most essential tool in the box for those making the decisions about how we use – and protect – our seas for the future.

The Plans provide the vital framework for us all to work together to achieve a balance between sustainable use of our seas and protecting our precious marine environment.

## **MMO's Director of Licensing, Marine Planning and Global, Trudi Wakelin said:**

The completion of Marine Plans for the whole of England's seas enables a paradigm shift in marine management for the future. It has involved many of our stakeholders and partner organisations and I'd like to thank them for working with us over the last few years to bring the Plans to this stage.

The work is never finished, as the Plans are updated with new research or piece of evidence and every new development that comes on stream. Over the next few months, we will be working with everyone interested to ensure that the Plans are understood and used effectively, whether the aim is to build the biggest offshore windfarm or the smallest jetty.

Working together we have the potential to make a huge difference to how our seas are protected and developed for generations to come.

Marine planning addresses the key issues for the marine area, including the coast, estuaries and tidal waters, as well as developments that impact on these areas. The plans include a vision, objectives and detailed policies on how these objectives will be achieved.

The MMO is now working with decision-makers across each marine plan area to ensure successful implementation of the newly adopted marine plans. Each marine plan has a 20-year horizon. To support ongoing improvements, the MMO must monitor and report to Parliament on the effectiveness of adopted marine plans every three years.

The [Explore Marine Plans](#) digital service provides an online, interactive resource for viewing marine planning policies, evidence, and supporting information. It allows users to consider multiple sources of information at a resolution relevant to their interest.

- There are 11 English Marine Plan areas that cover the inshore and offshore waters of the English marine area. Six documents have been prepared, combining adjacent inshore and offshore marine plans.
- Detailed maps of all the English Marine Plan areas can be found at [GOV.UK](#) and [Explore Marine Plans](#).
- The MMO has produced a short '[What is marine planning?](#)' animation to help explain marine planning available online at [GOV.UK](#).
- The North East Marine Plan covers approximately 687 kilometres of coastline and over 56,000 square kilometres of sea, the plans stretch from the Scottish Border in Northumberland to Flamborough Head in Yorkshire.
- The North West Inshore Marine Plan stretches from the Solway Firth border with Scotland to the River Dee border with Wales, taking in approximately 4,900 square kilometres of sea. The North West Offshore Marine Plan area covers a total of approximately 2,200 square kilometres of sea. The marine areas of Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man border the North West Marine Plan areas.
- The South East Marine Plan covers an area of approximately 1,400 kilometres of coastline and over 3,900 square kilometres of sea; the plan area stretches from Felixstowe in Suffolk to south west of Dover in Kent.
- The South West Marine Plans cover approximately 2,000 kilometres of coastline and over 84,000 square kilometres of sea, stretching from the River Severn border with Wales to the River Dart in Devon.
- The MMO has marine planning officers available to support stakeholders in each marine plan area. To contact your local marine planner please email [planning@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:planning@marinemanagement.org.uk).

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## [Scottish GDP Figures April 2021](#)

News story

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack responds to the latest Scottish GDP figures



Commenting on today's [Scottish GDP Figures](#), Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

The UK Government has taken swift and robust action to deal with the pandemic. We have supported more than 900,000 Scottish jobs, given thousands of businesses vital loans, and VAT cuts have kept firms in the hardest hit sectors afloat.

On top of this direct support, the Scottish Government has received more than £14.5 billion in additional funding. And the successful UK-Government-funded vaccine programme is giving us optimism for the future.

We are beginning to emerge from these uncertain times, and three consecutive months of growth is encouraging. But we know we still have a huge amount to do to recover our economy, and that families and businesses across Scotland still need our help.

A strong and stable recovery is the UK Government's sole priority. Growth deals across Scotland have seen investment of £1.5 billion and our new UK-wide funding programmes will benefit communities right across the UK.

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## [Foreign Secretary statement on closure of Apple Daily in Hong Kong](#)

Press release

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab comments on the closure of the Apple Daily newspaper in Hong Kong.



Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The forced closure of Apple Daily by the Hong Kong authorities is a chilling blow to freedom of expression in Hong Kong.

It is crystal clear that the powers under the National Security Law are being used as a tool to curtail freedoms and punish dissent – rather than keep public order.

The Chinese government undertook to protect press freedom and freedom of speech in Hong Kong under the UK-Sino Joint Declaration. It must keep its promises, and stand by the commitments it freely assumed.

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## [Decommissioning agreement reached on advanced gas cool reactor \(AGR\) nuclear power stations](#)

- New decommissioning arrangements reached with EDF for 7 advanced gas cool reactors (AGRs) due to come offline by 2030
- deal reached for Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to work with EDF to ensure AGR nuclear sites remain safe and secure for future, with no impact on the UK's energy supply
- British taxpayer is estimated to save upwards of £1 billion thanks to new streamlined arrangement

The UK government and EDF have agreed improved arrangements to deliver the safe and efficient decommissioning of Britain's 7 AGR stations, due to reach the end of their operational lives this decade.

The deal, negotiated by the government with EDF and signed today (Wednesday 23 June), will save the taxpayer an estimated £1 billion, as EDF and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) forge a new partnership.

The UK's AGR power stations have long been scheduled to reach the end of their working lives on a rolling basis by 2030, with EDF announcing that the first, Dungeness B power station, has now closed.

Their closure will not affect the UK's energy supply, as energy from renewables has more than quadrupled since 2010. The UK government has also committed to making a final investment decision on at least one large-scale nuclear power station by the end of this Parliament, alongside harnessing new and advanced nuclear technology.

Today's arrangement comes as the Business and Energy Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, exercises an option to deliver better value for money for the taxpayer in the decommissioning of AGR nuclear reactors. It will mean EDF will aim to shorten the time they take to safely remove the fuel from the power stations as they come offline, before working closely with the NDA to transfer ownership of the stations to the NDA.

With the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority currently decommissioning older Magnox stations, their expertise and the economies of scale of working on these and the AGR nuclear reactors combined, will ensure the long-term clean-up of these sites is done more efficiently – helping save the taxpayer an estimated £1 billion.

Minister of State for Energy, Anne Marie Trevelyan, said:

Today's deal marks an important milestone in managing the legacy of our older nuclear power stations, ensuring these stations are decommissioned safely and efficiently. By using the unique expertise of both EDF and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, we will ensure costs are reduced, saving the taxpayer an estimated £1 billion.

It forms part of our wider commitment to the future of nuclear energy, including looking to reach a final investment decision on at least one nuclear power station by the end of this Parliament, alongside harnessing new and exciting advanced nuclear technology.

Chief Executive of EDF, Simone Rossi, said:

We are committed to delivering value to the taxpayer via the NLF and the revised arrangements provide the certainty we need to plan and deliver safe and cost-effective defueling. The arrangements also provide our employees and supply chain partners important clarity over jobs for the coming years.

We look forward to building on our collaborative partnership with

the NDA to ensure successful defueling with Sellafield and a seamless transfer of the AGR stations to Magnox.

Once a nuclear station closes, the first stage of clean up requires all the nuclear fuel to be removed from the station (defueling), before the second phase of decommissioning begins. This involves the initial dismantling and removal of contaminated parts, before the stations enter abeyance – care and maintenance to allow radioactive materials in reactors to decay.

EDF had originally been responsible for total lifetime decommissioning of the AGR stations, which comprise Torness and Hunterston B in Scotland, Dungeness B in Kent, Hartlepool in Teesside, Heysham 1 and Heysham 2 in Lancashire and Hinkley Point B in Somerset. The revised arrangements will retain their involvement, while making the most of the expertise of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. It will also enhance the government's oversight of the long-term decommissioning programme and save the taxpayer money.

Chief Executive of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, David Peattie, said:

We are delighted to have been directed by government to take on the future ownership of the 7 EDF advanced gas reactor sites for future decommissioning. The work will be undertaken by our subsidiary Magnox Ltd and this decision is a testament of the skills, knowledge and experience held in the NDA and Magnox.

This work is of national importance and we now look forward to working with EDF to ensure the seamless transfer of stations in the coming years.

Chair of the Nuclear Liabilities Fund, Richard Wohanka, said:

These revised arrangements will form a sound basis for the safe decommissioning of the AGR stations and we welcome the renewed focus on collaboration between all parties. The Trustees of the NLF look forward to a continuing strong and supportive working relationship with BEIS, EDF and NDA over the course of the decommissioning programme.

This arrangement does not cover other nuclear power stations. As part of the investment agreement, operators of new nuclear sites such as Hinkley C are legally obliged to meet the full costs of decommissioning and their full share of waste management and disposal costs, ensuring taxpayers never have to pick up the cost.

See [further details of the agreement](#).

EDF will continue to use the [Nuclear Liabilities Fund Limited \(NLF\)](#) to defuel



the sites. The fund was established by HM Government on 28 March 1996 as part of the privatisation arrangements for British Energy plc (now EDF Nuclear Generation Limited ('EDFE')) which owned the 7 AGR reactors. The NLF is wholly owned by the Nuclear Trust, established between EDFE, the Secretary of State and 5 trustees.

The NLF receives and holds monies, investments, and other assets in a segregated decommissioning fund, to meet certain costs as set out in the revised arrangements of decommissioning EDF's 8 nuclear power stations that are currently operating in the UK.

EDF will complete the first stage of the agreement announced today by removing the fuel from the stations under a new incentive arrangement, which means they can earn up to £100 million for good performance but face up to £100 million in penalty for poor performance.

The agreement reached with EDF does not include Sizewell B station, which uses a different technology (Pressurised Water Reactor), and is scheduled to continue operating until 2035. It also does not cover new nuclear power stations, such as Hinkley Point C station, which is currently under construction.