

Open consultation: National FCERM strategy: Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping report

The revised flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) strategy requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations.

The scoping stage of SEA decides the issues we should address and the approach. We will present the outcome in the environmental report. This will be published together with the consultation on the draft FCERM Strategy 2050.

We will consult with interested parties, in particular the statutory SEA consultation bodies.

You can respond to this consultation by email to FCERMstrategy@environment-agency.gov.uk. Alternatively write to our [National Customer Contact Centre](#). Please mark for the attention of the SEA team.

For information about the FCERM Strategy 2050 see the [FCERM consultation hub](#).

Press release: Extended jail sentence handed to waste criminal

John Bruce (aged 46) is already serving 26 months imprisonment for dumping, burying and burning hazardous waste at Ridgeway Park Farm, Throckmorton Airfield, Worcestershire.

On Tuesday 4 September, Bruce pleaded guilty to a charge in relation to operating a regulated facility at Ridgeway Park Farm without an Environmental Permit. Worcester Crown Court handed Bruce a 22 week custodial sentence to run concurrently to his existing 26 month sentence.

The case, brought by the Environment Agency, concerned illegal waste operations at Ridgeway Park Farm in 2016. Bruce had accepted over 60 tonnes of redundant kitchen and bathroom materials onto his site. When Environment Agency officers visited the farm, they saw that in addition to these materials, flat pack furniture and packaging materials were being burnt on site.

In mitigation, the Judge noted that Bruce had pleaded guilty and therefore avoided the need for a full trial.

An Environment Agency officer in charge of the investigation said:

Mr Bruce has shown a blatant disregard for the environment and local community by operating a large scale illegal waste site at his farm. His actions undermine legitimate business also the investment and economic growth that go with it.

The Environment Agency will use all its enforcement powers, where we believe environmental offences have been committed. In cases where we believe monies have been unlawfully gained, we will investigate under the proceeds of crime act and confiscate assets.

The Environment Agency urge people to report waste crime on our Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Waste operator fined for illegal waste disposal in Devon countryside

The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

In 2016 Mr Baker imported 7,514 tonnes of inert waste on a field at Poltimore, Exeter under the guise of 'drainage' works. This amount of waste far exceeded that permitted under an authorisation, issued by the Environment Agency, known as a U1 waste exemption. A U1 exemption enables waste to be reused without the need for an environmental permit but sets a maximum tonnage limit of 1,000 tonnes for soil and sub-soil.

The waste, from development sites around Exeter, was used to level off a significant part of the site, altering the character of the field and that of the surrounding landscape. The defendant not only failed to comply with the conditions of his U1 waste exemption but he also failed to secure planning permission from Devon County Council.

Richard Tugwell for the Environment Agency said:

This was a serious abuse of a U1 waste exemption which had a significant impact on the Devon landscape. People who use waste exemptions must ensure they comply with them and obtain appropriate planning permission.

Appearing before Exeter magistrates, Roger Baker, of Bovey Tracey, Devon, was

fined £1,710 and ordered to pay £4,946 costs after pleading guilty to an offence under Reg 38 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016. The court also ordered Mr Baker to remove and appropriately dispose of the waste he'd illegally imported within 12 months.

The case was heard on 23 August 2018.

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[Press release: Helping communities be flood resilient](#)

A team of flood engagement officers have worked with more than 60 schools and 700 businesses during their first year in post to help communities be more resilient to flooding in the North East.

The Environment Agency appointed the new team to increase awareness of flood risk and help people be prepared for flooding.

The £280,000 a year project, which started last summer, includes four new engagement officers spread across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and Darlington, and Cleveland.

Funded by the Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NRFCC) for four years, the officers are working alongside partner organisations to help support communities.

In their first year they have worked closely with communities at risk of flooding to help them recruit Flood Wardens and develop Community Flood Plans, and have focused on ensuring businesses are resilient to protect the impact of floods on the economy.

Area updates

In Northumberland Colin Hall has been working with many Northumberland communities. In Ponteland in particular he has been working hard to increase their flood resilience including completing a Flood Week in Ponteland Primary School, campaigning for new Flood Wardens, progressing a community flood plan and establishing a Flood Warden Group.

In Tyne & Wear Taryn Al-mashgari has been working in schools in Sunderland, South Tyneside and Newcastle delivering Flood Weeks and careers events. She's also focused on businesses in Gateshead, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Her plans for the coming year include working with key communities such as Wingrove to raise awareness of surface water flooding.

In Cleveland, Sarah Duffy has been working with communities from across the area, working with schools in Middlesbrough, Stockton, and Redcar and Cleveland to complete a series of Flood Weeks. She's also been working with businesses in Yarm to increase resilience, including meeting businesses on the High Street, and running a Business Breakfast morning to bring businesses together. Sarah has formed strong links with Skinningrove Flood Warden Group and hopes to expand the Flood Warden network in Cleveland next year.

In Durham and Darlington Anna Caygill has been focusing on schools and communities such as Stanhope and Chester-le-Street, including promoting the

Flood Warning Service and recruiting Flood Wardens. Anna has also been working closely with Durham Housing Group to identify where their properties at risk of flooding are and to come up with a strategy to warn and inform tenants to be more prepared for a flood event. In Darlington she has been working with groups in Cockerton and Haughton-le-Skerne to increase the area's resilience.

The Community Engagement Officers are working on behalf of the Environment Agency and local authority partners.

As well as supporting residents and businesses, working alongside schools has played a key role in helping future generations understand their risk.

The team hosted a region-wide Flood Warden logo competition which led to a new blue jacket uniform for flood wardens across the North East so they were recognisable to emergency services and the community during an incident.

Really successful first year

Phil Taylor, Environment Agency Flood Resilience Team Leader in the North East, said:

It's been a really successful first year for the Flood Engagement Officers and they are now well known within their communities. This is a foundation they will build on going forward.

A key part of their activity has been working with schools as future generations have a key role to play in ensuring our communities are flood resilient – the team has worked with around 5,500 school pupils this past year alone.

We all know just how devastating flooding can be for communities and there are actions people can take now will make all the difference to reducing the impact a flood can have.

We're still working hard to help communities understand their flood risk and sign up to receive free flood warnings, as well as helping residents develop community flood plans that detail the action each community or business can take to reduce the impact of flooding, and help them return to normal life as soon as possible should a flood happen.

To find out more about your local flood risk and sign up to the Flood Warning Service [online](#)