

Southampton targeted for illegal waste exports

A former company director has been fined for exporting banned household waste from Southampton.

The illegal cargo bound for Indonesia in 2019 included nappies, clothing, textiles, tins and electrical items sent from a site in Worcestershire.

Tianyong Wang, of Solihull, pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to causing his dissolved company, Berry Polymer Ltd, to export the waste. Shipping documents described the waste as plastic, which can be exported to Indonesia for recycling.

Howard McCann, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told Kidderminster magistrates that between 27 June and 5 July 2019, Wang had caused his company to export some 382 tonnes of household waste in 22 sea containers from its site in Droitwich via Southampton and Felixstowe, including 17 from the south coast port.

The waste included 1,590 nappies and sanitary items, 1,338 electrical items and 33,639 tins and cans.

Other contaminants found in searches by investigators from the Environment Agency were items of clothing, textiles and rags, unopened plastic bags, glass, wood, golf balls, toys, a used toilet brush and food and drink cartons.

Mr McCann told the court Wang was the sole director of Berry Polymer, which has since been dissolved.

Wang had agreed to sell 500 tonnes of plastic bottle waste to a broker at £270 per tonne. A purchase order confirmed the load site of the waste as 'Berry Polymer Ltd, 20 The Furlong, Droitwich WR9 9AH'. Berry Polymer invoiced the broker £103,210.20 for 382.26 tonnes of 'plastic bottles'.

The offence was discovered on 4 July 2019 by Environment Agency officers who conducted initial inspections of some of the 22 containers sent to Southampton and Felixstowe.

The inspections recorded significant evidence of contamination, flies and, in some containers, a rotting decomposing smell.

The containers were deemed unfit for export at that stage and prevented from onward shipment to Indonesia.

Five of the containers were transported to the Environment Agency's inspection facility at Felixstowe for full examination. One of the bales was so badly contaminated, it made an officer physically sick.

All the containers were returned to the site in Droitwich for reprocessing.

Wang told the Environment Agency the material supplied was not as described because his company's usual bale-inspection had either not happened or was sub-standard.

In sentencing, district judge Ian Strongman said this was a 'blunder' by Wang that cost him his business and his reputation.

Sham Singh, a senior investigating officer for the Environment Agency, said:

This prosecution sends out a strong message we will investigate and, where necessary, prosecute anyone found to be involved in exporting waste illegally.

Waste crime can have a serious environmental impact and puts communities at risk. It undermines legitimate business and the investment and economic growth that go with it.

We support businesses operating within the law by stopping the illegal waste exports.

At Kidderminster magistrates' court on 10 August, Tianyong Wang, 43, of Welcombe Grove, Solihull, was fined £1,200 and ordered to pay costs of £10,000.

He was charged with breaching regulation 55(1) of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007, by causing Berry Polymer Ltd to transport 22 containers of waste collected from households to Indonesia illegally between 27 June and 5 July 2019. This was contrary to regulation 23 of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007.

If anyone suspects a company is doing something wrong, please contact the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

[COP26 Regional Ambassador O'Flaherty travels to Guatemala](#)

World news story

UK Government's Regional Ambassador for Asia/ Pacific, Caribbean and Small Island Developing States, Ken O'Flaherty, will visit Guatemala on 19 August.



Ambassador O'Flaherty is including Guatemala in a global tour to several countries vulnerable to climate change as part of the UK's vigorous diplomatic efforts to follow up on the commitments of the Glasgow Climate Pact, achieved last year at COP26 in Scotland.

The Regional Ambassador will focus on helping meaningfully efforts to build resilience to climate change, to curb greenhouse gas emissions and to provide the necessary finance for both.

The Ambassador will stress the importance of reducing the gap between existing emission reduction plans and what is required to reduce emissions, such as Guatemala's commitments to tackle deforestation and promote the use of renewable energies. He will also discuss the importance for Guatemala to support initiatives to phase down unabated coal power and inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels.

For that purpose, the Regional Ambassador will meet with senior representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy and the National Council of Protected Areas. He will also learn about private sector efforts to promote sustainable development, and other active projects being implemented in Guatemala by environmental organizations.

During his trip, the Regional Ambassador will also highlight the need for nations to reaffirm their duty to comply with contributing 100 billion dollars annually from developed to developing countries. The UK has already committed US\$20 million through its [Biodiverse Landscapes Fund](#), which will help Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Belize cope with the impacts of climate change, reduce poverty and protect biodiversity in environmentally rich areas of Mesoamerica.

The 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), COP26 took place November 1-12, 2021, in Glasgow, UK. The UK holds the Presidency until COP27 in Egypt later this year and will aim to ensure promises on emission reductions are fulfilled to keep 1.5C alive; commitments on adaptation and loss and damage are honoured; commitments to get finance flowing are kept and that its inclusive Presidency continues.

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More foreign criminals and illegal migrants removed

News story

Renewed focus on removals is fulfilling the government's commitment to keep the British public safe and tackle illegal migration.



The Home Secretary has sent out an urgent warning today (Thursday 18 August) to dangerous foreign criminals and immigration offenders in the UK that the government will not rest until they are removed and our streets are made safer.

The vow comes as new statistics show the Home Office has removed 1,741 foreign national offenders (FNO) from the UK since the start of 2022, including 487 Albanian FNOs. Almost 1,000 Albanians in total (FNOs and immigration offenders) have been returned.

The renewed focus on removals, part of the New Plan for Immigration, is fulfilling the government's commitment to keep the British public safe and tackle illegal migration.

Yesterday (Wednesday 17 August) the Home Secretary agreed a landmark deal with Pakistan, to remove Pakistani nationals with no legal right to remain in the UK, including criminals, failed asylum seekers and immigration offenders.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This work shows we will stop at nothing to remove those with no right to be here and I am proud that we have removed almost 1,000 Albanian foreign national offenders and immigration offenders this year so far, including some who crossed the Channel illegally to come to the UK.

I want to be crystal clear though that this is just the beginning.

I have tasked Home Office teams to renew their pursuit of dangerous criminals who devastate lives and communities and leave their victims and families to pick up the pieces. They must be swiftly removed so we can make our streets safer.

The British public rightly expect us to crack down hard on those abusing the system which is why our new Nationality and Borders Act will help end the cycle of last-minute claims and appeals that can delay removals.

Today, Home Office statistics show:

- the UK has removed 1,741 foreign national offenders since January 1, 2022
- 487 FNOs removed to Albania, including individuals convicted of rape, sexual offences, indecent assault of a minor, death by dangerous driving, facilitating illegal entry to the UK, trafficking, kidnap, robbery, carrying weapons, dealing Class A drugs, violence and burglary
- the 487 criminals had 606 convictions between them
- in July 2022, 243 foreign national offenders were removed from the UK on both charter and scheduled flights

Albanian foreign national offenders returned this year include:

- an individual sentenced to 18 years for Class A (cocaine) drug supply worth more than £2 million, was returned on a charter flight in June
- an individual sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for intent to supply Class A drugs, was returned on a charter flight in July
- an individual sentenced to three years' imprisonment for attempting to engage in sexual communication with a child and to meet a child following grooming, was returned on a charter flight in June

The UK also removed immigration offenders and illegal migrants who had entered the UK clandestinely – via small boats or hidden in lorries.

Immigration offenders and illegal migrants removed this year include:

- an individual first encountered in June 2022 following his arrest on suspicion of driving with excess drugs. He claimed to have entered the UK in the back of a lorry in 2021 but did not make himself known to authorities. The individual was detained for removal to Albania and agreed voluntarily to return in July 2022.
- an individual first encountered in July 2022 after arriving via a small boat crossing the Channel. He claimed to have come to the UK for economic reasons.
- an individual who entered the UK concealed in a lorry in 2015. The person made no claims to the Home Office. He was encountered and detained on 23 April 2022. He returned voluntarily on a charter flight in May after 12 days in detention.

The individuals were removed via charter or scheduled returns.

London landmark tax avoidance scheme named

ContractorCare Ltd was today named by HMRC as a tax avoidance promoter, along with PAYEme Ltd, and Gateway Outsource Solutions Ltd. Customers are being urged to withdraw from the published schemes and contact HMRC as soon as possible.

This [latest publication of tax avoidance schemes and their promoters](#) comes after tax avoidance promoter Hyrax Resourcing Ltd was handed a [£1 million fine after a legal challenge by HMRC](#), for failing to disclose to the tax authority the details of the tax avoidance scheme they promoted.

Mary Aiston, Director of Counter Avoidance, HMRC, said:

Tax avoidance schemes are advertised as clever ways to pay less tax but in reality, they rarely work as the promoters promise.

That's why we're regularly exposing the details of tax avoidance schemes and their promoters, to not only help customers steer clear of them, but also to disrupt the tax avoidance market and drive scheme promoters out of business.

Anyone who thinks they may be involved in a tax avoidance scheme, or have been approached by a scheme promoter, should contact us as soon as possible to get help.

The three named tax avoidance promoters are:

- ContractorCare Ltd, of 24/25 The Shard, 32 London Bridge Street, London, SE1 9SG
- PAYEme Ltd, 3rd Floor 8 Princess Parade, Liverpool, L3 1DL
- Gateway Outsource Solutions Ltd, of Mottram House, 43 Greek Street, Stockport, SK3 8AX

These avoidance schemes typically saw users contracted through the scheme and paid National Minimum Wage, with the rest of their wage disguised in a separate payment. Schemes such as these often wrongly promise their users can avoid National Insurance and Income Tax.

HMRC has now named a total of fourteen tax avoidance promoters and further names will be added to this list in the coming weeks. This is not a complete list of all tax avoidance schemes currently being marketed or a complete list of all promoters, enablers, and suppliers.

HMRC's [Tax Avoidance – Don't Get Caught Out](#) campaign offers a range of tools to customers to help them steer clear of avoidance schemes, such as their [interactive risk checker](#), [payslip guidance](#), and [case studies](#) demonstrating the risks of becoming involved in a tax avoidance scheme and the warning signs customers should look out for.

Customers who believe that they are involved in a tax avoidance scheme are advised to contact HMRC as quickly as possible by calling 03000 534 226.

HMRC is also urging customers who have been encouraged to get into a tax avoidance scheme or have come into contact with someone selling tax avoidance schemes to report this by using the [Report Tax Fraud Online Form](#).

Suspended sentences for 2 men who burned waste on Northampton site

David Wells, 41 of Fretter Close, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire and Daniel Hancock, 32 of Gull Crescent Northampton, repeatedly ignored warnings by the Environment Agency. They were sentenced to 8 months in prison, suspended for 2 years, and each ordered to perform 100 hours of unpaid work.

The pair, who had previously pleaded guilty, were ordered to pay £4,900 in costs at Northampton Crown Court following an investigation by the Environment Agency.

The court heard how both had been storing and burning waste without environmental permits at a site on the edge of the village of Boughton. Nearby residents reported toxic fumes and seeing flames coming from the Boughton Springs site.

During lockdown of spring and summer 2020, witnesses reported 'very thick dense smoke and very smelly' and 'acrid and very toxic'. Reports of fires that were 'frequent and troublesome' and smoke with 'a very unpleasant odour', were also reported.

Neighbours explained they were unable to sit in their gardens, hang out washing or open their windows. One elderly neighbour experienced breathing difficulty when fires were in progress.

Environment Officers visited on several occasions to warn and provide advice

on what material could be burnt legally. Despite these visits, the pair continued to burn material without permission and to store mixed waste illegally on the site.

In February 2021, officers visited unannounced after further blazes were reported. On arrival they found a fire made up of green waste in plastic bags, laminated wood, furniture, cans, and other general waste.

Officers at the scene described the smoke from the fire as black, with a 'toxic' smell.

Piles of items including toilets, scrap metal, 3 metres squared of spent printer cartridges, sacks of domestic waste, carpets, toys and clothes were found at the site. Much of the waste was stored on bare ground, risking contamination to soil and water, creating an odour problem and attracting flies and vermin.

In July, the pair were still storing illegal mixed waste in defiance of officers' advice. The Environment Agency, the court heard, had no alternative but to prosecute.

Environment Agency prosecutor, Sarah Dunne, said:

Officers had made every effort to work with the men to help them comply with the law.

Their activities had harmed the environment, impacted upon lawful competitors and undermined the Environment Agency's attempts to regulate and protect the environment.

Sentencing Wells and Hancock, Her Honour Judge Lucking QC said:

The pair's 'lucrative' business had had 'an impact on other people's mental health and well-being.

If the pair were back before the court for further environmental offences, they risked immediate custody. They had demonstrated a 'resistant attitude' to the Environment Agency and a 'flagrant disregard' for the law.

Paul Salter, Environmental Crime Officer at the Environment Agency, said:

David Wells and Daniel Hancock's convictions show how seriously we take the issue of waste crime.

This burning of waste blighted the community throughout lockdown, causing residents misery. The men were advised on many occasions as to how to store and safely manage their waste but refused to comply.

The burning of waste must be done in a sustainable and properly managed way that mitigates any impact on the local community. This was not done in this case.

Anyone with suspicions of waste crime can call our incident hotline, 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers, on 0800 555111.