

All creatures great and small

Scotland's Rural College has become one of only two higher education institutions in Scotland to offer a degree in Veterinary Nursing.

News story: Strong public backing bolsters fight against blight of plastic waste

Individuals, businesses and campaign groups have expressed overwhelming support for action on tackling the impact of plastics on our environment.

The backing comes as HM Treasury publishes the [summary of responses](#) to its recent call for evidence on how tax can be used to reduce plastic waste. The call attracted an unprecedented 162,000 responses, the highest in the Treasury's history.

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, has reiterated the department's commitment to take action through the tax system to reduce the amount of single-use plastic waste. The views received will help inform and shape the government's approach ahead of this year's Budget.

Measures which received noteworthy public support and are being considered include using the tax system to:

- encourage greater use of recycled plastic in manufacturing rather than new plastic
- discourage the use of difficult to recycle plastics, like carbon black plastic
- reduce demand for single-use plastics like coffee-cups and takeaway boxes
- encourage further recycling as opposed to incineration

The Exchequer Secretary, Robert Jenrick, while visiting a plastic pollution clean-up operation on Perranporth Beach in Cornwall, said:

Tackling the scandal of plastic pollution is one of our top priorities and we know the public is right behind us. I've been overwhelmed by the public support and the responses we've received will be invaluable as we develop our plans for using the tax system to combat this.

Our duty to leave the environment in a better state than we found it is absolutely clear and what we've set out today is another important step to ensuring a cleaner, greener future for Britain.

Hugo Tagholm, CEO of Surfers Against Sewage, said:

Surfers Against Sewage is delighted with the huge public response to the Treasury's recent call for evidence on how the tax system could be used to reduce plastic waste, which many of our supporters responded to.

This is a clear indication of the public appetite for more fiscal interventions to help reduce plastic pollution littering our environment, from inner-city streets and countryside to our oceans.

The Treasury is also looking at how it could further support measures to fund the development of new, greener products and innovative processes that will help ensure a more sustainable future for the country.

This work forms part of the government's overall commitment in its [25 Year Environment Plan](#) to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste. It builds on the recently announced £20 million plastics innovation fund – to support the production of sustainable and recyclable plastics – and follows the £61.4 million announced by the Prime Minister to be invested in tackling plastic in the world's oceans.

[News story: LLWR Manager wins share of industry honour](#)

LLW Repository Ltd (LLWR) Manager Mike Coward has received the prestigious Shared Services Alliance (SSA) Walker Award for Collaborative Working as a member of a team that undertook a pilot project predicted to lead to major cost savings across the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Group.

The award-winning team, drawn from across the SSA, undertook a collaborative supplier assessment on the management system arrangements of Nuvia Ltd, and its assessment report has been well received across the Alliance.

Such joint assessments are expected to reduce the burden on resources across the NDA Group and the supply chain, creating significant efficiency savings.

In an extreme example, one particular supplier had been audited 135 days out

of 250 potential working days because of a lack of collaboration between SSA members.

“I am delighted the team won the award which recognises the hard work that went into the collaborative assessment,” said Mike, LLWR Operations & Projects Quality Manager.

“I think the potential huge cost and efficiency savings of this approach for both suppliers and resources across the NDA estate were a major factor in us winning the award.”

The team, led by Martin George, from Sellafield, and including DSRL’s Mary-Jane Statham, and Karina Pellow, of the SSA, is now developing a collaborative assessment programme.

[Press release: Make it your business to be flood resilient](#)

The Environment Agency has launched a campaign to ensure North East businesses are prepared for flooding.

Since 1998 there has been at least one serious flood every year with businesses more likely to flood than be destroyed by fire.

And with recent events such as 2012’s ‘Thunder Thursday’ hitting businesses hard the Environment Agency is working with them to reduce the impact of a flood.

The campaign launches with an event in Yarm next week and will culminate with an event in North Shields in October.

The Environment Agency’s four Flood Resilience Community Engagement Officers for the region have already been in touch with more than 700 business across the region to raise awareness of flooding issues – more than 100 in Tyne and Wear, more than 500 in Durham and Darlington and more than 90 in Cleveland.

In Northumberland, the team worked with seven businesses during a drop-in about a potential flood scheme at Hexham Industrial Estate and 18 businesses attended a drop-in event at Prudhoe.

‘It will never happen to me’

Taryn Al-mashgari, Community Engagement Officer for Tyne and Wear, said:

A common phrase I hear when out visiting businesses is ‘it will never happen to me’. Some aren’t even aware they are trading in an

area at risk of flooding. Flooding accounts for 33% of all losses to business property. This has a huge impact on our economy.

With climate change meaning extreme weather events becoming frequent and more severe in the future it's more important than ever that businesses are prepared.

Most businesses can save between 20% and 90% on the cost of lost stock and moveable equipment by taking action now, before winter. For every £1 spent preparing for flooding £5 is saved – this is money well spent.

- The campaign launches with a 'Business Breakfast' drop-in event in Yarm which takes place at Yarm Fellowship Hall between 7.30am-9am on Wednesday 22 August.

Businesses can come along and talk to Sarah Duffy, Community Engagement Officer for Cleveland, about their experiences of flooding and she will be helping them understand how to prepare for a flood, create a business flood group and ensure the safety of staff and customers during a flood event. Refreshments will be provided.

- This will be followed up by a community drop-in event at Redcar and Cleveland Leisure and Community Heart on Friday 24 August between 10am and 12noon.

And in October, the campaign will culminate with a big event for businesses at North Shields Fish Quay. Taryn added:

The impact of 'Thunder Thursday' on businesses across the country was estimated to be £200million, that's an extraordinary figure. There's lots that businesses can do to reduce the impact.

Things businesses can do to make them more resilient to flooding:

1. Understand the different types of flooding. Flooding can happen from the coast, river, surface water, sewer and groundwater.
2. Check their flood risk. Businesses can check if they are at risk of flooding from rivers, the coast and surface water.
3. Check they have the right level of insurance.
4. Write a flood plan.
5. Invest in flood protection measures and link up with neighbouring

properties.

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