

Press release: Environmental charities receive over £2.2 million from businesses which broke environmental laws

Companies and individuals will make the payments for environmental offences including pollution of rivers or the sea, not meeting permit conditions or not taking reasonable steps to recover packaging waste.

A total of 15 charities and projects will benefit from the £2,223,121.54 with the money to be spent by local groups on projects that benefit the environment including cleaning up and enhancing parks, rivers and beaches.

The latest list includes the Environment Agency's largest ever financial contribution of £975,000 offered by [Wessex Water Services Limited](#) for an environmental offence involving sewage spills at Swanage in Dorset. The funds will benefit Dorset Waste Partnership (£400,000), Dorset Litter Free Coast and Sea Project (£100,000), Purbeck District Council/Swanage Town Council (£400,000) and Durlston Country Park and Nature Reserve (£75,000).

There are another 14 Enforcement Undertakings with payments ranging from £5,000 – £232,000, including:

- United Utilities Water Limited – £232,000 benefitting Mersey Rivers Trust (£90,000) and Community Forest Trust (£142,000) for discharging sewage into a brook
- Yorkshire Water Services Limited – £200,000 benefitting Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for polluting a river.
- Northumbrian Water Limited – £135,000 benefitting Durham Wildlife Trust (£45,000), Wear Rivers Trust (£45,000), Marine Conservation Society (£45,000) for polluting a stream.
- Carlsberg Supply Company UK Limited – £120,000 benefitting the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Northamptonshire (£80,000) and River Nene Regional Park Community Interest Company (£40,000) for polluting a river.
- Tesco Distribution Limited – £100,000 benefitting Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for discharging diesel into a watercourse and ponds.

- Angel Springs Holdings Limited – £24,329 benefitting Marine Conservation Society for not taking reasonable steps to recover and recycle packaging waste.

As well as making a payment to an appropriate charity or project, these companies have accepted liability, demonstrated restoration of harm and will make improvements to avoid future offences.

Peter Kellett Director of Legal Services from the Environment Agency said:

When companies damage the environment whether it is through polluting our waters or breaching permit conditions, we will take enforcement action against them including civil sanctions.

We take these environmental incidents very seriously and these payments of more than £2.2 million direct to charities will help them carry out vital projects to improve our environment right across England.

Ellie Brodie, Senior Policy Manager, The Wildlife Trusts said:

Obviously, we would have been happier if these incidents hadn't occurred at all. However, it's a good principle that polluters should offer redress for the damage they cause. The money will enable work which will benefit wildlife and wild places, and which otherwise wouldn't be funded. We hope these payments serve as a reminder to business of its responsibility towards a clean and healthy environment; and also have a deterrent effect as it's clearly cheaper to do things cleanly, rather than risk creating pollution.

Companies or members of the public are urged report pollution to the Environment Agency's 24/7 hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Environment Agency officers respond to limit damage to the environment and protect people and wildlife.

The Environment Agency is increasingly using enforcement undertakings for suitable cases to restore or enhance the environment, improve practices of the offending business and ensure future compliance with environmental requirements. However prosecutions will still be taken, particularly in the most serious cases.

The full list of [Enforcement Undertakings](#) is now available.