

# Press release: Arrest as Environment Agency cracks down on waste crime

Environment Agency and Yorkshire & Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit carried out enforcement action at a residential address this morning (Tuesday 9 May 2018) following an in-depth investigation into illegal dumping of waste. One 46 year old male was arrested and evidence was seized.

This arrest follows successful enforcement action taken in April 2017 as part of an ongoing investigation into the illegal dumping of 20,000 to 25,000 tonnes of waste at 17 sites across the Midlands, North West and North East.

The investigation known as Operation Cesium is looking into illegally dumped baled waste at 17 sites. The investigation will continue with the evidence seized today and is expected to continue for many more months.

Michael Brown, lead investigator, part of the Environment Agency's National Investigation Team said:

We are determined to tackle waste crime and bring those responsible to account; in this case we are thoroughly following and interrogating the evidence so that we have a robust case to take to court.

This investigation is complex, with waste being illegally dumped across many parts of the country, blighting those communities. Some of the sites have already caught fire causing a significant impact on communities, the environment and our emergency service partners.

Illegal waste and the criminals behind waste crimes divert as much as £1 billion every year from legitimate businesses and the treasury, which is why we take tough action against serious offenders. In 2016 our prosecutions resulted in fines totalling £8 million.

It's our job to do everything we can investigate these crimes and prosecute those we believe responsible.

Convictions for waste crime can include large fines and a custodial sentence.

DC John Davies, of the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit, said:

We're committed to working with our partner agencies to effectively investigate and relentlessly disrupt criminal activity.

By working together, we can utilise our collective knowledge,

experience and powers to bring offenders to justice.

This investigation has been ongoing since 2016 and we will continue to examine the evidence to determine the full extent of the suspected offences in efforts to bring those responsible to account.

Waste crime is taken extremely seriously. If anyone has information connected to this investigation or suspects other waste crime contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

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## [News story: Master and vessel owner fined for fishing in Bass Nursery Area during closed period](#)

William Paul Chapman, master and owner of unlicensed vessels Spirt and Last Minute, was sentenced at Bodmin Magistrates Court on 12 April 2018 in a prosecution brought by the MMO.

The court heard about a joint patrol that was conducted on 15 September 2016 by MMO and Environment Agency (EA) officers around the Camel Estuary in Cornwall, a Bass Nursery Area (BNA) where fishing is prohibited between 1 May and 30 November in any year. The officers observed one vessel fishing within the BNA and two men transferring items to a second vessel.

When that vessel returned to shore officers identified themselves to one of the men, Chapman, who subsequently left the scene. The fish box left behind was found to contain 10 bass, two of which were below the minimum conservation size. Three nets and anchors used in the fishing operation were also found on the vessel.

Chapman pleaded guilty to three offences relating to the catching of the bass and was ordered to pay total of £1,000 fine and £1,000 costs.

A spokesperson for the MMO said:

Bass conservation is very important and this case highlights the benefits of joint patrols between MMO and EA.

In cases like these MMO will always take proportionate and appropriate action, including prosecution, to ensure offenders do not profit from such illegal activity and to protect fish stocks for the wider fishing industry and future generations.

Chris Hitchings, EA Fisheries Enforcement Officer said:

We regularly work with the MMO and pool our resources enabling us to better protect sea fish and migratory fish from illegal capture. We hope that this result will serve as a deterrent to others seeking to fish illegally.

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## [Press release: £7m Lincolnshire coast flood scheme gets underway](#)

Around 400,000 cubic metres of sand are set to be pumped onto Lincolnshire's beaches to reduce flood risk to more than 20,000 homes and businesses, 24,500 static caravans and 35,000 hectares of land in a massive [Environment Agency-led](#) project.

The Lincolnshire Beach Management project involves the raising of beach levels lost naturally to the sea, by dredging sand from the seabed and pumping it onshore. The work forms a key part of the Environment Agency's management strategy for the Lincolnshire coast, which reduces coastal flood risk to thousands of homes, businesses and static caravans as well as agricultural land.

### **Reducing flood risk**

The project started on 30 April at Boygrift. Over the course of the next eight weeks, the dredger will move to Trusthorpe, Mablethorpe, Ingoldmells, Trunch Lane, Wolla Bank, Chapel Six Marshes and Huttoft to complete the project for this year.

The HAM316 dredger, which has the lowest carbon footprint of its class, is operating continuously, delivering approximately 5,000 cubic metres of sand twice a day.

Mark Robinson, senior coastal advisor at the Environment Agency, said:

Our work to restore beach levels is important as it protects our coastal defences, such as sea walls, from the energy of the waves as they impact on the coast.

Our defences along the Lincolnshire coast help us reduce coastal flood risk to tens of thousands of homes and businesses as well as significant areas of agricultural land. By replenishing beaches, we extend the defences' life.

The project also brings value to the bustling tourism economy on Lincolnshire's coast, as without it Lincolnshire's beaches would not be nearly as sandy.

Although the Environment Agency works around the clock to reduce flood risk to Lincolnshire's coastal communities, the risk can never be eliminated completely.

The Environment Agency urges people to [check if they are at risk of flooding and sign up for flood warnings online](#) or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

## Background

- The work to restore beach levels on Lincolnshire's coast is part of the Lincolnshire Beach Management 2018-2021 scheme.
- With storms and flooding becoming more frequent and sea levels rising due to climate change, the Environment Agency has recognised a need to review whether the current coastal flood risk management approach will be sustainable in the long term for Lincolnshire. The agency has therefore been consulting with the public on six coastal flood risk options to work alongside beach nourishment as part of the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy. This strategy will set out the most sustainable way of managing flood risk on this stretch of coast from 2021 to 2121. A draft strategy will be taken to consultation this summer.
- More details on the strategy and further information regarding times and locations of beach nourishment works are [available online](#)
- The Environment Agency is working to better protect more than 49,000 additional homes and businesses across Lincolnshire with £221m of government investment by 2021.

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## [Press release: Blitz on illegal fishing for Bank Holiday Weekend](#)

The officers will work with the police and Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiffs to make sure anyone fishing is obeying the law including fishing in waters that are open to anglers, using the right tackle and equipment, and having a valid fishing licence.

Bank Holiday weekends are a great opportunity for families to get out and do some fishing on our waterways and the Environment Agency is keen to ensure everyone is enjoying themselves and doing the right thing.

Kevin Austin, Deputy Director Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment, Environment Agency said:

The Environment Agency conducts enforcement operations throughout the year to protect fish stocks and improve fisheries.

Our enforcement officers, Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiffs and police are out there to make sure everyone is fishing legally this weekend. Anyone caught can expect to face prosecution.

Our work is intelligence-led, meaning we target known hotspots and act on reports of illegal fishing.

### **Is your local fishing spot open for fishing?**

Anglers are reminded that it is currently the closed season for coarse fishing and fishing for coarse fish on rivers and streams is not permitted.

This is done to protect breeding fish, helping to safeguard stocks for the future. However, there are still plenty of places anglers can wet a line.

Anglers are encouraged to check which waterways are open to fishing. They can visit [fishinginfo](#) to find more information.

There are nearly 500 Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiffs doing a great job keeping watch on their local rivers and working alongside local police. However, the Environment agency is also asking the public to report any suspicious activity.

Money from rod licence sales is invested in England's fisheries, and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers including; protecting stocks, restoring fish stocks through restocking, eradicate invasive species, and fish habitat improvements. Fishing licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing and to encourage participation in the sport.

You can check local fishing byelaws and get your fishing licence direct from [GOV.UK](#)

People are urged to report illegal fishing to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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# Press release: North East man fined for illegally burning waste

Mark Anthony Walsh, 57, of Maidstone Drive, Marton, Middlesbrough, appeared at Peterlee Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, 2 May, where he pleaded guilty to burning waste at Thorpe Larches in Sedgfield.

He was fined £5,800, ordered to pay £2,000 in costs and a victim surcharge of £80.

Prosecuting on behalf of the Environment Agency, Simon Crowder told the court that on 5 December 2016, the Environment Agency received information from Durham County Council about possible waste burning taking place on land at Beechgrove at Thorpe Larches in Sedgfield.

The following day two Environment Agency enforcement officers went to the property and spoke to Walsh, who said he had been burning waste packing which he had produced as a result of renovations on his own property. They left information with Walsh about the Environment Agency role and powers but did not see any evidence of burning.

In February 2017, the council contacted the Environment Agency to say they had received further complaints about burning waste at the land.

In March 2017, they received further information about fires at the address and attended the scene on two occasions. During one of the visits they saw no one was present with the fire. The waste pile was estimated to measure 5m by 2.5m and contained partially burnt household items along with a plastic wheelie bin, tin cans, garden waste, waste paper, metal springs and household electrical items.

During interview on 4 May that year Walsh said he only burnt bedding from the pig sty. Paul Whitehill, from the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

The evidence, including images and visits by our enforcement officers, shows Walsh burning waste on his land illegally.

Environmental laws are there to protect the environment and community and Walsh deliberately flouted those laws, putting the environment at risk. I'd encourage people to report waste crime to us so that we can investigate and take any necessary action.

Waste crime can be reported to the Environment Agency on 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.