

Green Party responds to Sheffield Council's injunction against Green councillor



Green Party

28 June 2017

Responding to the news that Sheffield Council is to seek a civil injunction against Green Councillor Alison Teal who protested against their tree-felling programme [1], Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“This is a heavy-handed attempt by an authoritarian Labour council to shut-down debate and gag any opposition to their environmental vandalism. Their plans have already been shown to be ill-considered, environmentally illiterate, and downright destructive to the green spaces that surround residents in Sheffield.

“The Green Party stands shoulder to shoulder with Alison and with the wider community who have peacefully protested against the ravaging of the perfectly healthy trees that line Sheffield’s streets. Greens are committed to standing up for local people who want to create healthy, vibrant communities that promote everyone’s wellbeing and Alison along with her fellow campaigners are leading that movement from the front.”

Notes

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40417519>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/nov/28/sheffield-trees-dispute-scenes-putin-russia-nick-clegg-arrests>

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Press release: Water abstraction lie costs farm business £5,500

Lakenheath farming business N&M Sizer lied about how much water it abstracted, fearing it would lose its licence or have its abstraction limits reduced.

In doing so, the company falsely stated that it had extracted more water than it was allowed to under the licence which resulted in an investigation by the Environment Agency.

The company had actually taken very little of the allowance as its crops at the time did not need spray irrigation, Ipswich Magistrates' Court heard today (30 May).

It fined the company £3,000 for the deception and ordered it to pay £2,531 costs.

Mrs Megan Selves, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court the company had been worried that as it had not taken much water it would lose the right the following year to take what the licence allowed.

However, she said that any reduction in future abstraction or any revocation of licence would not be done without looking at about 10 years of records and without discussion with the licence holder.

Any assessment would only be carried out when the licence came up for renewal or if there was evidence that the licence is causing environmental damage. The licence for N&M Sizer Ltd expires on 31 March 2027.

Mrs Selves said that water meters at the company's site, Bedford Fen in Sedgfen, had been re-calibrated to corroborate the figures submitted to the Environment Agency in a 'determined effort to mislead'.

She said the company's actions had been deliberate and a 'flagrant disregard for the law' and although there had been no environmental impact, the company had falsified its figures giving a false impression of how much water had been taken from the environment.

Mrs Selves said the company had shown remorse and co-operated with the investigation.

N&M Sizer Ltd pleaded guilty to:

Charge: On or before 30 November 2015 you furnished information to the Environment Agency pursuant to section 201 of the Water Resources Act 1991, namely the water abstraction return for 2014 to 2015 for licence 6/33/39/*S/0496/R01 for abstraction points A, C, D, E and F, and in the said information made a statement which you knew to be false or misleading in a material particular, namely that you had abstracted 153,360 cubic metres of

water.

Contrary to section 206(1) and (5) of the Water Resources Act 1991

Media enquiries: For East Anglia press office please contact (24 hours): 0800 917 9250

Press release: Environment Agency saves thousands of fish in Ampthill Reservoir

Over the hot weekend of 17 to 18 June, Environment Agency teams saved thousands of carp, roach and rudd from Ampthill Reservoir Lake, an amenity fishery in Bedfordshire.

The angling club reported seeing huge shoals of fish gasping at the water's surface throughout the fishery. A dedicated Fisheries Incident Officer was in touch within the hour and quickly on-site to monitor oxygen levels.

Recent hot weather and very high water temperatures encouraged algae blooms which had reduced oxygen levels in the fishery to a potentially fatal level for fish. Environment Agency fisheries officers dosed the lake with hydrogen peroxide into the early hours of Monday (19 June). They were then back on the scene first thing to monitor recovery. There are now no fish in distress, and the huge shoals of fish seen gasping have returned to normal behaviour.

Kye Jerrom, Fisheries Officer said:

Specialist officers are on duty 24 hours a day to respond to fish kills and fish in distress, all funded by rod licence income. Our team was able to respond quickly and we'd like to thank the angling club for knowing what to do.

The club suffered a similar incident 30 years ago and lost every fish in the lake. The scene when I arrived was very worrying and I am sure that our efforts have saved the fishery from a huge fish kill, which is great news for such a hardworking club, and for those who fish it.

We have provided advice and management options and will continue to work with the club to prevent a similar, and potentially devastating, event in the future. If anyone spots fish in distress then please call our incident helpline on 0800 80 70 60.

Summer can see Environment Agency staff responding to many reports of 'fish in distress' due to naturally occurring environmental changes causing lower oxygen levels in the water. Hot, sunny weather can lead to low flows in rivers and stillwater fisheries (ponds and lakes) starting to warm up. Small stillwaters are particularly susceptible.

As well as encouraging people to call them on 0800 80 70 60, the Environment Agency is encouraging private fishery owners to manage fish stocks to appropriate levels and install aerators.

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Press release: Fish stocks boost for north east rivers

Thousands of fish were released into the River Pont at Ponteland and Matfen as well as tributaries of the rivers Wear and Tees.

It's part of the Environment Agency's ongoing plans to develop and restore rivers in the region.

The fish were reared at the Environment Agency's fish farm near Calverton, Nottinghamshire, using funding from rod licence sales.



Fisheries Technical Specialist Phil Rippon was out releasing some of the grayling in the south of the region today. He said:

We're pleased we can provide these fish for restocking as part of our commitment to rod licence paying anglers and to help the process of natural recovery in impacted waters.

While it's a really important aspect of our work, it's one of many things we do together with our partners to develop fisheries, including reducing the effects of pollution, improving habitat and removing barriers to migration.



Rivers have improved dramatically

The Environment Agency releases fish into our waterways annually. Fisheries officers target fish stocking activity in response to impacts on local rivers and using data from national fish surveys to identify where there are problems with poor breeding and survival.

Many of our industrialised rivers have improved dramatically in water quality in the last 30 years and targeted and appropriate restocking has helped the restoration of natural fish stocks and viable fisheries.

Angling is a great way for everyone to keep healthy and enjoy the natural environment. All rod licence income is used to fund work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries.

[Anyone who wants to go fishing needs to buy a fishing licence. A full annual licence costs £30 \(short term and some concessionary licences are also available\) and are available online](#)

Scottish Government cabinet WAS told about farm payments delay

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28 Jun 2017



The Scottish Government's cabinet was told about plans to seek an extension in processing vital farming payments, days before both Nicola Sturgeon and the rural affairs secretary evaded the issue.

It was revealed in Holyrood today that Fergus Ewing informed members of the cabinet that he was likely to seek permission from Europe to extend the deadline for delivering CAP payments to Scotland's farmers.

This is despite the fact, on Wednesday and Thursday last week, both he and the First Minister – when directly asked – dodged the question.

It means the Scottish Government's most senior members – including the First Minister – would have had this information before the issue was publicised at the end of last week.

At today's rural economy and connectivity committee, following questioning from Scottish Conservative MSP Jamie Greene, Mr Ewing conceded cabinet had been informed that the extension would be requested.

He then added he was unsure if Nicola Sturgeon herself was present at the meeting, though she will have been informed of what was discussed. Scottish Government cabinet meetings take place every Tuesday.

At today's committee, Mr Ewing also admitted payments would not be made by the Friday deadline, meaning farmers have been left waiting for cash for two years running.

Scottish Conservative shadow rural affairs secretary Peter Chapman said:

“We now know that the Scottish Government's cabinet was told that this extension would be requested.

“Despite knowing this, both Fergus Ewing and Nicola Sturgeon pleaded ignorance last week, even after the disclosure had been made to cabinet.

“This is yet another incident of the SNP completely lacking in transparency.

“It's simply not good enough for figures as senior as the First Minister to shrug her shoulders when repeatedly asked something, even though her cabinet

had already been informed.

“It’s insulting to the parliament and, more seriously, a slap in the face to thousands of farmers who are yet again waiting for crucial CAP payments.”

Scottish Government cabinet meets on Tuesdays.

Today, Fergus Ewing said he had informed cabinet that the extension would be sought.

But last Wednesday, when asked by shadow rural affairs secretary Peter Chapman if the extension had been requested, he refused to say.

A day later, Ruth Davidson repeatedly asked Nicola Sturgeon the same question. She also declined to tell MSPs.

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/06/sturgeon-must-come-clean-on-second-cap-crisis/>