

News story: No fishing for coarse fish in rivers from 15 March to 15 June

Every year, the close season prevents fishing for coarse fish, like barbel and chub, for 3 months to give the fish a chance to breed.

Judy Proctor, Head of Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said:

Our job is to protect fish stocks and improve fisheries. This includes rescuing fish in distress, improving habitat and restocking rivers with 450,000 fish a year. However, one of the best things we can do is simply to leave the fish alone during the spring allowing them the opportunity to breed so that we have healthy stocks in the future.

During the close season, the Environment Agency's specialist enforcement teams rigorously police illegal fishing. In the first few weeks of last year's close season, officers carried out more than 380 targeted patrols and found more than 70 people fishing on waters off-limits.

In addition to Environment Agency enforcement teams, the Angling Trust's Voluntary Bailiff Service, which is funded by fishing licence money, will be taking part in Operation Clampdown. The volunteers will be looking out for illegal fishing on local rivers and reporting any suspicious activity to the Environment Agency and police.

Judy Proctor:

The majority of anglers, who fish legally, rightly demand that we take action to catch offenders. Our enforcement officers, supported by Angling Trust voluntary bailiffs, will be targeting illegal fishing again this year and anyone caught can expect to face prosecution and receive a significant fine. We urge anyone to report illegal fishing as quickly as possible by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Coarse fishing is still allowed on most still waters and canals, depending on fishery owner agreement, though a valid fishing licence is still required. You can check which still waters and canals still have a close season in operation by checking the byelaws which apply in your area at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-fishing-byelaws>

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 at www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence.

[Press release: Essex wood waste site fined for illegal waste operation](#)

JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd, operating in Nazeing, Essex, and two directors have been ordered to pay over £12,000 in fines for treating wood waste without the correct authorisations from the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency was also awarded £10,000 in costs.

The company, and former company directors Jenny Dodge of Epping and John Michael Parish of Wickford, Essex appeared before Barkingside Magistrates Court (on Friday 10 March 2017) and pleaded guilty to operating their wood recycling site unlawfully over a period of 8 months.

Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010, certain low-risk waste operations can be undertaken when an operator registers an exemption with the Environment Agency. Exemptions are limited to particular types and amounts of waste and methods of treatment. If an operator registers an exemption but then operates outside of its terms, he or she commits an offence.

The court heard how JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd registered two exemptions for the storage and treatment of wood waste, which allowed the storage of up to 600 tonnes of waste wood at any one time. The company had a blatant disregard to the requirements of the exemption and exceeded the allowance by storing up to 1,750 tonnes of waste wood. The site also accepted waste which it was not authorised to treat and processed it in ways which it was not permitted to do.

JSJ Wood Recycling Ltd received payments for illegally receiving waste wood on its site at Birchwood Industrial Estate, Hoe Lane, Nazeing. Once on the site, the wood was processed by using heavy plant to chip it. Chipping wood makes it easier to store and transport, and in some instances makes it suitable for reuse. Once chipped, some of the wood was taken off site for incineration and for export. Some of the wood was baled in black plastic wrapping prior to removal.

Environment Agency officers attended the site in May 2014 to assess compliance with the registered exemptions, but raised concerns about the way the site was being operated, most notably the dust being generated from the chipping process and the treatment of waste wood of a type not allowed by the exemptions.

Lead Officer in the case, Patrick Schneiders, said:

I visited the site on numerous occasions during 2014 but the defendants continued to ignore our advice on how to comply with

their exemptions and run a site within the rules. Further visits to the site throughout 2014 revealed an increase in illegal activity with even more waste on site.

Waste crime can undermine legitimate businesses, so we work closely with businesses to help them comply with the law. In cases like this where individuals consistently operate illegally, we have no hesitation in prosecuting them as we want to make sure that waste crime doesn't pay.

[Construction firm fined after worker fell from height](#)

Construction company Kier Construction Limited has been fined £400,000 after a worker fell from height.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how Jair Morales was installing plywood boards covering holes on the third floor of a building at a construction site in Uxbridge, Middlesex when he fell a distance of 3.95m to the floor below.

The court heard no steps had been taken to prevent him falling through the opening as he installed the plywood boards. Mr Morales suffered fractures in his pelvis and his arm following the fall and has been unable to work since the accident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Kier failed to ensure the work was properly planned and carried out in a safe manner.

Kier Construction Limited of Tempsford Hall, Bedfordshire pleaded guilty to breaching section 4 (1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, has been fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,534.

Speaking after the case HSE inspector Owen Rowley said: "This incident could have been a lot worse. The system that Kier Construction Ltd has in place to control the risk from installing the protection for openings was not implemented on site, ultimately resulting in the accident.

"The risks of working at height are widely recognised throughout the construction industry. This case highlights the importance of ensuring that all work at height is properly planned and carried out safely."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death,

injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. www.hse.gov.uk

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

News story: Defence Secretary announces 1,500th signing of Armed Forces Covenant

Building materials supplier Travis Perkins were revealed as the 1,500th signatory during the third annual Partnering with Defence employer conference at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London today.

Speaking at the conference, Sir Michael said:

By signing the Covenant, Travis Perkins joins firms across Britain committed to ensuring those who serve or have served our country are better supported.

Reaching this milestone also shows growing recognition of the unique skills and experience that reservists and former service personnel offer their organisations.

Amongst their commitments, Travis Perkins has pledged to provide Armed Forces personnel and veterans with a variety of work experience placements in their centres, branches, and stores across the country and are supporting members of the Royal Engineers in gaining NVQ qualifications for their construction skills.

Travis Perkins currently employs nine reservists and other members of the Armed Forces community across the country.

Maria Walding, a Compliance Manager at Travis Perkins, who is an Army Cadet Force adult volunteer, said:

The Travis Perkins Group has fully supported and values my role as

a Reservist. I am proud to say I work for a company that consistently gives military personnel the chance to use their existing skills and build a lasting career outside of the military.

Travis Perkins CEO John Carter said:

As a business, Travis Perkins has long recognised the valuable skills and attributes those with a serving background can contribute, not only to our own workforce but also to the wider economy.

We are delighted to not only be here to celebrate the Group's commitment and ongoing support of the Armed Forces in our signing of the Armed Forces Covenant, but incredibly proud and honoured to be recognised along with our community of ex forces and serving colleagues, as the 1500th organisation to do so.

Travis Perkins joins a growing number of businesses that are making tangible pledges to the Armed Forces community.

Earlier this week Defence Minister Mark Lancaster also announced that the UK's main broadband providers including Virgin Media, Sky, Talk Talk, BT, EE and Plusnet, representing 95 per cent of Britain's broadband market, had committed to waiving fees on contracts that personnel had to cancel when posted abroad or to another part of the UK, often at short notice.

Since 2013, the Covenant has helped to deliver these key improvements for the Armed Forces community:

- A new agreement with mortgage lenders allowing personnel posted abroad to rent out their homes without facing higher mortgage costs or having to change their mortgage;
- Fairer mobile phone contracts, freezing the accounts of Armed Forces personnel and their families posted overseas and removing cancellation fees;
- Better deals in motor insurance, allowing personnel to keep their no claims bonuses and avoid cancellation fees when posted overseas at short notice;
- Employer networks in a wide range of sectors to support Service leavers through their transition to new careers;
- Better access to banking, such as savings accounts to Service families posted overseas;
- Tackling commercial disadvantage previously experienced by the Armed Forces community in relation to credit rating and access to mortgages on offer. For example, if their Service overseas forces them into a situation where they will need to rent out their home, members are now free from the need to switch to a 'buy to let' mortgage;
- Better access to mentoring, work placements and employment opportunities for personnel leaving the Services;
- Increased funding and sponsorship of military charities and sports

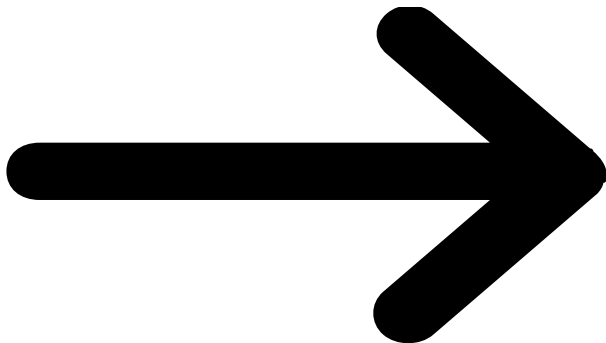
- events such as the Invictus Games;
- Flexible paid or unpaid leave for mobilised Reservists;
- Employment support for Veterans, Reservists, Service spouses and partners, as well as support for Cadets;
- Discounts and special deals for individuals and their families.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation, enshrined in law, ensuring that those who serve or have previously served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly and not disadvantaged by their service.

[SNP probed on ministers' indyref 'ring around'](#)

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- SNP probed on ministers' indyref 'ring around'

14 Mar 2017



A series of parliamentary questions have been tabled to establish the extent of a Scottish Government minister "ring around" following Nicola Sturgeon's referendum announcement.

It was reported today that ministers spent the day contacting companies and trade bodies to discuss the new break-up plans.

This is despite the SNP saying it is focused on the day job, and that areas like education and health are its "priority".

According to reports, one recipient of a phone call said the minister in question was keen to "allay fears" surrounding a new vote, and that it might not happen until after Brexit was concluded.

On the same day, it emerged a school in education secretary John Swinney's local area was appealing to parents to come in and help with maths tuition,

such was the shortage of teachers.

And today, figures have revealed accident and emergency departments across the country – including at Scotland’s newest flagship hospital – continue to miss targets.

Scottish Conservative deputy leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“This is a farcical use of government ministers’ time when they are supposed to be focused on the day job.

“Schools are having to ask parents to come in and fill teaching gaps, people are waiting too long at A&E and Police Scotland is in crisis.

“Yet the SNP thinks the best use of senior ministers’ time is to embark on a ludicrous ring around of businesses to put down a marker on independence – surely more appropriately a job for SNP party apparatchiks?

“Nicola Sturgeon’s statement that her government’s priority is matters such as education is now exposed as a lie.

“The SNP should reveal exactly who spent time on these calls, who they were to, what was said, and exactly what the nationalists thought would be achieved by making them.”

Reports of the ring around are here:

<https://order-order.com/2017/03/14/snp-ring-around-played-down-referendum-chances/>

Below is a list of questions submitted today by Scottish Conservative chief whip John Lamont:

TATSG to publish a record of all phone calls made between Scottish Government Ministers and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, CBI Scotland and other business organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

TATSG to release all correspondence between Scottish Government Ministers and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, CBI Scotland and other business organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

TATSG to publish a record of all meetings between Scottish Government Ministers and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, CBI Scotland and other business organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

TATSG to publish all minutes of discussions between Scottish Government Ministers and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, CBI Scotland and other business organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

TATSG to publish a record of all phone calls made between Scottish Government Ministers and financial organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

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TATSG to publish all minutes of discussions between Scottish Government Ministers and financial organisations in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

TATSG to publish a record of all phone calls made between Scottish Government Ministers and the NHS, Royal Colleges and other medical stakeholders in the week leading up to – and including – 13 March 2017.

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