

[Press release: Body worn cameras to help fight fisheries and waste crimes](#)

East Midlands officers are now wearing body worn video cameras to aid prosecutions and as a deterrent to violence

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Environment Agency enforcement teams in the East Midlands have adopted wearing body worn video cameras in their fight against crime following a successful six-month trial of the practice in the North-East.

The trial in the North-East found that wearing the cameras helped to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour, assaults and threats against Environment Agency staff.

Following a growing number of abusive incidents during site inspections to waste sites, enforcement officers will be equipped with body worn video cameras on their visits. The cameras will also be used by fisheries enforcement officers during their routine activities.

Footage captured on a bodycam in the North-East was recently used by the Environment Agency for the first time to convict an offender. The defendant pleaded 'guilty' of wilfully obstructing the officers in the execution of their duty and using abusive behaviour towards two officers when he knew they had video evidence.

Pete Haslock, Enforcement Team Leader for the Environment Agency in the East Midlands, said:

The safety of our staff is paramount. They are well trained in dealing with hostile situations and we take any threat against them very seriously. Our preference is to prevent hostility in the first place and wearing the cameras can prevent threatening situations from escalating.

We want to get on with our jobs without the threat of violence and the cameras will help to protect staff and bring obstructive individuals to justice. Officers will switch on the cameras if and when they enter a hostile situation or where hostility may be anticipated. That could be a site where they have experienced

aggressive behaviour in the past or an unknown quantity, such as on a remote river bank.

Studies also show that people are less likely to contest the evidence when they know their offence is captured on camera, which could help speed up justice and reduce legal costs.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities or to report illegal waste activity, should contact the Environment Agency's 24/7 Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Press release: Government commits £12 million to champion freedom of Religion or Belief worldwide

The Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID) programme, funded through UK Aid Connect, will work with faith groups, NGOs and academics to promote religious diversity, with a focus on helping countries around the world to embed freedom of religion or belief policies in poverty reduction and development approaches.

The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

This money will go a long way in bolstering the work of civil society and NGOs to promote respect, and the value of religious diversity and tolerance. It will sit alongside the excellent work British diplomats do in flying the flag for human rights.

As the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief, I will ensure that the UK stands up for everyone's right to practise or not practise a religion that is in line with their conscience, wherever they are in the world.

International Development Minister Lord Bates said:

Today's announcement underscores the government's commitment to empowering people across the world irrespective of religion or belief and builds on the Prime Minister's pledge to tackle religious prejudice and intolerance in all its forms.

The problems facing the world's poorest and most excluded people are complex with no single answer; that is why UK Aid Connect is crucial to bringing together different organisations that can work with global communities to find solutions to these problems.

Young people are key to creating a better, more tolerant world. As part of this announcement HMG's Respect in Education will receive increased funding so that schools in the world's poorest countries can teach more children about respect for religious diversity.

The announcement follows the government's recent announcement of a further £1 million funding for places of worship that have been subjected to hate crime attacks.

Further information

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon [@tariqahmadbt](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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