



 <p>Powered by Bing © GeoNames, HERE, MSFT, Microsoft</p>	<p>Intelligence related overwhelmingly to the North West region; as expected, intelligence was focused around coastal counties. Workers reported were often Chinese or British, male, and aged in their thirties.</p>	
<p>Trends</p> <p>Anecdotal reporting suggests that shellfish gathering is occurring more frequently. Generally, the trends seen in previous years have continued. However, foreign nationals have different methodologies compared with local gatherers. Persons associated with Chinese restaurants and takeaways are suspected to be organising groups of shellfish gatherers, though this is unconfirmed. This poses a public health risk if it enters the food chain.</p>		
<p>There is significant competition in the industry over licenses and supply. Information suggests there have been local tensions and disputes over access to gatherers.</p>		<p>Most reports concern cockling, followed by oysters, mussels and winkles. Bait digging is a potential emerging issue. Multiple tonnes of shellfish can be gathered at a time.</p>
<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>Fast moving tides and quick sands pose significant danger, leaving workers vulnerable to harm. Some of those involved are inexperienced and have limited protective equipment; reports suggest that drug users have been employed. Workers have been sighted crossing deep water in small, poor quality inflatable boats overloaded with shellfish.</p>		
<p>Methodologies</p> <p>Whilst family groups of shellfish gatherers are commonly identified, other groups appear more organised, with indicators of unlicensed gangmasters directing their activities. There is significant financial gain to be made from this industry; prices varied between £1 and £2.20 per kilogram. Some workers double-tide to increase their profits; such practices were used by a Chinese gangmaster convicted of the manslaughter of cockle pickers who drowned in 2004.</p>		
<p>Environmental Impact</p> <p>In addition to labour exploitation there is a significant environmental impact. Incorrect shellfish gathering has caused disturbance and damage to local areas. Cockle poaching enables individuals to fulfil orders.</p>		
	<p>Intelligence Gap</p> <p>How individuals are recruited into exploitative shellfish gathering</p> <hr/> <p>Risk</p> <p>Increasing use of violence linked to disputes over access to shellfish gatherers</p>	



Key Questions to Prevent and Identify Labour Exploitation



- Do you know and understand each level of your supply chain? Do you conduct background checks?
- What mechanisms are in place to understand high risk workers' recruitment and working conditions? Are these effective?
- Do you have a publicised reporting process for complaints by workers?
- Are contracts and conditions of employment provided to all workers?
- Are there routine audits regarding worker safety?
- Do you have an internal escalation process if you identify an issue of exploitation? Do you know who to contact?

What to consider when reporting intelligence

Example: Chinese workers are sleeping on the beach on the Wales coast. They are used for gathering shellfish during low tides by an unknown person.

What else? Provide more details about the workers involved – how many were sighted? Do any appear to be minors? Male or female? When were they seen? Have they been sighted before? Are there any health concerns? Is any more information known about a potential exploiter i.e. vehicles used, description?

Whilst not all factors may be known, any additional details will assist the GLAA in identifying people and locations involved for operational purposes and to improve our intelligence picture.



GLAA resources are available at <https://www.gla.gov.uk/publications/resources/> including a useful "Spotting the Signs" leaflet at <https://www.gla.gov.uk/media/4285/spot-the-signs-glaa.pdf>

More information about Shellfish Gathering is available at <https://www.gla.gov.uk/i-am-a/i-supply-workers/do-i-need-a-glaa-licence/which-activities-need-a-licence/shellfish-gathering/>

Who to Contact

Please report to the GLAA:

- Unlicensed trading in the regulated sector (agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering and any associated processing and packaging) across the UK.
- Labour market offences (non-payment of the National Minimum Wage, breach of Employment Agency Standards) in the regulated sector in England and Wales
- Individuals, labour users or labour providers who are suspected of modern slavery and human trafficking in any labour industry (excluding sexual exploitation), or individuals who are potential victims of such activity in England and Wales.

Please report to partners:

- Issues of National Minimum Wage only, in sectors that are not GLAA regulated to the HMRC NMW team (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/national-minimum-wage-enquiries-and-complaints>)

- Health and safety issues only (all sectors) to the Health and Safety Executive (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm>)
- Workplace relations and employment law issues (including contract issues, discrimination and grievances) to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) (<https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1410>)
- When there is an immediate threat to life contact the police emergency number.
- To report labour exploitation, human trafficking or modern slavery outside of the regulated sectors in Northern Ireland or Scotland, contact the local police service

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