

Natural capital tool launched to help protect the environment

An ambitious [new online resource](#) has been launched today (22 January) by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to help ensure better environmental decision-making by valuing our 'natural capital'.

For the first time, a comprehensive and integrated set of evidence and guidance about UK natural capital is now accessible from one place. It is intended to help policy makers, businesses, landowners and public sector organisations make better planning decisions in order to protect and to boost natural capital.

'Natural capital' is the sum of our ecosystems, providing us with food, clean air and water, wildlife, energy, wood, recreation and protection from hazards. The natural capital approach will make it easier for public and private organisations to better assess and value the environment. This will help deliver benefits including long-term flood risk reduction, boosts to wildlife, improvements to water and air quality, and opportunities for biodiversity net gain.

The value of the environment and natural capital is routinely understated. For example, the [Office for National Statistics](#) estimate that England's woods and forests deliver a value of services estimated at £2.3 billion annually. Of this figure, only a small proportion – 10% – is in timber values. The rest of the value derives from other more 'hidden' benefits to society, such as human recreation and air pollution removal, which improve health, and carbon sequestration which can help combat climate change.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

Today's publication helps to put the natural environment at the heart of decision-making. It meets a commitment from our 25 Year Environment Plan to better incorporate the value of nature – known as natural capital – and the benefits the environment provides to us all.

This comes at a critical time where the protection of our environment is ever-more important in combatting climate change and reversing habitat loss.

The 'Enabling a Natural Capital Approach' (ENCA) project delivers on a commitment in [the government's 25 Year Environment Plan](#). The resource was developed in collaboration with experts from across Defra and its agencies and informed by the work of academic, professional and voluntary bodies such as the Valuing Nature Network, to ensure the best available evidence is included in a user-friendly way. Today's move will also help support the delivery of [Nature Recovery Networks – part of the government's landmark](#)

[Environment Bill](#).

Matthew Farrow, Executive Director of the Environmental Industries Commission (EIC) said:

Business has a vital role in delivering natural capital improvements across our communities and countryside. To do so it needs to adopt best practice and make decisions based on a consistent understanding of the available tools, resources and datasets.

In bringing together all the relevant resources in one place, ENCA will make a huge difference to the ability of businesses and their advisers to assess how their actions and investment decisions can be aligned with protecting and enhancing the natural environment on which we all rely. EIC is delighted to have provided member case studies for ENCA and looks forward to promoting it.

Professor Ian J. Bateman, Director of Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute (LEEP) University of Exeter said:

Ensuring that natural capital is embedded at the core of policy and decision-making is now key to government policy as seen with the HM Treasury Green Book guidelines for appraising public spending, the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and as recently as the Green Finance Strategy.

Yet information and guidance on how to implement the natural capital approach to decision making at the practical level is at best fragmented. There is a clear need for central government leadership on this. I and other academic colleagues believe Defra's ENCA will provide what is needed and we look forward to its arrival.

ENCA builds directly on HM Treasury's 'Green Book' guidance – a standard to which government policies and projects must be measured against, so that government departments fully take account of the natural environment in policy design and publically funded projects.

This meets the recommendation of the [Natural Capital Committee's Annual Report \(2019\)](#) to have robust values and resources when assessing environmental impacts.

Further information

- [Natural capital is the sum of our ecosystems](#), species, freshwater, land, soils, minerals, our air and our seas. These are all elements of nature that either directly or indirectly bring value to people and the country at large. They do this in many ways but chiefly by providing us with

food, clean air and water, wildlife, energy, wood, recreation and protection from hazards.

- For enquiries please contact: EnvironmentAnalysis@defra.gov.uk

December 2019 Transaction Data



In December:

- HM Land Registry completed more than 1,375,680 applications to change or query the Land Register
- the South East topped the table of regional applications with 313,823

HM Land Registry completed 1,375,682 applications in December compared with 1,771,880 in November and 1,274,000 last December, of which:

- 310,299 were applications for register updates compared with 355,399 in November
- 652,772 were applications for an official copy of a register compared with 912,853 in November
- 207,679 were search and hold queries (official searches) compared with 226,094 in November
- 17,402 were postal applications from non-account holders compared with 20,835 in November

Applications by region and country

Region/country	October applications	November applications	December applications
South East	430,303	404,786	313,823
Greater London	347,443	345,170	256,620
North West	227,567	206,020	156,919
South West	181,312	168,039	133,325
West Midlands	168,325	149,859	120,093
Yorkshire and the Humber	152,736	138,165	110,777

Region/country	October applications	November applications	December applications
East Midlands	138,606	124,538	100,028
North	91,825	81,318	64,881
East Anglia	79,314	72,626	56,073
Isles of Scilly	53	52	97
Wales	87,964	81,224	62,968
England and Wales (not assigned)	95	87	78
Total	1,905,543	1,771,884	1,375,682

Top 5 local authority areas

Top 5 local authority areas	October applications	Top 5 local authority areas	November applications	Top 5 local authority areas	December applications
Birmingham	29,114	Birmingham	26,875	Birmingham	20,979
Leeds	23,865	City of Westminster	23,596	City of Westminster	18,088
City of Westminster	23,722	Leeds	21,303	Leeds	16,802
Manchester	22,792	Cornwall	17,648	Cornwall	14,106
Liverpool	19,602	Manchester	16,777	Manchester	13,030

Top 5 customers

Top 5 customers	October applications	Top 5 customers	November applications	Top 5 customers	December applications
Infotrack Limited	59,349	Infotrack Limited	56,765	Enact	43,278
Enact	59,062	Enact	54,094	Infotrack Limited	42,603
O'Neill Patient	31,592	O'Neill Patient	31,687	O'Neill Patient	28,990
My Home Move Limited	20,505	WSP Management Services Ltd	23,169	Optima Legal Services	20,178
HBOS PLC Bank	19,669	Optima Legal Services	21,467	HBOS PLC Bank	16,755

[Access the full dataset on data.gov.uk](#)

Next publication

Transaction Data is published on the 15th working day of each month. The January data will be published at 11am on Friday 21 February 2020.

Written Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State Baroness Morgan of Cotes

On 9 January I instructed my officials to write to the Daily Mail and General Trust plc (DMGT) to inform them that I was 'minded to' issue a Public Interest Intervention Notice (PIIN). I can confirm today that I am issuing the PIIN.

This relates to concerns I have that there may be public interest considerations – as set out in section 58(2B) of Enterprise Act 2002 – that are relevant to the recent acquisition of JPI Media Publications Limited, and thus the i newspaper, by DMGT and that these concerns warrant further investigation.

I invited the Parties to submit representations to me, which they have done. I have noted their representations regarding protections for editorial independence, including commercial incentives for maintaining the editorial position of the i. However, I continue to believe that it may be the case that the public interest consideration of sufficient plurality of viewpoints in newspapers is relevant to this merger. I thus consider it appropriate to intervene in this matter.

At this stage, my decision to issue the PIIN triggers the requirement for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to report to me on jurisdictional and competition matters; and for Ofcom to report me on the media public interest consideration in section 58(2B) of the Enterprise Act 2002 – namely, the need for, to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable, a sufficient plurality of views in newspapers in each market for newspapers in the United Kingdom or a part of the United Kingdom. I have asked both the CMA and Ofcom to report back to me by 13 March 2020.

My role as the Secretary of State in this process is quasi-judicial and procedures are in place to ensure that I act independently and follow a process which is scrupulously fair, transparent and impartial.

DCMS will update Parliament once both reports from the regulators have been received and considered.

Thriving UK jobs market hits record high employment rate

The number in work has hit yet another record high and the unemployment rate remains at its lowest level since the mid-1970s as Britain's jobs market continues to flourish, new figures released yesterday (Tuesday 21 January 2020) show.

All regions throughout the UK are benefiting from an upturn in employment since 2010. The number in work climbs to a record high in the North West to 3.55 million.

And, with weekly pay still rising, outpacing inflation for a 22nd month in a row, workers nationwide can expect their money to go that bit further.

Contributing to the plummet in overall unemployment, women continue to benefit most from the thriving UK jobs market – with 317,000 more entering work in the last year alone to reach a record high.

Today's figures also show an uplift in people taking up quality careers offering real progression – as 3.1 million more people are in higher skilled work since 2010 – making up over 80% of the employment growth.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies said:

These figures show not only more people in work than ever before, but it's also pleasing to see alongside this a rise in those working in higher skilled roles. It means at the dawn of the decade the opportunities to progress in work are out there, with people already benefiting from another month of rising wages.

This, coupled with business confidence turning a corner, is paving the way for an even stronger jobs market in 2020.

And with unemployment at its lowest since the 1970s, our jobcentres go beyond getting people into work – they are about community and progression. Reaching out to more people, and supporting those in work to get ahead.

Read the [latest labour market statistics](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

Information for UK nationals in Switzerland and Liechtenstein

Published 7 December 2018

Last updated 25 February 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 25 February 2020

The readout for the Facebook Live Q&A from 4 February was published

2. 22 January 2020

We have added a readout for our Facebook Live Q&A session on the 21 January

3. 30 September 2019

We have added a readout of the Facebook Q&A on 24 September 2019.

4. 13 September 2019

We have added the dates of a new series of outreach events for Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

5. 2 August 2019

The dates of our outreach events have been updated.

6. 4 January 2019

We added a second sitting for the event in Zurich. Please note that many events are fully booked. We are looking into the possibility of providing additional capacity for some of our events, so please sign up for the waitlist.

7. 19 December 2018

We have added the information of an additional roadshow in Berne

8. 7 December 2018

First published.