

Press release: Carlsberg pollution leads to restorative charity donations

Carlsberg Supply Company UK Ltd (Carlsberg) has paid £120,000 to environmental charities as part of an Enforcement Undertaking (EU).

The EU was offered to the Environment Agency after the company admitted causing two similar diesel pollution incidents in the River Nene in July and October 2017.

Benefit to environment

Enforcement Undertakings (EUs) enable firms and individuals who have damaged the environment to offer to complete actions which will address the cause and effect of their offending, including making a payment to an appropriate environmental project.

EUs can be offered for offences including polluting rivers, breaching permit conditions designed to protect communities, or failing to comply with recycling/recovery obligations. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the actions offered by the offender are acceptable.

In July 2017, around 230 litres of diesel escaped into the River Nene. This followed a diesel spill the previous week that ran into the site's surface water drain. Heavy rain in the days leading up to pollution incident is believed to have washed the diesel out of the drain and into the River Nene. The Environment Agency was able to contain most of the spill by ensuring the lock downstream at the marina remained closed until the diesel was cleared up by the Environment Agency and Carlsberg personnel.

In October 2017, an estimated 200 litres of diesel escaped into the same river following similar circumstances. The diesel took the same path as the previous incident and due to a faulty valve flowed straight into the River Nene.

The EU offer was accepted by the Environment Agency in August 2018 and payments to the charities have already been received. Carlsberg made donations totalling £120,000, made up of £80,000 to the Wildlife Trust – Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, and £40,000 to the River Nene Regional Park Community Interest Company.

This money will be used to fund environmental improvements including coir rolls along the river at Foot Meadow Island on the River Nene in Northampton.

The company also paid the Environment Agency's incident response and enforcement costs in full. In response to both incidents Carlsberg introduced site based improvements, including incident training and exercising, installation of preventative measures to the draining system and the revision of relevant processes and procedures to reduce the likelihood of this

happening again.

Tim Lowe, a Regulatory Officer with the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow polluters to positively address and restore the harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for suitable cases to swiftly restore the environment, improve practices of the offending company and avoid longer criminal court cases. However prosecutions will still be taken in appropriate cases.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

John Comont, Conservation Director for the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, said:

We have ambitious goals to increase wetland diversity along the river Nene and around Northampton, not just on our treasured wildlife sites in the area, but equally in the connecting corridors and neighbouring areas that can help form a vital 'network for nature.

We urgently need more funds in order to achieve this ambition and the money we have received will contribute towards these goals, which we believe will improve the area for people as well as wildlife.

Kathryn Hardcastle, Chief Executive Officer, River Nene Regional Park, said:

This contribution has allowed us to complete a £140,000 project at the Foot Meadow Island in the town centre which has improved the environment for people and for nature.

This is our second Enforcement Undertaking contribution and is an excellent way of funding environmental improvements and building awareness.

Notes to editors

The River Nene Regional Park Community Interest Company has used the money to improve river habitat with the installation of planted coir rolls along the river at Foot Meadow Island on the River Nene in Northampton.

Coir rolls are a great way to create riverside habitat opportunities on

rivers with concrete edging, without compromising the water flow. As well as the aesthetic appeal, coir rolls benefit a wide range of species, from native invertebrates, water voles, aquatic birds as well as providing cover for young fish and a place for species such as bream to lay their eggs. The root systems from the plants in the coir roll can also assist with water purification through the absorption of nutrients.

For more information about the River Nene Regional Park Community Interest Company project please contact kathryn@rnrp.org, or call 07551311528.

For more information on the Wildlife Trust – Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire – please contact Caroline.Fitton@wildlifebcn.org or call 01954 713567.