



National
Bee Unit



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

National Bee Unit

Northern England Annual Report 2022

National Bee Unit Changes and Updates 2022

You may be wondering why there's only one report this year rather than separate documents for the North West and North East Regions. It is because Dhonn Atkinson, the Regional Bee Inspector (RBI) for the North East is currently seconded to assist with the avian influenza outbreaks across the country, so is not available at the time of writing to compile the North East report. Hopefully, Dhonn will return to his region in spring 2023.

During the 2022 season three northern based Seasonal Bee Inspectors (SBI) left the National Bee Unit (NBU). Phil Khorassandjian from the North West, and Adrian Wilford and Simon Oglesby from the North East. Phil joined the NBU in 2018, initially being a member of the North East Team. When the regional boundaries were changed Phil's geographical work area of South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire meant he transferred to the North West Team. Phil retired early in the 2022 season. Adrian joined the NBU in 2013 and was the inspector for the East Yorkshire area. Adrian retired at the end of the 2022 season. Simon joined the NBU in 2019 and was the inspector for the Lincolnshire area. Simon left during the summer of 2022. I would like to thank them for their service and wish them well for the future.

We have just completed a recruitment round to find replacements for Phil, Adrian, and Simon. Successful candidates will start their training early March 2023.

I would also like to welcome Kay Phillips to the North West Team. Kay joined the National Bee Unit in March 2022 as SBI for West Yorkshire. Kay has already made a huge contribution, working to identify and deal with foulbrood outbreaks throughout the summer.

National Bee Inspector Cristina Ruiz was on maternity leave from January and returned to the National Bee Unit in October 2022. Her maternity leave was covered by Dhonn Atkinson prior to his secondment. As a result, throughout the 2022 season SBI David Bough covered for Dhonn by taking over the role of North East RBI. David has done an excellent job, continuing to promote the close working relationship we have between the northern regions.

Finally, the National Bee Unit office also welcomed Samantha O'Toole in June to provide programme support alongside Diane Gillibrand.

You can use the post code search on the contacts page of BeeBase to check for your local SBI, who can be contacted on the numbers below from the beginning of April until the end of September. During the winter period of October to March, or if you cannot make contact, please direct all enquiries to the Regional Bee Inspector for your area.

Regional Bee Inspector	Area	Contact
Mark McLoughlin	North West Region	07500 891425
Seasonal Bee Inspectors	Area (North West Region)	Contact
Julia Hoggard	Cumbria, North West Yorkshire	07900 394303
Caroline Coughlin	Lancashire	07500 891423
Kay Phillips	West Yorkshire	07796 435125
Vacancy	South Yorkshire, West Derbyshire	
Regional Bee Inspector	Area	Contact
Dhonn Atkinson	North East Region	07775 119437
Seasonal Bee Inspectors	Area (North East Region)	Contact
Tim Roper	Derbyshire	07775 119441
David Bough	Yorkshire	07824 408973
Brian Murphy	Northumberland, Tyne & Wear	07747 765934
Keith Bartlem	North Yorkshire	07385 397936
Vacancy	East Yorkshire	
Vacancy	Lincolnshire	

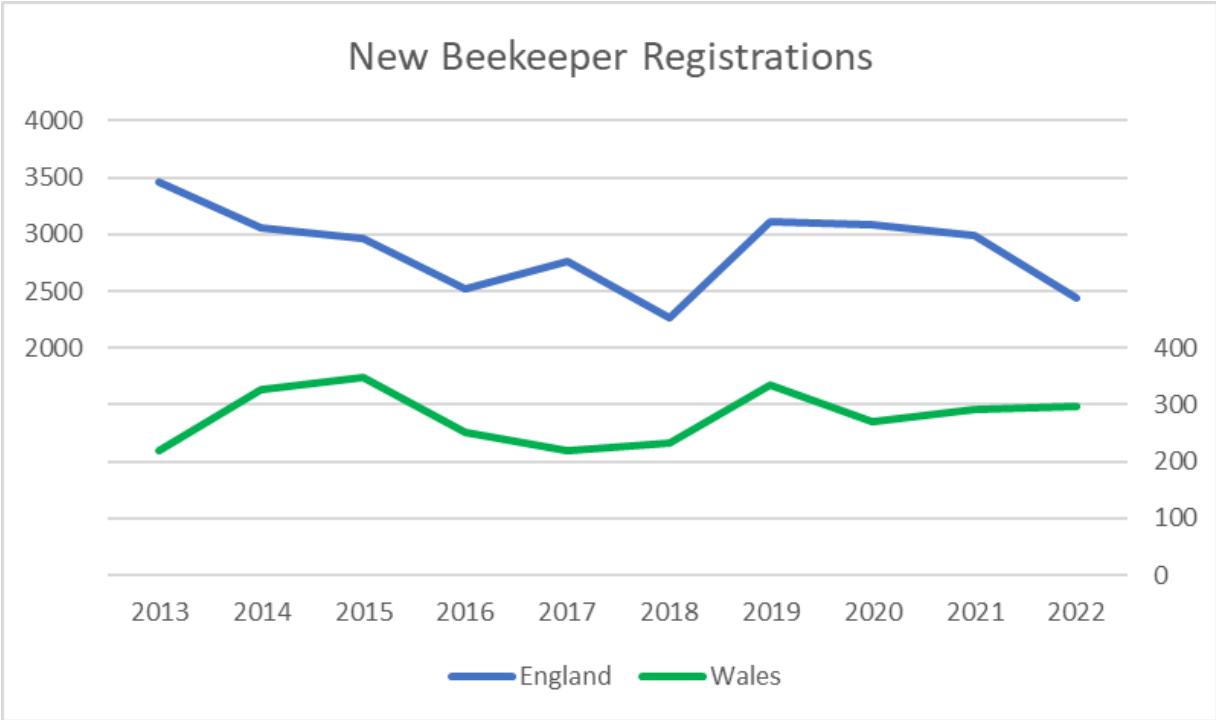
BeeBase Registrations

This year has seen the general trend for a decrease for new beekeeper registrations in England continue.

It is important for beekeepers to remember that being a member of a beekeeper's association does not mean that you are registered on BeeBase (the National Bee Unit's website and database). However, if you have been inspected by the National Bee Unit then your details will automatically be on BeeBase.

If you are registered then thank you, but please keep your apiary locations updated. If you have lost your password, there's a forgotten password link on the BeeBase login page. You can register online (www.nationalbeeunit.com), by contacting the NBU office on 0300 3030094 / nbu@apha.gov.uk or by contacting your SBI.

Registration is free and all your details are kept confidential. You can receive email alerts if foulbrood or exotic pests (including Asian Hornet) are found in the area where your apiaries are situated. Your registration also benefits the wider beekeeping community by allowing inspectors to know where to look for disease or pests so that outbreaks can be quickly brought under control.



Trends in new beekeeper registration in Northern England and England for the last decade (2022 data to end of October).

Beekeeper and hive numbers

There are currently 40,745 beekeepers registered on BeeBase in England. Between them they have 197,686 colonies in 54,650 apiaries, which is an average of 4.8 colonies per beekeeper and 3.6 colonies per apiary.

The North West and North East Regional statistics are reproduced below. The North West has a total of 5,504 current beekeepers registered, the North East 4,792. Furthermore, there are a total of 22,647 colonies and 7,094 apiaries registered for the North West, and 31,369 colonies and 6,521 apiaries registered in the North East. The actual figures are probably much higher due to unregistered beekeepers, also apiaries/colonies that have not been added to existing records. Beekeepers and apiaries that are not registered reduce the effectiveness of the response to disease or exotic pest outbreaks, as they could act as reservoirs for re-infection.

Almost 9,000 beekeepers updated their details on BeeBase during the 2021 hive count. The Hive Count provides a very useful indication of the number of managed colonies in the UK and helps to ensure that BeeBase records are kept up to date. Information about numbers and location of hives is very important for the National Bee Unit and Scottish Government inspectors in terms of preparing and planning for outbreaks of disease and exotic pests. Please take the time to complete the 2022 hive count which is live now and finishes on the 31st of December 2022.

Region	County	Current beekeepers	No of Current Apiaries	No of Colonies	Non-current beekeepers
North West England	Cheshire	936	1264	4348	436
	Cumbria	684	873	2980	762
	Derbyshire	765	1007	3148	333
	Greater Manchester	519	663	2313	354
	Lancashire	994	1208	3748	580
	Merseyside	409	556	1426	366
	West Yorkshire	1197	1523	4684	540
	NORTH WEST ENGLAND TOTALS	5504	7094	22647	3371
Region	County	Current beekeepers	No of Current Apiaries	No of Colonies	Non-current beekeepers
North East England	County Durham	359	470	1739	301
	East Yorkshire	351	468	4522	254
	Lincolnshire	1027	1451	6306	574
	North Yorkshire	1356	1896	8708	1317
	Northumberland	331	453	2714	445
	Nottinghamshire	575	779	3609	238
	South Yorkshire	583	717	2801	257
	Tyne & Wear	210	287	970	204

	NORTH EAST ENGLAND TOTALS	4792	6521	31369	3590
	Current beekeepers	No of Current Apiaries	No of Colonies	Non-current beekeepers	
England totals	40745	54650	197686	27960	

Inspections

During the 2022 season North West SBIs visited a total 294 apiaries and inspected 1,272 colonies. Ten colonies were destroyed due to foulbrood across five apiaries, and three colonies with European Foulbrood (EFB) were treated by shook-swarm. During the same period, North East SBIs visited 726 apiaries and inspected 3,794 colonies. Twenty-nine colonies were destroyed due to foulbrood across twenty apiaries, and thirty-seven colonies with EFB were treated by shook-swarm. Inspectors have also obtained honey samples for the Veterinary Medicines Directorate and have taken samples from sentinel apiaries for laboratory analysis.

Bee Health Days and other Events

The North West Team held two events in 2022. Stockport Bee Health Day (BHD) in May and Lancaster BHD in July. The events were well attended with fifty beekeepers at Stockport and forty-eight at Lancaster.



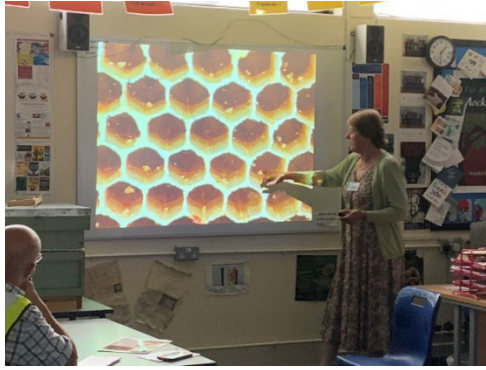
Caroline outlining the importance of biosecurity



Kay describing how to identify foulbrood in diseased comb

The events covered the same subjects namely Varroa, biosecurity, the continuing threat from Asian hornet, and a comb room for viewing live foulbrood and other diseases or conditions. I would like to thank David Bough for assisting Julia, Caroline, Kay and me on both days.

The North East Team held at bee health day in May, based on practical handling skills, near Morpeth, Northumberland. Approximately fifty beekeepers attended the event. RBI David Bough, SBI Adrian Wilford, SBI Keith Bartlem and SBI Brian Murphy gave practical demonstrations including equipment sterilisation, how to conduct a shook-swarm and how to introduce queens.



Julia pointing out what to look for in the comb (varroa)

Professor Giles Budge from Newcastle University was present and gave a talk on EFB. Our thanks to Giles for assisting on the day.



North East Region Bee Health Day May 2022

In September, inspectors from the North East and North West came together to run an Asian Hornet Team (AHT) training day at Harrogate, Yorkshire. This was the second joint event, the first being in 2021, where beekeepers learnt the basics of tracking and how AHTs could support the NBU with observations and public awareness. Currently only NBU inspectors can catch and release Asian hornets, as a licence to do so is required. However, should Asian hornet become established in the UK this may be reviewed to allow beekeepers to mirror the great work being done in Jersey by their volunteers.

In November we held the Northern England Regional Forum at Sand Hutton near York. These events were held in other regions during 2022, there being a hiatus in our area, mainly due to COVID restrictions, since Dhonn and I took over the role of regional bee inspectors. The purpose of the forum was to bring together representatives from the northern associations so we could give presentations on what we considered the top four issues that have concerned us, during 2022. This was not a definitive list and at future events we plan to cover other subject matter.

The subject matter for the day included an overview of the Healthy Bee Plan 2030 by Becky Clarkson (Healthy Bees Plan Manager at the NBU). I then talked about the threat from exotic pests and the sentinel apiary programmes. Victoria Tomkies from Fera Science Ltd gave an overview of Foulbrood Multi-Locus Sequence Typing (MLST), and how it informs our approach to tracing and treating foulbrood cases. Julia Hoggard discussed the continuing threat from Asian hornet, followed by Professor Giles Budge who outlined the current scientific knowledge about Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus.

The forum ended with Dr Ben Jones outlining some bee related research work currently being carried out by Fera Science Ltd. at Sand Hutton. The event was Chaired by Kay Phillips throughout the day.



Victoria Tomkies from Fera Science Ltd explaining her work on Multi-Locus Sequence-Typing – North of England Regional Forum 2022

My thanks to all who attended and were involved in the running of this event.

Disease and Pests

European Foulbrood (EFB) and American Foulbrood (AFB)

AFB was found in six colonies in the North West Region during the 2022, compared with three colonies in 2021. Keighley features both years, but it has now been found in the Bradford area too.

AFB 2022

County	Grid Square	Area	Positive tests	Month
West Yorkshire	SE04	KEIGHLEY	2	July
West Yorkshire	SE04	KEIGHLEY	1	August
West Yorkshire	SE13	BRADFORD	2	July
West Yorkshire	SE13	BRADFORD	1	September

EFB continues to be found in Derbyshire, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. EFB was found in South Yorkshire in 2021 but not in 2022. This could be the result of carrying an SBI vacancy for that area all season.

EFB 2022

County	Grid Square	Area	Positive tests	Month
Derbyshire	SK23	ETWALL	1	June
Derbyshire	SK24	BRAILSFORD	1	June
Derbyshire	SK32	MELBOURNE	8	June
Derbyshire	SK32	MELBOURNE	1	August
Derbyshire	SK33	DERBY	2	June
Derbyshire	SK33	DERBY	1	August
Derbyshire	SK34	BELPER	5	April
Derbyshire	SK34	BELPER	3	May
Derbyshire	SK34	BELPER	2	August
Derbyshire	SK35	WHATSTANDW ELL	4	May
Derbyshire	SK43	BORROWASH	10	July
Derbyshire	SK43	BORROWASH	2	August
Derbyshire	SK43	BORROWASH	1	September
Derbyshire	SK44	ILKESTON	1	June
Derbyshire	SK44	ILKESTON	1	July
North Yorkshire	SE37	RIPON	3	June
North Yorkshire	SE37	RIPON	1	July
North Yorkshire	SE44	THORPE ARCH	2	July
North Yorkshire	SE45	WHIXLEY	1	April
North Yorkshire	SE52	WEST HADDLESEY	1	August
North Yorkshire	SE54	COPMANTHOR PE	1	June
North Yorkshire	SE55	YORK WEST	1	June
North Yorkshire	SE56	HUBY	1	May
North Yorkshire	SE63	SELBY	2	June
North Yorkshire	SE87	THORPE BASSET	1	May
Nottinghamshire	SK63	COTGRAVE	1	April
West Yorkshire	SE23	WEST LEEDS	3	May
West Yorkshire	SE23	WEST LEEDS	4	August
West Yorkshire	SE53	EAST LEEDS	1	May
West Yorkshire	SE53	EAST LEEDS	4	August

Further details on the distribution of disease in the North of England can be found on the disease incidence pages of BeeBase at www.nationalbeeunit.com.



AFB ropiness test.



Contorted larvae with EFB

Varroa

Varroa remains one of the commonest significant problems that inspectors see. To maintain strong vigorous colonies, the NBU advice is to monitor and control Varroa when necessary. Control can be achieved by using biotechnical methods and authorised products as directed. Varroa treatments should be targeted before colonies start to produce their 'winter' bees but monitoring of Varroa levels throughout the season will help determine whether an earlier treatment is required.

Varroa acts as a vector for viruses which will reduce the longevity of the bees and so impact on the foraging capability of colonies during the summer. Colonies treated too late in the season will result in winter bees being affected by viruses and they will be weakened by the Varroa mites feeding on them. This may lead to colony mortality in the winter or early spring.

This year the Varroa treatments Bayvarol and PolyVar Yellow are no longer permitted for use in the UK. Formic Pro is **not** authorised for usage with supers present and if a honey super remains on the hive during treatment that honey may not be used for human consumption. The list of medicines registered and approved for use by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is available on their [website](#) together with the 'Summary of Product Characteristics' giving full details of use. For the full list, select 'Bees' on the drop-down list of species in the product search link.

To avoid Varroa mites becoming resistant to specific chemicals it is good policy to rotate your treatments on a regular basis.

There is a legal requirement that the use of any treatments is recorded, and these records must be kept for a minimum of five years. Full details can be found on this link -

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?sectionid=110>

BeeBase has pdf links to numerous free fact sheets including the 'Managing Varroa' advisory leaflet.

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167>



Collapsed colony - typical signs of late-stage Parasitic Mite Syndrome (Varroosis)

Exotic Pest Surveillance

As well as NBU inspectors carrying out specific exotic pest surveillance inspections (for Small Hive Beetle and Tropilaelaps mites), we also have a group of volunteer beekeepers who have apiaries near risk points and who specifically monitor their honeybee colonies for these exotic pest species on behalf of the NBU. These 'Voluntary Sentinel Apiary' (VSA) apiaries represent a valuable front-line early warning against exotic pest incursion.

Risk points include freight ports, plant importers, airports, crude hive product importers, honey and queen importers. The distribution of VSAs both near risk points and at random sites maximise the likelihood of early pest detection. VSA beekeepers are provided with a sampling kit and regularly examine their colonies according to standard protocols. Samples of hive debris are sent to the laboratory in June and September each season to be examined for the presence of Small Hive Beetle (SHB) and Tropilaelaps mites. Everything required is supplied including postage so there's no cost to the beekeeper to take part.

In addition, by agreement with the beekeeper, NBU inspectors monitor selected 'Enhanced Sentinel Apiaries' (ESA) three times each season near to areas deemed as high risk.

We are keen to hear from beekeepers with apiaries near to risk points who would like to join the VSA programme, or from beekeepers with local knowledge who wish to make us aware of high-risk points near them. If you are interested contact your Regional Bee Inspector or Seasonal Bee Inspector to discuss.

Yellow-legged Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrathorax*)

This year has seen continued low levels of confirmed Asian Hornet sightings in the UK with just one Asian Hornet nest found by NBU inspectors in a sycamore tree in the Rayleigh area of Essex on Friday 30th of September 2022, which was subsequently destroyed. This followed reports from a beekeeper in the area who had identified Asian hornets entering their greenhouse where the beekeeper was rendering wax. The nest was large compared to others previously found in the UK at approximately 40cm in diameter, local beekeepers were made aware via the Asian Hornet Teams (AHTs) and monitoring has continued in the area.

Single Asian hornets were also photographed and reported via the Asian Hornet Watch app in Chelmsford in Essex and Dover in Kent. No further insects were seen but local Asian Hornet Teams have been alerted and are continuing to observe forage and monitor insects in the area.



Chelmsford Asian hornet.



Rayleigh Asian hornet nest being held by RBI Dan Etheridge.

We are encouraging everyone to:

- download the free Asian Hornet Watch iPhone or Android app
- familiarise yourself with what the hornets and similar insects look like
- keep a look out on late summer flowering plants such as ivy where the hornets (and other insects) forage on the flowers.
- report suspect sightings using the 'Asian Hornet Watch' app, or by filling out an online report form, or by emailing alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk .

We in Northern England are currently at the northern edge of the Asian hornet's European range and by working together hope to keep this invasive species at bay and protect our nation's important pollinators.

Imports and exports of honey bees

Third Country rules now apply to import and export trade between the UK and EU member states. Movements of honey bees from Great Britain to Northern Ireland are treated as exports and so are also subject to these rules. Import rules do not apply to movements of honey bees from Northern Ireland to GB.

Imports

Honey bees imported from a Third Country must have an appropriate Export Health Certificate (EHC). The health certificate must be issued by the Third Country's Competent Authority or their Official Certifier. Currently only the import of queens (in cages with attendant workers) is permitted under Third Country rules, except from New Zealand where the import of packages of bees is also permitted.

Importers must notify all imports in advance via the IPAFFS system. From 1st November 2022, the health certificate for imports from EU countries must be uploaded onto IPAFFS (Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System) so that it can be viewed online. There is no longer a requirement for the original paper EHC document to accompany the consignment. Original documents will remain valid but, by providing an original document, this does not remove the requirement to upload an electronic version.

Imports from countries other than EU member states must enter via a Border Control Point (BCP). For now, imports from EU member states will continue to be checked at destination by a Bee Inspector on a risk basis; this approach is expected to change in 2023, with the exact date to be confirmed.

Exports

If you intend to export bees, you must ensure that the destination country permits imports from GB and that you can comply with their import conditions. It is the exporter's responsibility to do this.

If you export your bees to any country without the correct certification, the consignment may be rejected/destroyed by the destination country. If the consignment required an inspection prior to export and this was not carried out, the NBU would not be able to issue a certificate retrospectively.

From January 2022, Export Health Certificates for exports to EU countries must be signed by an Official Veterinarian (OV). For countries outside the EU, whether an OV is required to sign the EHC is determined by the authorities in the country of destination, so it is important for the exporter to check the requirements with them.

Exporting to EU countries

Only queen bees can be exported to EU countries. To export queen bees, you must obtain an Export Health Certificate and arrange for it to be signed by an OV. The OV must carry out a health inspection at the apiary before the certificate can be signed, and exporters should expect that there will be a charge for the services of an OV. The health certificate template can be found on GOV.UK, along with Notes for Guidance and information on how to contact an OV.

The OV will confirm whether a National Bee Unit inspector also needs to be present to support the OV at the health inspection. There is no separate charge for a bee inspector to be present.

The OV can find information about how to contact a Bee Inspector on BeeBase or contact the National Bee Unit at (nbu@apha.gov.uk). For exports to EU countries, a signed health certificate is valid for 10 days.

To keep up to date with the latest guidance on importing and exporting live honey bees, please visit the following link <https://nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?sectionid=47>

Finally

I would like to thank the North West and North East SBIs for all of their hard work this season. I would also like to thank them for their commitment and dedication to improving and maintaining Bee Health across the North of England.

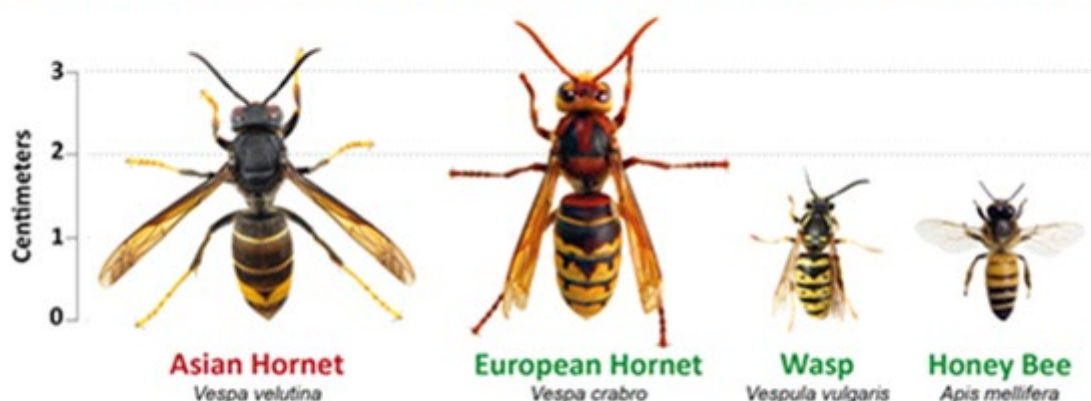
I'd like to also wish you all a successful and trouble free season next year, and please remember the NBU are here to help <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/>

Mark McLoughlin

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Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



[APHA Website](http://www.gov.uk/apha) | [Twitter](https://twitter.com/APHAgovuk) | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/aphagov) | [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/apha) | [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8)



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APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.