

[Environment Agency calls on sports industry to support Plastic Free July](#)

Campaign toolkits have been sent to over 100 organisations inviting them to raise awareness of environmentally-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic items.

The toolkit has been created by the Environment Agency's plastics and sustainability team as part of the [Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution](#) project. The aim is to embed positive behaviour change. Experts say that 50% of all plastic produced is for single-use items – items that are often only used a few times and then discarded, which may pollute rivers and oceans, causing harm to wildlife.

Environment Agency project lead Hannah Amor said:

Everyone has a part to play in minimising their avoidable plastic consumption and carbon footprint to help conserve the natural world.

Sport can influence thousands of people that may otherwise not engage with environmental issues. Three billion people watched the Tokyo Olympics. That is a huge platform to showcase sustainability and make it the new norm for people taking part in and watching sport.

We hope this campaign will encourage people from all walks of life involved in sport to take even the smallest step, like wearing a hydration belt or carrying a reusable cup. Collectively, changing our daily habits can make a huge difference.

The toolkit includes twice-weekly posts encouraging deposit return schemes, re-wearing old kit and avoiding single-use plastic waste at celebrations. The posts also signpost to new sustainability guidance for [sports events](#), [stadiums](#) and [community clubs](#), and encourage people to sign up to the [Big Plastic Pledge](#) – a global movement founded by Olympic gold medallist Hannah Mills.

The campaign will also run on the Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution Twitter feed at [@Plastic_EU](#), with the first post going live on Friday 1 July (tomorrow).

Plastic Free July is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution. It was launched by the Plastic Free Foundation which aims to see a world free of plastic waste.

Environment Agency role

As a regulator, preventing waste plastic entering the environment by cracking down on waste crime and poor waste management is a key activity for the Environment Agency. As an influencer, it also has an ambition to promote better environmental practices that result in a reduction of plastic waste, helping to achieve the goals and commitments outlined in its five year plan to create better places for people and wildlife, and the government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Preventing Plastic Pollution (PPP)

PPP is a €14million funded EU INTERREG VA France (Channel) England Programme project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund which works mainly across pilot catchments: Brest Harbour, Bay of Douarnenez, Bay of Veys, Test and Itchen, East Hampshire, Poole Harbour, Medway, Tamar, and the Great Ouse catchments.

Working in partnership with 18 organisations from across France and England, PPP seeks to understand and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in the river and marine environments. By looking at the catchment from source to sea, the project identifies and targets hotspots for plastic, embeds behaviour change in local communities and businesses, and implement effective solutions and alternatives.

Partners are the Environment Agency, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Queen Mary University of London, LABOCEA Conseil, Expertise et Analyses, Syndicat mixte établissement public de gestion et d'aménagement de la baie de Douarnenez, Office Français De La Biodiversité, Parc naturel marin d'Iroise, Brest Métropole, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Conseil départemental de la Manche, Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer, The Rivers Trust, Syndicat de bassin de l'Elorn, ACTIMAR, Brest'aim, Westcountry Rivers Trust, South East Rivers Trust, and Plymouth City Council.

[Increased sentence for man convicted of rape and child sex offences](#)

News story

A Cambridgeshire man will spend longer in prison for rape and child sex offences



A Cambridgeshire man found guilty of rape and sexual offences against a child will spend longer in prison after the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP referred his original sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

Elton Townend-Jones, 52, engaged in a course of sexual abuse against the victim when she was between the ages of 10 and 14, which included raping her. There were at least 25 occasions where the offender assaulted the victim by penetration whilst she was under the age of 13.

On 23 March 2022, Townend-Jones was sentenced to a Special Custodial Sentence of 14 years' imprisonment with a 1-year extended licence at Cambridge Crown Court. This was later increased on 6 May 2022 by Cambridge Crown Court to 17 years' imprisonment with a 1-year extended licence.

Following the sentencing the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP, referred Townend-Jones' sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

On 30 June the Court of Appeal found his original sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it 20 years' imprisonment with a 1-year extended licence.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP said:

Elton Townend-Jones engaged in a sustained and depraved course of sexual abuse against a child. I believed that his crimes warranted a stronger punishment, so I welcome the decision of the Court of Appeal to increase his sentence today.

Published 30 June 2022

[Somerset farmer fined second time for](#)

polluting Frome watercourse

The case was heard at North Somerset Magistrates Court on 28 June 2022.

Cross Keys Farms Ltd pleaded guilty to causing an unpermitted discharge of slurry. This polluted the Somerset Frome river in Frome, turning it brown and smelly in August 2020. The slurry pollution killed more than 120 adult fish, including many large pike, roach and chub.

He was fined £12,000 and ordered to pay costs of £13,631.08.

In 2017 Aylesbury was found guilty of polluting this same stretch of the River Frome in 2016, killing more than 1,700 fish.

Members of the public alerted the Environment Agency to the pollution on 20 August 2020. Local residents carrying out 'citizen science' river monitoring provided helpful evidence for our investigation.

Reminded of the 2016 pollution incident, the sight of dead and dying fish distressed many people. One local fisherman described feeling 'physically sick' from the strong putrid smell of dead fish and said the sight of the dead fish was 'heart breaking'.

The pollution came from slurry that had been washed out of a soiled cattle trailer and rinsed out on to a concrete yard at Bollow Farm, Silver Lane, East Woodlands.

Also, a pile of slurry left open to the elements was washed into the surface water drain, ending up in the river.

Environment Officers found the ditch and river smelt strongly of slurry and low in dissolved oxygen. Investigations also showed that the slurry pollution resulted in the death of most invertebrates over more than 2.6 kilometres downstream.

Andy Grant, Environment Officer, said:

It was very disappointing to find another pollution from Bellow Farm following a previous prosecution for a major incident. The river was just beginning to recover and the fish population was showing signs of improving.

Informing us of the slurry spillage and keeping an eye on nearby watercourses are two simple actions the farmer should have taken to protect the local environment.

We restocked the river following the 2016 incident and it is so disappointing to see that work undone.

Luke Kozak , a Project Manager from the Environment Agency's Environment Programme Team said:

We are actively working with our partners in the Somerset Frome catchment to improve the water quality and habitat for people and for wildlife. Farming Wildlife advisory Group SW are leading an EA funded project focussed on working with farmers to improve their land management practices in order to reduce sediment reaching the river.

The Wild Trout Trust are leading a project in Frome Town Centre to enhance river habitat, which will also investigate the possibility of removing impoundments, increasing habitat connectivity and improving fish passage.

If anyone is concerned about pollution or an environmental incident they should call the Environment Agency's 24-hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Charges

- Between 18 August 2020 and 27 August 2020 Michael Aylesbury did cause an unpermitted water discharge activity, namely the discharge of poisonous, noxious or polluting matter from Bollow Farm, Silver Lane, East Woodlands, Frome, Somerset into inland fresh waters

Contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and Regulation 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

- On or before the 20 August 2020 at Bollow Farm, Silver Lane, East Woodlands, Somerset Michael Aylesbury failed to ensure that slurry was stored in accordance with Regulation 4(1) of the Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010

Contrary to Regulation 10(1) of the Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010.

Citizen science

The Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART) offer opportunities to carry out citizen science monitoring through their 'RiverBlitz' project and 'River Fly Monitoring' – further information can be found by visiting the BART website <https://bristolavonriverstrust.org/>.

New Members appointed to the Board of the British Library

Richard Blakeway

Appointed from 01 July 2022 until 30 June 2026

Richard has been the Housing Ombudsman since 2019. The service provides free, independent and impartial dispute resolution between residents and member landlords, and promotes positive change in the housing sector. He also chairs the Ombudsman Association.

Richard has extensive experience in the housing and regeneration sectors, with previous roles including Deputy Mayor of London for Housing, Land and Property, serving on the board of the regeneration agency, Homes England, and on the governing board of the Chartered Institute of Housing. He has been an election observer in Somaliland and Ukraine and is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Mary Hockaday

Appointed from 01 September 2022 until 31 August 2026

Mary is Master-Elect/Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. She left the BBC after a long career in News. In 2021 she was Director of BBC World Service, overseeing more than forty language services. For several years she was Controller BBC World Service English, looking after the BBC's radio and digital audio services in English for audiences around the world, growing the audience and developing a wide range of award-winning programmes and podcasts. Her previous role was as Head of the BBC Newsroom, overseeing the BBC's flagship daily television and radio news bulletins and the BBC news website. She held various other roles in the BBC.

She lived in Prague in the early 1990s as a correspondent for the BBC and The Independent and is the author of *Kafka, Love and Courage* – a biography of Milena Jesenska. She studied English at Cambridge and then Journalism at New York University on a Fulbright Scholarship.

Mary is a Lay Trustee with the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, an independent NED with the ICAEW and a Board Member with a small social enterprise, Climate Alliance.

Tom Holland

Appointed from 01 November 2022 until 31 October 2026

Tom Holland is a historian and broadcaster. He specialises in ancient and early medieval history. His most recent book, *Dominion*, traced the evolution of Christianity's influence on the world from antiquity to the present day.

He has made documentaries for both the BBC and Channel 4, and is the presenter of the podcast, The Rest Is History. He has served as chair of both the Society of Authors and the PLR Advisory Committee. He has been described by The Times as “a leading English cricketer”.

British Library Board Members are remunerated at £9130 per annum. These appointments have been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office’s [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Richard Blakeway, Mary Hockaday and Tom Holland have declared no activity.

[Speech by Jacob Rees-Mogg at Policy that Works 2022](#)

Thank you and good morning. My normal role when speaking at Conservative events is to be the warm-up man for the raffle, but I’m delighted that today they don’t have a raffle so I’m not doing that. Thank you for joining. Since I came to government just under three years ago, the commitment and hard work of civil servants to make government happen has been so impressive. So I want to begin by thanking you for all you do, and what this is about making your efforts go further so that we can have an even better and more effective government.

Opening today’s session of this Policy that Works conference, I had some thoughts on why evaluation and evidence-based policy design are vital for delivering value for taxpayers whom we serve. This great bugbear of mine is there is no such thing as public money. It’s always taxpayers’ money. My combined responsibilities for Brexit opportunities and government efficiency are one and the same with total governing independence outside the European Union.

It has never been so important to ensure the Whitehall machine is as finely tuned as possible – the Whitehall machine, that great Rolls Royce! We are to be one of those fantastic, classic Rolls Royces that purrs away and the loudest noises stop. The government currently spends around £1 trillion of taxpayers’ money a year . It’s a vast sum of money and it’s crucial to know how well this is spent and whether it is funding effective and meaningful policy. This should be at the front of all civil servants’, and indeed politicians’, minds. You are custodians in this regard. We must not waste taxpayers’ money or your own energy on ideas that won’t ultimately work.

Analysis undertaken by the Cabinet Office, the Treasury and Behavioural Insights Team found only 8% of government spending on major projects in 2019,

£35 billion of £432 billion total expenditure, had robust evaluation plans in place. This isn't where we want to be. And it's now attracting criticism from the National Audit Office into the evaluation of government spending. For evaluation to work in policymaking, it must have a clear plan for results. There must be scope to deliver things in a new way to scale up or to stop altogether. Evaluation must be informative every step of the way, not just at the end of the process, or indeed some years after the process is completed. Let me look at these 3 points individually. When embarking on a project in your role as a civil servant, you need to plan for evaluation at every stage from the beginning.

The first question you should ask when evaluating your own work is the most important. How will the policy I am developing make people's lives better in this country? That is what we're here for. And some departments have established organisations that sit alongside them to drive evaluation, like the Education Endowment Foundation created by the Department of Education or the role played by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence for the Department of Health and Social Care. But there is still more to do to ensure all departments are operating as effectively and efficiently as they can.

Hence, the focus on evaluation in the context of decisions seen at the Spending Review 2021 is here to stay. It is to be increased by challenging departments to tackle evaluation without being afraid of the results. As for those departments that have established What Works Centres, have you now learned what does not work and what are you doing about it? It is not only about what works but also what doesn't work.

We now move on to thinking more about how you do what we are asking you to do: how to implement effective and robust evaluation. We can do this through testing small innovations or variations of policies or programmes to identify which aspects of our proposals are effective and which are not. This is a valuable process as it enables us to explore whether some ideas might fail while minimising costs for the taxpayer and saving money in the long run from the experience.

One useful example of this is an early experiment HMRC ran to review how they write to people who were late in paying their taxes. HMRC compared different wording in letters to late-paying taxpayers using a Randomised Control Trial, it was found that adding the line "most people pay their taxes on time and you are one of the few yet to do so" into correspondence, it led to a 15% increase in the payment rate without further prompt. It was also associated with fewer complaints to HMRC, compared with our previous, more complicated and aggressive letters. As we all know, taxation is about plucking the goose with the least amount of hissing. By saying most people pay their taxes on time and you haven't, by not being rude and aggressive, more taxes are being paid. It was fantastic and that's a fantastic way of evaluating things. And HMRC didn't stop there – it took on board the deeper lesson that it could improve the performance of its services for the taxpayer by making their letters easier to understand. They began using Anglo-Saxon rather than Romanised words, but not all Anglo-Saxon words are suitable for correspondence from HMRC. They improved comprehension, in turn, reducing

frustration caused from confused taxpayers while improving payment rates and even increasing satisfaction with their service – a mean feat indeed.

We must all start with small pilots and work up to a bigger rollout. We must not be afraid of failure. If the pilot is not successful, go back to the drawing board and try again. No one will criticise you for that. And there is support available to you at this crucial point on the back of our commitments in the 2021 Spending Review – which I'll come to slightly later. So often in government combinations of inertia and sunk cost fallacy leads to colossal waste and failure. One of my biggest bugbears is the sunk cost fallacy, if £10 was wasted we shouldn't waste another £10 to justify it. Proper evaluation and honesty can stop this.

While pilot projects are important, it is helpful to reflect on what evaluation methods we can apply when we are happy that a project can be rolled out at full scale. An impact evaluation will mean we catch and fix problems early on in the rollout. We would rather do this than have an extensive list of lessons learned at the completion of a project, many years later, along with the vague hope that we can do better next time. Instead, we must do better at this time and use impact evaluation as a live tool to improve the customer experience in public services at the time people use them.

This will also help us tackle the problem we have in that we aren't generating enough evidence of what works to help inform future projects. You might ask: what support is available to ensure I can meet my evaluation obligations across the three areas set out above? Emphasising that we recognise this way of working may require change in some departments' traditional working practices, our commitment to put the outcomes of real-world spending impacts at the heart of decision making is why we established the Evaluation Task Force. The Evaluation Task Force (ETF), a joint Cabinet Office and HM Treasury unit, aims to improve people's lives by ensuring robust evidence on the effectiveness of policies and programmes sits at the heart of government spending decisions. Already, they are doing a fantastic job of promoting and furthering the use of robust evaluation. They played a significant role in the recent spending review, ensuring spending decisions were informed by evidence. The team has also launched a £15 million Evaluation Accelerator Fund. Over the next three years, we will accelerate evaluation activity, creation of actionable evidence, tackle evidence gaps, and provide vast evidence of financial or efficiency savings from new interventions. I would strongly encourage you to consider how we might make use of this fund to answer pressing questions in priority policy areas.

The ETF website is also helping to drive our commitment to government transparency. In the last few weeks, the ETF has been starting to feature some of the government's top evaluations. You will see a number of these top evaluations featured at this conference. Many of these from complex policy areas, where departments have been told evaluation would not be possible. Evaluation is always possible. Using new analysis techniques, high-quality evaluations have been developed, counterfactuals established and the impacts of our interventions have been learned and improved. Therefore, I would encourage you to draw on their services and drive them to provide you with

techniques for evaluation you can implement in your pilot projects and impact evaluations as you deliver for the British public.

All of this links back to the notion I introduced at the beginning: we need to be bold, not afraid of failure and have more evidence-based approaches to deliver an effective service to the taxpayer. I hope today has given you some sense of why I feel this agenda is so important and how you can go about implementing evaluations yourselves. Not just to deliver the same service or policy advice you gave yesterday, but to experiment, evaluate and improve the efficiency of government. We must find out what works and what does not work. Not only what works overall, but what works for whom, where and why. This is how we better deliver for citizens. This is how we build a modern civil service that supports us to be our best. So, let me close by thanking you once again for coming to this event today. For showing your willingness to ensure that the civil service can be as good as possible. Thank you for all that you do on a daily basis to ensure that the country is well-governed. The real Rolls Royce of Britain.