

AIM TO SUSTAIN UPLAND STANDARDS (GROUSE)



Foreword

The Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme allows game farms, game shoots and estates to demonstrate publicly that they operate to the highest standards. The standards laid out in this document cover 'best practice' across a broad spectrum of topics applicable to game management and shooting on upland estates and shoots.

These standards include assessment of animal health and welfare, food quality, environmental enhancement and protection, staff training and health and safety. Certified Game Assurance Scheme members will have produced evidence during a robust assessment process to show how they meet the standards that make up this scheme and earn their certified status.

The scheme gives confidence to the public and consumers that where they see the Aim to Sustain assurance stamp, the shoot operates to the highest standards and produces high quality wild game meat, having been through the independent assessment process.

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Guidance in reference column:

- R. A Record will be required at audit.
- T. A Template is available to record evidence. These templates can be found in the Game Assurance Scheme Handbook and can be downloaded from the Aim to Sustain website.

Section 1 - Shoot procedures & operation

Shoots must comply with all legal obligations and must be maintained and operated in a manner that does not bring the shoot, shooting sector or the Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme into disrepute. Shoots must abide by the Scheme rules as detailed in the Members' Handbook.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
1.1	Shoots should demonstrate an understanding of the Code of Good Shooting Practice.	 An up-to-date hard copy or electronic copy of Code of Good Shooting Practice must be available to all involved in the shoot including Guns, beaters, pickers up etc. If a complaint is made to the Code of Good Shooting Practice regarding the shoot and it is subsequently investigated by the Code's Steering Committee, the shoot must comply with the Committee's decision. https://www.codeofgoodshootingpractice.org.uk/
1.2	A site map of the shoot must be in place.	The site map details all areas covered by the shoot and
R		includes (where applicable): water courses, access points, protected sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC, RAMSAR etc).
1.3	The shoot key contact list and an emergency action plan must be in place and displayed.	 Contact list and emergency action plan is up to date and accessible to all those involved with the shoot. Contact list includes: Person with overall responsibility, keeper(s), vet, energy and water suppliers, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), and details of the trained
R		person and game dealer if applicable.
T		 The emergency action plan must assess the critical risks and may include (but not be limited to) actions to be taken in the event of: suspected disease outbreak, activist activity, fire, accident or illness on a shoot day, extreme weather, chiller failure, absence of a game meat hygiene trained person on a shoot day
1.4	A complaints procedure must be in place.	 The complaints procedure includes recording the
R		complaint, investigation, outcome/resolution, lessons
_	This includes complaints made to the	learnt to prevent the issue happening again.
T	shoot regarding non-compliance with the Code of Good Shooting Practice and Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme standards.	
	A declaration must be made to the Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme of any prosecutions or convictions against the shoot or staff for wildlife crimes.	 All prosecutions and convictions against Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme members or their staff will be managed in accordance with the Scheme Rules, which can result in expulsion from the Scheme. If shoots are also members of the Moorland Association, this information will be share with them.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
1.5 R T	Where applicable training should be provided, and relevant records must be kept.	 Training records for all employed staff/volunteers are available and include: name, details of training, date of training and training providers. Copies of certificates are held where applicable. Where staff/volunteers are trained to undertake specific tasks such as the use of rodenticides, pesticides, pest & predator control etc then these are listed on their record.
1.6 R	Shoots supplying game to an Approved Game Handling Establishment (AGHE) must have a "trained person present to examine the game throughout every shoot day".	 Shoot must have at least one Trained Person on every shoot day. The Trained Person must have undertaken a Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for small game. Large game only is not acceptable. A record of the course and or course certificate available (in training records 1.5). See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points A, B and C there is no requirement to have a trained person, but it is recommended. Point D there is a legal requirement to have a trained person.
1.7 R	Shoots that are supplying 'in feather' or 'in fur' game to an AGHE, or which supply wild game meat to the final consumer or local retailers, are legally required to register with their Local Authority (LA) / Environmental Health Office (EHO) as a Food Business Operator (FBO).	 Confirmation of registration as a FBO. OR Evidence that the application process has commenced e.g. acknowledgement by the LA/EHO that the application has been received. See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Point A & B there is no requirement to register as a FBO. Point C & D there is a requirement to register as a FBO. https://register.food.gov.uk/new
1.8	Health and safety policy in place and	Health & safety policy in place and is effectively
R	effectively communicated to those involved with the shoot activities.	communicated to all involved with the shoot activities e.g., staff/volunteers, beaters, pickers up, visitors, guns, and guests. Policy statement (hse.gov.uk)
1.9	First Aid kits & eye wash must be available.	 First aid kits and eye wash must be checked to ensure the contents are in date. If applicable, contents must be food grade, including food grade plasters (blue).
1.10	Shoots must demonstrate that they have checked if the shoot is in or near a European Site or site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).	 In relation to activities on SSSI shoots must check the designations relevant to that site and where applicable have the necessary consents in place from the relevant statutory agency such as NE, NRW or NatureScot.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
		European protected sites and SSSIs must be identified
		on the site map (standard 1.2).
		https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx
Recommen	dations	
1.11	It is recommended that shoots take part in	
	a regular bird count, e.g. breeding bird	
	survey	
1.12	It is recommended that sustainable or lead	
	free ammunition is used	
1.13	It is recommended that shoot staff are	
	trained in wildfire management	

Section 2 - Bio security

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems are in place and if required, equipment and materials will be available to prevent the spread of a notifiable disease.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
2.1	Cleaning and disinfecting facilities should be available for use on the shoot.	 Details for bio-security management will be in the emergency action plan. Defra approved
		disinfectants and cleaning equipment is planned to be available for use on boots, clothing,
		vehicles, and facilities.
		 https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disease-
		prevention-for-livestock-farmers#biosecurity-
		<u>measures</u>
		Defra, UK – Disinfectants

Section 3 Pest and predator control

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems are in place for the effective and responsible control of pests and predators.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
3.1	Shoots must have a documented pest and	Pest and predator control plan will include:
R	predator control plan in place.	A site survey.
T	The plan should be reviewed annually.	 The types of predators and pests controlled on the shoot. Control measures in place, and reasons for the control being undertaken. Current general licences used with the relevant justifications highlighted. Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) Code of Best Practice must be followed http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code An annual site survey. A bait plan in place that identifies: bait used, location, date bait point inspected, date(s) bait replenished or removed, and procedures in place to ensure bait does not contaminate the environment. http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code
Recommend	ations	
3.2	It is recommended that shoots sign up and	National Gamebag Census - Game and Wildlife
	complete the GWCT game bag census.	Conservation Trust (gwct.org.uk)

Section 4 - Grit

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that use of medicated grit is appropriate and in line with sector best practice guidance.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
4.1	Medicated grit must be purchased from an	UFAS or equivalent
	assured source	
4.2	Grit must be stored appropriately and be	Applies to both medicated and non medicated
	clearly labelled either on the bag or bulk	grit
	store	
4.3	Grit must be stored in a manner that	Shoot can demonstrate to the assessor that
	minimises the risk of contamination	contamination from substances, machinery,
		equipment, birds, predators, dogs and cats etc
		has been prevented
4.4	Shoots mixing their own medicated grit	Record of approval from the Veterinary
	must meet the regulatory requirements	Medicines Directorate (VMD)
R		Records of appropriate prescriptions
		Appropriate medicine storage prior to mixing.

Section 5 - Health and welfare

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that their procedures ensure the health and welfare of the game birds.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
5.1	Shoots must ensure adequate picking up resources are in place to ensure that all shot birds are quickly accounted for and wounded birds are dispatched humanely	 Shoots must be able to demonstrate that sufficient pickers up and dogs are present on shoot days Achieved through professional discussion with assessor
Recommend	ation	
5.2	It is recommended the shoot vet or vet practice is registered with the BVPA. https://www.bvpa.co.uk	

Section 6 - Veterinary Medicines

Shoots must be able to demonstrate the responsible and competent use of veterinary medicines and treatments. On the Uplands, this standard includes the use of medicated grit. .

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
6.1	Only authorised veterinary medicines are used. (including in medicated grit).	 POM-V products are prescribed by a vet. POM-VPS products are prescribed by a vet, pharmacist, or Suitably Qualified Person (SQP)/Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (RAMA). Prescriptions for medication must be available to inspect.
6.2	Veterinary medicines must be used appropriately. (including in medicated grit).	 Where medicines are administered this is done so in accordance with the prescription, the manufacturer's, or veterinary instructions. Medicines that have expired or been open and not used within the in-use shelf life must not be used and must be disposed of correctly.
6.3	Veterinary medicines must be administered	Confirmation of who is the competent person
R	by a competent person. (including medicated grit)	 (and record of training in training record (1.5) Prescription and manufacturer's instructions must be followed .
6.4	Records for all medicines purchased must be	Purchase records must be kept for 5 years and include:
R	kept. (including in medicated grit).	Date of acquisition/delivery.
т		 Name of the product. Batch number(s) of the product. Expiry date of the product. Quantity purchased. Name and address of the supplier.
6.5	Records for all medicines administered must	Administration records must be kept for 5 years and
R	be kept. (including medicated grit).	include:
T		 Identity of medicine. Date of administration (placed on moor). Quantity administered. Length of withdrawal period. Identification of the birds/beat: location of all grit stations (GPS if possible). Batch number(s). Number of animals treated. Date treatment finished. Date when birds are fit for human consumption. Demonstrate procedures to ensure withdrawal period is completed before shooting starts. Name of person administering medicine. Reason for treatment.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
6.6	Records for disposal of medicines must be	Disposal records must be kept for 5 years and include:
R	kept. (including medicated grit).	Date of disposal (removed from moor and
_		disposed of).
T'		Quantity of products disposed.
		Name of product.
		Batch number(s).
		Route of disposal (licenced contractor).
6.7	All veterinary medicines must be stored	Locked in a storage facility/room.
	appropriately.	Manufacturer's storage instructions followed.
		If refrigeration is required and a domestic fridge
		is used, then medicine must be stored in a
		container.
6.8	Use of HP-CIA antibiotics must only be used	Use is supported by a veterinary statement
	as a last resort, under veterinary direction.	outlining the justification for use.

Section 7 - Animal by-products

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that dead birds and shot birds that are damaged or contaminated to the point that they cannot enter the food chain are managed to meet the minimum legal requirement, and to minimise the risk to the environment and spread of disease.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
7.1	Shot birds which are deemed not fit to enter the food chain must be stored correctly	Shoot must be able to show assessor how dead game unfit to enter the food chain is stored
	pending disposal.	pending disposal.
7.2	Dead game deemed not fit to enter the human food chain should only be fed to	 Dead game deemed not fit to enter the human or animal food chain must be disposed of
R	animals where appropriate and safe to do	without undue delay.
	so. Where it is not, they should be disposed of correctly and disposal records kept.	 Be collected by or taken to a licenced fallen stock collector/disposal site.
		 Not be burnt on site (unless in an APHA approved incinerator).
		 Not be buried on site (unless the remote area derogation applies - Scotland Only).
		 On farms/shoots, incinerators are covered by species approval document issued by the
		relevant competent authority.
		 Records are kept for 2 years.
		Fallen stock and other animal carcases – Animal by-
		products: disposal guidance – gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
		Fallen stock and safe disposal of dead animals – GOV.UK
		(www.gov.uk)

Section 8 - Game handling, transport, and food hygiene (wild game and game meat intended for human consumption)

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems and equipment are in place to ensure the safe handling of wild game and game meat intended for human consumption.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
8.1	All shot game unless damaged or contaminated must be regarded as a food product.	 Shoots can clearly demonstrate that shot game is handled in such a way that it meets the requirements of food safety legislation and is safe to enter the human food chain. Shooting activity must not take place on contaminated ground and care must be taken to reduce incidences of contamination when handling shot game. If contamination does occur appropriate action should be taken.
8.2	Shot game must be transferred to the larder at the earliest opportunity after dispatch to allow active chilling to commence as soon as possible.	See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Point A. Where game birds are kept for own consumption or given to friends and family then there is no requirement for a chiller. There is still the requirement to ensure that the game birds are safe to eat. Point B, C and D. There is a requirement for a chiller. • Birds should be transferred into the chiller within 2 hours of being shot. • Provisions in place on high temperature days to transfer shot game to the larder/chiller as soon
8.3	Game carts must be suitable and maintain the safe transportation of shot game intended for human consumption.	 as possible (and in less than 2 hours). Game carts must be designed in such a way to allow game to be transported without risk of contamination. Game to be transported to allow airflow around the birds to allow the cooling process to commence and prevent game heating up in transit. Game to be transported hung or laid out in trays (once cool) and must not be heaped. Effective cleaning and disinfection of game carts to take place before each day's shoot and during the day if contamination requires it. Dogs, equipment, and anything else that might cause contamination must not be transported with the game
8.4 R T	The chiller (if appliable) and game larder area are kept clean and, in a food safe manner.	 Be free from accumulated dirt, dust and cobwebs, mould, rubbish. Be free from chemicals, equipment, and products not in use.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
		 Be free from foul odours by maintaining and keeping drains clean and free from blockages and have adequate ventilation. Have means of cleaning available e.g. dedicated hose pipe, brush, food grade detergent. Be kept clear of debris and non-essential equipment, vegetation must be kept short and managed. See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points B, C & D HACCP plan and food safety management system in place Chiller and larder to be washed and disinfected as soon as possible after game is collected (after each collection). Chiller and larder cleaned with food grade cleaning materials with data sheets available. Cleaning records must be kept
8.5	The structures within the chiller (if applicable) and game larder internal and external areas must be sound, suitable and food safe.	 Cleaning records must be kept. Floor and wall surfaces must be maintained in sound condition, easy to clean and disinfect. All fixtures and fittings must be constructed of impervious, non-absorbent, washable, and nontoxic materials. Surfaces must be well maintained and in good condition. Surfaces In the larder/chiller in contact with food must be made of smooth, washable nontoxic materials. Doors to the chiller units must be well fitting to prevent access by pests and able to be opened from both sides. Larders/chillers must always have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting to allow thorough inspection of the game. Artificial lights must either have protective covers or shatterproof bulbs to avoid the risk of glass contamination.
8.6	Water used within the larder and chiller on internal surfaces must be safe.	From a water company supply: • Potable drinking water from the rising main. Where the water supply is <u>private</u> : • The supply must be tested at least annually to determine the water is safe. • Test results available at audit.
8.7	Hand washing and drying facilities are available in the larder/chiller area.	 Facilities must include: Hot and cold water. Wall mounted hand wash dispenser. Paper Towel. Lidded bin.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured			
8.8	Chillers must be managed in such a way as	Game birds must be stored below 4 °C			
	to maintain the safe storage of shot game	The size of the larder/chiller must be adequate			
R	intended for human consumption.	for the quantity game to be handled and stored			
		to ensure it cools quickly (to below 4 °C).			
T		'In feather' and 'in fur' game must not be stored			
		in the same chiller without a floor-to-ceiling			
		barrier to prevent cross contamination.			
		 Processed game must not be stored in the 			
		chiller at the same time as 'in fur' or 'in feather'			
		game.			
		Game carcasses unfit for human consumption			
		and awaiting disposal must not be stored in the			
		larder/chiller.			
		No live animals must be allowed into larders (shillers)			
		larders/chillers.			
		 Smoking/drinking/eating is not permitted in larders/chillers. 			
		See annex 1. Origin of wild game.			
		Points C & D HACCP Plan and Food safety management			
		system in place			
		When in use the temperature of the chiller			
		must be recorded at least twice daily.			
8.9	Records to allow full traceability of game	Records must in include:			
	that goes into the food chain must be kept.	 Customer/destination. 			
R		Date of supply.			
-		Number and species supplied.			
		 Total number sold or given to the final 			
		consumer e.g. guns, beaters or local retail			
		establishment.			
8.10	Shoots that supply 'in feather' or 'in fur'	See annex 1. Origin of wild game.			
	game to an Approved Game Handling	Points C & D HACCP plan and food safety management			
R	Establishment (AGHE), or which supply wild game meat (i.e. processed) to the final	system in place.			
T	consumer or local retailers must have HACCP	A documented Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan that includes: • Routine hygiene of people handling game and			
	plan and food safety management system in	visiting larders and chillers must be			
	place.	documented in a Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan.			
		Hygiene related management of facilities must			
		also be detailed in the Hygiene Hazard Audit			
		Plan.			
		Identify and record hazards applicable to the			
		shoot and actions to minimise the risk.			
		All staff handling game must have access to a			
		copy of the plan and must have signed it			
Recommend	ation				

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
8.11	It is recommended that hand wash basins	
	with hot/cold or mixed water are	
	elbow/knee/foot operated	
8.12	It is recommended that chillers are serviced	
	at least annually	
8.13	It is recommended that there is a means of	
	notifying staff in the event of chiller failure	
	to avoid spoilage of the game meat	

Annex 1 - Game Handling – Legal Requirements and Exceptions

Origin of wild game	Restrictions on Supply	Wild Game Meat	Food Business	HACCP Plan and Food	Official record keeping
		Hygiene Course for	Operator (FBO)	safety management	& traceability
		small game status	Registration Required	system required	
(A)	The wild game must be kept for your own	Not required (but	No, registration as a	Not required (but	Not required (but
	private domestic consumption or restricted	encouraged).	food business is not	encouraged).	encouraged).
Keeping the in feather	to supply only to family and friends for their		required.		
wild game carcasses (i.e.	private domestic consumption on an				
unprocessed) for private	occasional basis.				
domestic use					
	The family and friends you supply game to				
	must not supply the game to anyone else.				
(B)	Supply must be by the producer of small	Not required (but	No, registration as a	Not required (but	Yes, you must
	quantities of hunted wild game (primary	encouraged).	food business is not	encouraged).	maintain traceability
Direct supply of in	product).		required.		records of supply.
feather wild game					
carcasses (i.e.	Supply must be direct to the final consumer		You are encouraged to		
unprocessed) to the	or to a local establishment who directly		contact your LA/EHO		
final consumer and/or	supply to the final consumer (for example,		to ensure you are		
local retail	butchers, restaurants, etc.).		eligible for this		
establishments directly			exemption.		
supplying the final	Supply from the producer to local retail				
consumer	establishments (who directly supply to the				
	final consumer) must be within the area of				
	your Local Authority (LA)/EHO, a				
	neighbouring LA or 50 km/30 miles from				
	the boundary of your LA.				
	, ,				

Origin of wild game	Restrictions on Supply	Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for small game status	Food Business Operator (FBO) Registration Required	HACCP Plan and Food safety management system required	Official record keeping & traceability
(C) Direct supply of wild game meat (i.e. processed carcasses) to the final consumer and/or local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer.	Supply must be of small quantities of wild game meat. Supply of wild game meat must be direct to final consumer or local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer (i.e. butchers, restaurants, etc.). Supply to local retail establishments can be no further than your own Local Authority (LA)/EHO, a neighbouring LA or 50 km/30 miles from the boundary of your LA.	Not required (but encouraged).	Yes, registration with your LA/EHO as a food business is required.	Yes, you must have a food safety management system based on HACCP principles.	Yes, you must maintain traceability records of supply.
(D) Supply of in fur/feather (i.e. unprocessed) wild game carcasses to an AGHE.	None.	Yes, Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for small game status.	Yes, registration with your LA/EHO as a food business is required.	Yes, you must have a food safety management system based on HACCP principles. You are also required to comply with the criteria set out in the receiving establishment's HACCP plan.	Yes, you must maintain traceability records of supply.

Annex 2 - Record Keeping Requirements

Records must be available to the assessor at the time of the audit and can be kept in paper or electronic format.

Reference	Standard	Legal requirement	Minimum time records to be kept	A to S Template
1.2	A site map of the shoot must be in place.	No	NA – up to date	No
1.3	The shoot key contact list and an emergency action plan must be in place and displayed.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
1.4	A complaints procedure must be in place.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
1.5	Training records must be kept.	Yes	2 years*	Yes
1.6	Shoots supplying game to an Approved Game Handling Establishment (AGHE) must have a "trained person present to examine the game throughout every shoot day".	Yes	NA	Yes (1.5 training records)
1.7	Shoots that are supplying 'in feather' or 'in fur' game to an AGHE, or which supply wild game meat to the final consumer or local retailers, are legally required to register with their Local Authority (LA) / Environmental Health Office (EHO) as a Food Business Operator (FBO).	Yes	NA	No
1.8	Health and safety policy in place and effectively communicated to those involved with the shoot activities.	Yes	NA – up to date	Yes
3.1	Shoots must have a documented pest and predator control plan in place. The plan should be reviewed annually.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
4.4	Shoots mixing their own medicated grit must meet the regulatory requirements. (VMD Approval)	Yes	NA	No
6.3	Veterinary medicines must be administered by a competent person. (including medicated grit).	Yes	NA	Yes (1.5 training records)
6.4	Records for all medicines purchased must be kept (including medicated grit).	Yes	5 years*	Yes
6.5	Records for all medicines administered must be kept. (including in-feed and soluble medication, vaccines).	Yes	5 years*	Yes
6.6	Records for disposal of medicines must be kept for a minimum of 5 years.	Yes	5 Years*	Yes

7.2	Dead birds or shot game deemed not	Yes	2 Years*	
	fit for the food chain must be disposed			
	of correctly and disposal records kept.			
8.4	The chiller (if appliable) and game	Yes	Record of last cleaning	Yes
	larder area are kept clean and, in a		available.	
	food safe manner.			
8.8	When in use the temperature of the	Yes	12 Months	Yes
	chiller must be recorded at least twice			
	daily.			
8.9	Records to allow full traceability of	Yes	12 Months	Yes
	game that goes into the food chain			
	must be kept.			
8.10	HACCP Plan and a documented	Yes	Must be kept up to date	Yes
	Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan.			

^{*}Is the minimum legal requirement for time records must be kept.

Annex 3 - Useful Links

- https://www.codeofgoodshootingpractice.org.uk/.
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/poultry-including-game-birds-registration-rules-and-forms).
- https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/guidance-for-primary-producers-and-food-business-operators-on-the-hygienic-production-of-wild-game
- https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/V7%20Guidance%20-%20supply%20of%20wild%20game%20for%20human%20consumption.pdf
- https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/FSS Wild Game Guide- December 2021.pdf
- https://register.food.gov.uk/new
- Policy statement (hse.gov.uk)
- https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx.
- https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disease-prevention-for-livestock-farmers#biosecurity-measures
- Defra, UK Disinfectants
- http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code.
- National Gamebag Census Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (gwct.org.uk)
- https://www.bvpa.co.uk
- https://www.gwct.org.uk/advisory/guides/medicated-grit-best-practice/checklist/
- Fallen stock and other animal carcases Animal by-products: disposal guidance gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
- Fallen stock and safe disposal of dead animals GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)