

Press release: Humber habitat creation scheme plans on show

Residents are being invited to learn more about the Outstays to Skeffling Managed Realignment Scheme by attending the surgery at Patrington Village Hall, Church Lane, 11am to 3.3pm on Thursday 5 July.

Being delivered in partnership with Associated British Ports, the scheme will see a new inter-tidal environment created that offsets habitat losses from future coastal development and climate change.

It is a legal obligation for the Environment Agency to rebalance the reduction in habitats caused by 'coastal squeeze', which occurs when fixed hard flood defence structures, built to protect people and properties along the coast, reduce the inter-tidal land between low and high tide as a result of rising sea levels.

As part of the proposed scheme a 900 acre natural habitat site will be created for estuarine and terrestrial wildlife and an improved landscaped flood defence will surround this area to help reduce the risk of flooding to the local community.

The Environment Agency and Associated British Ports say they are hoping to announce the final design and plans this autumn, with the planning application being submitted before the end of the year and construction starting in spring 2019.

Press release: 50th anniversary of the devastating floods in East Devon

A summer storm flooded homes and businesses across the south west, thousands were driven from their homes and tragically a number of lives were lost.

The Environment Agency, together with the Sid Vale Association will commemorate the floods of July 1968 with a free exhibition of historic flood photographs and maps. They are inviting residents and visitors to come along and share their experiences or to simply view the photographs on display.

Date: 7 and 8 July 2018

Opening times: 10.30am to 4pm

Location:

Kennaway House

Sidmouth

EX10 8NG



Frogmore Road, East Budleigh, July 1968

Chris Khan, Flood Risk Officer at the Environment Agency, said

This is one of the biggest floods we have recorded in Devon. Many communities that we work with were affected. We would like as many people as possible to come along, whether they are a local resident or on holiday. We would love visitors to share memories and bring any photographs they have.

The impacts of the flood were immense; bridges collapsed causing roads to close. Sidmouth, Colyton, Honiton, Newton Poppleford, East Budleigh and Ottery St Mary all had significant flood damage whilst The Otterhead reservoir was completely washed away.

A lot has changed since 1968; similar storms still occur but people and businesses are better protected than ever before. In the last 10 years the Government has invested more than £6.1 billion in flood risk management work including many flood alleviation schemes across the south west.

There are also tools to help you reduce your own risk of flooding. The

Environment Agency send targeted flood warnings to over a million people in England – giving them vital time to prepare for flooding. You can sign up for free flood warnings [online](#) or by ringing 0345 988 1188.

Press release: Glebe Quarry Ltd AKA 1st Call Skips fined for supplying contaminated waste

A Cornish waste disposal company has been ordered to pay £26,500 in fines and costs for illegally handling and disposing of hazardous waste.

Glebe Quarry Limited was also ordered to pay £17,000 compensation to a local farmer after waste contaminated with asbestos was dumped on his land. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

The company, which trades as 1st Call Skips, operates a permitted waste transfer station at Glebe Quarry near Roche, St Austell. On 6 December 2017, the company pleaded guilty to 5 separate offences at Truro Crown Court.

The offences occurred at 3 sites in Cornwall, including the company's own waste transfer station, a nearby farm and a site operated by the china clay company, Imerys.

The Environment Agency had earlier advised the company to improve Glebe Quarry after the drainage and concreting at the site was checked and found to be 'inadequate'. No action was taken so the Environment Agency issued an enforcement notice requesting that improvements works be carried out.

Glebe Quarry Limited appealed, but the appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate; forcing the company to carry out the improvements that were finally completed in November 2016.

Further checks by the Environment Agency revealed the company had unlawfully dumped more than 2,400 tonnes of waste, some of which was contaminated with asbestos, on land which wasn't authorised by their site permit. Glebe Quarry Limited continued illegally dumping waste at the site despite being warned they would be committing an offence if they carried on.

In 2015, the defendant also sent waste to Imerys Minerals Ltd with waste that should have been suitable for land improvements for restoring an area of china clay spoil heaps. However, it was later found to be contaminated with asbestos.

The asbestos was discovered before the waste was spread and the loads were returned to Glebe Quarry. Nearly 50 tonnes of hazardous material was removed

by Glebe Quarry Limited but was never traced as no paperwork was kept.

Glebe Quarry Limited also supplied waste to local farms for use in low-risk activities such as the construction of farm tracks. This was done under an exemption which is an agreement that doesn't require a permit. The waste supplied to one farm was heavily contaminated with asbestos and cost nearly £120,000 to clean-up.



Each yellow flag in this farm track, made from waste supplied by Glebe Quarry Ltd, marks where asbestos was found

Matthew Lee of the Environment Agency said:

This case sends a clear message to those who put profit ahead of the environment and human health.

As a minimum, we expect waste companies who hold environmental permits to act legally and should set an example to others, but the behaviour in this case has fallen far short of exemplary.

Appearing before Truro Crown Court on 22 June 2018, Glebe Quarry Limited was fined £12,500 for offences under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010, the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005, and the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

In addition to the financial penalty, the court ordered that Glebe Quarry Limited must proactively inform the Environment Agency which sites they are

sending their waste to and they must also remedy the sites they have polluted.

If you see waste crime taking place report it by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to [Crimestoppers](#).

[Press release: Water quality improvements signal end for 1980s river equipment](#)

Lea Marston lakes were created in the 1980s to collect contaminated sediment flowing down the River Tame from Birmingham and Minworth sewage treatment works. An automatic trash screen was built to collect logs and other debris to protect the equipment used to remove the contaminated sediment. It was never installed to protect people from flooding.

Over the last 30 years water quality in the River Tame has improved dramatically, and for over 15 years there has been no need to clear the sediment. This has meant that the lakes have become a wildlife haven for birds and other animals.

The trash screen costs over £200,000 each year to run and maintain and it has now got to the end of its design life. So, as it is not providing any environmental benefit and it's not reducing flood risk, the Environment Agency are planning to decommission it.

This will lead to further improvements in water quality; logs and other natural debris are good for healthy rivers as they create natural shallows and deep areas which is really good for fish and aquatic life.

Neil Lote, from the Environment Agency said:

We're really pleased to see the work we've been doing to improve river water quality have such wide benefits. The screen isn't reducing flood risk, and is actually acting as a barrier to further environmental improvements to the lakes and the river, so it makes sense to remove it.

After the Environment Agency remove the screen, they will be able to take more accurate measurements of water levels so their flood alerts and warnings will be more accurate as the water level won't be artificially altered by the screen.

The Environment Agency will closely monitor the lakes and the River Tame

before they totally remove the screen to make sure the river is flowing as their expert assessments have shown.

[Press release: Environment Agency agrees first Enforcement Undertaking for odour pollution](#)

An Enforcement Undertaking (EU) has been agreed with Renewi UK Services Ltd, formerly Shanks Waste Management Ltd, after the company were suspected of causing odours, following a history of odour complaints.

The site on Sowerby Woods Industrial Estate, Barrow-in-Furness, is one of two in Cumbria which takes the county's municipal waste. Waste at the site is processed, the recyclates are removed and the remaining waste is turned into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). Local businesses and residents have complained of being affected by odours from the site since 2014. These reports were investigated by the Environment Agency and the Operator has subsequently put additional measures in place to minimise the impact of odour.

When appropriate, it may be in the public interest to accept an EU from an Operator rather than prosecuting them for an offence. EUs allow those who are suspected of committing offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence. When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right voluntarily, working with their local environment.

Having worked with the Operator to identify changes that were needed the Environment Agency accepted the EU offer which included an increase in the biofilter stack height, alterations to the management of the processes on site and increased sampling and monitoring.

As part of the EU, the Operator has also donated £60,000 to a local environmental charity which will benefit the local environment, made compensation payments to a number of local businesses and individuals as well as paying the Environment Agency's investigation costs.

Claire Westgarth, Environment Agency Installations Team Leader said:

This is the first time an EU has been accepted for alleged permit breaches relating to odour at an Installation, which is a huge achievement.

Since the Operator invested and addressed the issues on site the reduction in odour has been noted by local businesses. Whilst a site like this may never be completely free of odour, we are really

pleased with the outcome for the local community.

We are continuing to monitor odour around the site to check that the measures continue to be suitable for minimising the impact from odour.

The Environment Agency is receiving more EU Offers since they became available in 2015 and we assess and accept them where the offer adequately addresses the offending and restores and benefits the environment”
The EU was completed on 24 May 2018.