

Protecting the marine environment is vital say public

Whether its rambling along coastal paths, walking the dog or visiting coastal heritage sites, a new survey has revealed the overwhelming value the public feel the marine environment offers to their mental and physical health. However, around half of the 12,000 people surveyed also expressed concern about our seas, with over 80% of those taking part saying how crucial it is to protect our ocean.

Almost 70% of people see marine litter and plastic pollution as the greatest threats to our marine environment, with over half saying they believe regulating the use of single use plastics is one of the main ways we can address these issues. The public continue to take action at home, with roughly 4 out of 5 recycling more over the last 12 months, and 70% reducing their use of single use plastics.

The survey, published by Defra in collaboration with the Ocean Conservation Trust, the Scottish Government and Natural Resources Wales, sheds light on public awareness, knowledge and attitudes surrounding the marine environment.

Minister for Marine, Lord Benyon said:

“This survey highlights the immense value that the general public place on our ocean and marine environment as well as their willingness to take action to help to preserve it.

“As a government we are determined to continue to build on the protective measures we already have in place in our Marine Protected Areas alongside introducing further restrictions on single use plastic.

“We are also championing the goal of protecting 30 per cent of the global ocean by 2030 to help conserve our marine environment that is evidently precious to many.”

Roughly 4 in 5 people believe spending time in the marine environment results in good mental health; and over half found it to be a good source of social connection and a way to spend time with family and friends. Around 70% believe visits to the coast are also good for their physical health. England’s coastal path, being established by Natural England, will be the longest continuous coastal walking route in the world once complete, and a previous [report](#) from Natural England found that 97% of people felt refreshed and revitalised as a result of their visit.

The survey also shows that the public consider the ocean and marine environment as fragile resources that are highly valuable when it comes to education, general life enjoyment and overall wellbeing. Many of the respondents have carried out activities to protect the environment, including changes to lifestyle choices and signing petitions, and over 80% said they

support the creation of Marine Protected Areas.

Nicola Bridge, Head of Advocacy and Engagement from the Ocean Conservation Trust said:

“As an Ocean conservation charity, understanding Ocean Literacy levels in the UK is vital to help us to protect the future of our Ocean. Someone who is Ocean literate is more likely to act in ways that support the health of our Ocean. At the OCT, our goal is to support as many people as possible to connect to the Ocean, becoming ‘Ocean literate’ and thinking about their impact on the Ocean in their daily choices.

“The results from this survey will be an important tool to help us shape our public engagement and education programmes. It is uplifting to see more and more people taking action to increase their positive impact on the Ocean, which is a great baseline for us to work from.”

In June this year, the UK Government joined other world leaders at the UN Ocean Conference to announce new initiatives to protect the global marine environment, marking a significant step forward in our mission to protect at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030. At home, the UK has a strong track record in marine conservation, with 374 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) already in place. The comprehensive network of MPAs provides protection for just over 38% of UK waters, and in England, nearly 60% of the 178 English MPAs are already protected from damaging fishing gear, with the aim to have all 40 offshore sites protected from damaging fishing activity by 2024.

The UK has also been a leading voice in attempts to tackle marine plastic pollution, [co-sponsoring a proposal to prepare a new treaty](#) and being a founding member of the High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution, a group of more than 30 countries calling for a target under the treaty to stop plastic from flowing into our lands and ocean by 2040. This builds on the UK’s world-leading efforts to tackle plastic pollution at home. We have so far introduced a plastic packaging tax on packaging that contains less than 30% recycled plastic, a ban on microbeads in rinse-off personal care products, and measures to restrict the supply of plastic straws, plastic drink stirrers and plastic-stemmed cotton buds.

This report follows the first meeting of the [UK Dialogues on Ocean Plastics](#) this month which marked a major step in developing a legally-binding global treaty that aims to end plastic pollution by 2040.

It also comes shortly after COP27 where the UK Government has [continued to push for progress on ocean commitments](#), including announcing an additional £12 million to the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA) to help protect our ocean and vulnerable coastal communities.

Notes to editors:

- The Defra Ocean Literacy headline findings report will be available online shortly. For a copy of the report, please email Defra press office.

- The Scottish Government Ocean Literacy headline findings report can be found [here](#).
- The Natural Resources Wales Ocean Literacy headline findings report can be found [here](#).
- The term 'Ocean Literacy' means an understanding of the ocean's influence on a person and their influence on the ocean. Across England, over 7000 people over the age of 16 participated in the online survey; over 3,000 people responded to the Scotland survey; and over 2,000 people responded to the Wales survey.
- Following a pilot survey in 2021, this is the first year that Scottish Government have taken part in the survey, and Northern Ireland also plan to develop their own, making this a nationwide endeavour to tackle issues related to the marine environment. The survey will be conducted every two years, allowing the government to track behaviours and attitudes over time.

[DASA seeks deployable anti-submarine warfare technologies](#)



- DASA has launched a new Market Exploration: Project CHARYBDIS
- Launched on behalf of the Royal Navy
- This Market Exploration is seeking technical solutions to deliver persistent, deployable uncrewed maritime assets

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is pleased to launch a new Market Exploration as a workstream of Project CHARYBDIS, which seeks systems and technologies that could deliver persistent, deployable uncrewed maritime assets.

This is one workstream of Project CHARYBDIS, which is being delivered by DASA & the [Submarine Delivery Agency \(SDA\)](#) on behalf of the [Royal Navy](#).

This [Market Exploration](#) is run on behalf of the Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA), and project CHARYBDIS is part of Navy Command's ASW Spearhead Programme. In support of this the SDA have commissioned DASA to search for related innovative technologies and sub-systems. The SDA are separately

commissioning concept studies from suppliers with expertise in overall integrated ASW systems, which is being advertised through the [Defence Sourcing Portal](#).

If you don't have a login you can still access this from the homepage:

- on the DSP homepage select 'View DSP Opportunities'
- select the drop down arrow on 'Enter Filter'
- select 'Project Info'
- insert 705492450 into 'Value' section
- search

Suppliers are welcome to participate in either or both workstreams.

Do you have an innovative solution? [Read the full Market Exploration now and submit your idea.](#)

Exploring underwater security systems and their capabilities

Our Market Exploration aims to identify, prototype, trial and deliver technologies that could support persistent deployable uncrewed capabilities to detect, classify, localise, and report underwater hostiles with a focus on wide areas of ocean.

We are looking for innovations (covering related technologies and systems) that could credibly result in an improvement to uncrewed anti-submarine warfare capability, focusing on the following areas:

- Sensors for underwater hostile threats, or their signature.
E.g. active acoustic, passive acoustic and non-acoustic.
- Platforms including uncrewed seabed, underwater, surface and air.
E.g. Overall structures, mobility options, tethering.
- Analysis including on-board uncrewed platforms, and off-board.
E.g. Data management, structuring and processing.
- Communication including in-water, above-water, through surface and tethered.
E.g. associated software, firmware, hardware and integration (e.g. standards).
- Launch & Recovery solutions across all domains and locations
E.g. Crewed and uncrewed options to deploy and recover systems
- Power sources spanning generation, storage and transfer.
E.g. Renewables and Non-renewables.
- Station-keeping and Propulsion, spanning related platforms
E.g. Tethering, Anchoring, Traditional rotary propulsion, Buoyancy systems, Biomimetics.
- Navigation, including internal and external.
- Data, including collection, processing, storage, management and wiping.
- Maintenance and sustainment options.
- Training, options including relevant simulations.
- Validation, options including test-targets.

Key dates

This market exploration is currently open. The deadline to submit proposals is midday on 20th January 2023.

Submit your innovation

Your innovative solution could help support the Royal Navy in their endeavours to maximise their operational advantage over adversaries. Innovations with a particular focus on leveraging advances in autonomy, and exploring new solutions beyond the current mixture of fixed infrastructure, short-term sonobuoys and high-value crewed platforms, will ensure the Royal Navy maintains their battle-winning edge.

[Read the full Market Exploration document and submit your innovative solution.](#)

Published 18 November 2022

Last updated 21 November 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 21 November 2022

Instructions on accessing the Defence Sourcing Portal (where the SDA are separately commissioning concept studies) has been added to the introduction/summary section at the front of the article.

2. 18 November 2022

First published.

[Bus Operator ordered to provide free services](#)

Press release

Stagecoach Devon Ltd, trading as Stagecoach South West, has been ordered by the region's Traffic Commissioner to provide free transport in Exeter for two weekends before Christmas.



The company attended a public inquiry over two days in June and October this year. A DVSA investigation found that around 21% of services were not running to timetable. The figure was accepted by the operator who put the cause down to a lack of drivers despite efforts to recruit and retain.

In his written decision following the inquiry, Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney noted that this was not a case of buses running more than one minute early or five minutes late (the accepted “window of tolerance”) but one of buses not running at all. Stagecoach’s own evidence was that between six and nine percent of registered mileage had been lost. He found that the operator had not been quick enough to act and was also critical of the information available to passengers. He set the shortcomings against the significant lack of drivers across the bus and coach sectors since the pandemic and EU exit, and the significant recent action to recruit and retain drivers.

In making the order for free services, estimated to cost around £120,000, Mr Rooney also recorded the company’s intent to keep a member of staff available at peak hours at Exeter Bus Station.

The decision can be found [here](#).

For any further details or enquiries, please contact:

Email: pressoffice@otc.gov.uk

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Published 18 November 2022

[Local authorities having to find homes for children at the ‘last minute’](#)

Press release

An Ofsted report published today, finds that local authorities are struggling to find homes for children coming into care.



Local authorities are struggling with a last minute dash to find homes for children coming into care due to the rising demand for places and a lack of suitable accommodation, according to Ofsted.

In a report published today, Ofsted found that the lack of enough suitable accommodation, and the need to find placements quickly, mean local authorities often struggle to plan for and meet their legal duty to offer sufficient accommodation for children in need of care. Difficulty forecasting demand and the need for urgent placements leaves local authorities with little option but to respond to individual cases as and when they arise.

Some local authorities told Ofsted that a lack of time and resources for forward planning results in a last-minute response when a child comes into care. Even when local authorities can plan, there is often a lack of available accommodation and care for children with more complex needs.

Local authorities also noted tension in their relationships with some private providers and their 'power' over the children's social care market. Some suggested that providers can cherry-pick certain children, making it difficult for them to follow their plan and fulfil their sufficiency duty. Conversely, other local authorities highlighted how positive relationships with providers mean they are better able to find homes for children with more complex needs and negotiate the cost of placements.

Ofsted's report draws on interviews and focus groups with social workers, regional commissioning groups and other local authority staff.

The research also found:

- local authorities' knowledge about providers and agencies is often held by individuals, which can be lost when there are staff changes
- some local authorities are concerned about the ageing population of foster carers in their area and their ability to plan for long term placements

Yvette Stanley, Ofsted's National Director for Regulation and Social Care:

Today's report lays bare some of the challenges facing local

authorities when it comes to finding the care children need. More children are coming into care, many with high-level physical and mental health needs. The need to find places for these children quickly overrides local authorities' long-term planning.

It is clear that these findings are set against the issues affecting children's social care nationally, and local authorities cannot solve the sufficiency issue on their own. There is a lack of suitable homes in the right places, particularly for children with the most complex needs – this needs to be addressed.

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Published 18 November 2022

[Vice Admiral appointed NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe](#)

Press release

Vice Admiral Blount will take up the appointment in the rank of Admiral in succession to General Sir Tim Radford in July 2023.



Vice Admiral Keith Blount is to be appointed NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR), demonstrating the UK's continued leadership in the Alliance. For the past three years, he has been Commander of NATO's Maritime Command.

Vice Admiral Blount will take up the appointment in the rank of Admiral in succession to General Sir Tim Radford in July 2023.

Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe serves as the second in command to the

Supreme Allied Commander Europe and concurrently as the deputy head of Allied Command Operations. This is the first time the role has been held by a representative from the Royal Navy.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I am delighted to congratulate Vice Admiral Keith Blount on his promotion to Admiral and appointment as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

His appointment demonstrates the United Kingdom's unwavering commitment to NATO and our leadership in European defence. I pay tribute to the contribution Vice Admiral Blount has made to the Royal Navy and the Alliance in his career to date. He brings extensive leadership experience and has served on operations across the globe alongside our allies and partners. I look forward to continuing to work with him and NATO.

Chief of the Defence Staff Admiral Sir Tony Radakin said:

Vice Admiral Blount's appointment as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe is testament to his leadership of NATO's Maritime Forces at this pivotal time for European security.

It also reflects the United Kingdom's commitment to the Alliance on land and in the air, our exceptional nuclear contribution, our growing cyber capabilities, and our pivotal role on NATO's northern flank, all of which make Britain the leading European ally.

Vice Admiral Keith Blount said:

It is an absolute honour to have been selected to succeed General Sir Tim Radford as the next Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

He has been instrumental in guiding NATO's work at a critical time for the Alliance and its Partners and I look forward to maintaining the momentum.

The strength of NATO lies with its people and we have a highly skilled and dedicated team that is laser focused on our collective defence.

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