

[News story: Update on investigation into Whitstable oyster farm activity](#)

The Marine Management Organisation has provided an update on [the investigation it began in early 2017](#) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This related to alleged unlicensed depositing of oyster trestles on a privately owned area of Whitstable Beach by the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company or its manager Mr Green.

After investigation and careful consideration the MMO has concluded there was insufficient evidence to prove a criminal offence in relation to its remit under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The MMO licensing team has also considered the facts and circumstances of the deposit of trestles on Whitstable Beach and has concluded based on an [independent navigational risk assessment commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#) that the array of trestles do not currently constitute an obstruction or danger to navigation. This activity benefits from an exemption relating to shellfish propagation and cultivation under [the Marine Licensing \(Exempted Activities\) Order 2011 as amended \(Article 13\)](#).

The MMO is dealing with the issue [in line with its compliance and enforcement strategy](#) and does not intend to take further, retrospective legal action.

The MMO has a difficult task in managing competing uses of the marine area and appreciates there has been much public debate about the issue. It previously met with a number of local representatives, including the former MP for the area, on the matter. As it is important that the MMO carries out its duties and obligations impartially and fairly it did not feel it appropriate to open this process to a wider audience during an ongoing investigation.

Whilst this investigation has concluded the MMO will continue to monitor the situation and consider issues raised on a case by case basis.

[Press release: UKEF makes senior appointments to support UK's export ambitions](#)

UK Export Finance (UKEF) has made three appointments to its senior management to enhance its capability and capacity to realise the ambitions set out in its [Business Plan for 2017-20](#).

- Richard Simon-Lewis, Head of Origination, Client Coverage, Marketing and Communications
- Adam Harris, Head of Civil, Infrastructure and Energy
- Andy Blacksell, Head of Underwriting Policy and Products

They will help UKEF implement its strategy to lead with finance, bring major international business opportunities to the UK and help UK companies better compete for business around the world.

Additional recruitment into senior roles across UKEF's policy and operations divisions to build the department's capacity and expertise further is planned for the coming months.

Louis Taylor, UKEF's Chief Executive Officer, welcomed Richard, Adam and Andy to their roles, saying:

I am very pleased to announce these appointments into key positions as we look to deliver world-leading finance to help the UK's world-leading exporters grow their business internationally.

Richard, Adam and Andy will bring the expertise, creativity and ambition required to help UKEF realise its aim to be the best export credit agency in the world.

Richard Simon-Lewis, Head of Origination, Client Coverage, Marketing and Communications

Richard will focus on seeking and securing global opportunities for UK exporters:

- helping to connect UK capability with international demand
- raising awareness of UKEF's support among exporters and overseas buyers
- generating new business both at home and abroad
- helping to develop a new network of international advisers, to support UKEF's overseas activity across 20 different markets

Richard commented:

In the last year, UKEF has enhanced its reputation as a world-leading export credit agency, from extending short-term finance to the UK supply chain, to expanding our overseas buyer finance to 62 local currencies. We are better placed than ever before to support UK exports.

I want to ensure UK exporters and their buyers can realise the full benefits of that, and am excited to be leading UKEF's international

drive to bring these major opportunities to the UK.

Adam Harris, Head of Civil, Infrastructure and Energy

Adam will manage and develop UKEF's growing team of 30 specialist underwriters, responsible for delivering and enhancing UKEF's support for the civil, infrastructure and energy sectors.

Adam commented:

I am delighted to be leading UKEF's civil, infrastructure and energy underwriting division at an exciting time for UK exports and international trade.

By working closely with our customers and their overseas buyers, and growing our capacity to do ever more business in these vital sectors in which the UK is a recognised leader, we can help UK businesses thrive internationally.

Andy Blacksell, Head of Underwriting Policy and Products

Andy will focus on the development and delivery of products that UK exporters need to support them in making the most of trading internationally, with greater pace, efficiency and capacity.

Andy commented:

UKEF's offering must remain agile and adaptable, so I am excited to be able to take this role to ensure our product range continues to evolve in a way that is both evidence-based and, crucially, puts the needs of UK exporters first.

Background

Richard has over 25 years' experience in structured financing, heading up energy and infrastructure units at leading project and export institutions.

In 2016, he became UKEF's Head of Civil, Infrastructure and Energy and led the division through a period of significant growth, as well as pioneering an innovative new 'supplier fair' model which has connected hundreds of UK companies with opportunities worth hundreds of millions on major international projects.

Adam began his career in the Civil Service Fast Stream, gaining experience in a range of positions, including credit risk analysis at UKEF, as well as policy at HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs. He spent over five years in UKEF's aerospace underwriting division, before becoming Chief of Staff to Louis Taylor, UKEF Chief Executive, in 2016.

Andy has over 15 years' experience at UKEF, spanning roles as a country policy officer for sub-Saharan Africa and an underwriter in UKEF's civil, aerospace and defence sector teams, as well as managing the department's transition through landmark changes to its governing statute in 2015.

[News story: Government champion raises profile for private flying](#)

The government has appointed Byron Davies as its first ever General Aviation Champion to help identify a network of UK aerodromes that are most important for non-scheduled flying to flourish.

Baroness Sugg made the announcement today while visiting Elstree Aerodrome to discuss the importance of private flying to the economy.

Byron Davies will lead important research and engage with fliers to identify a network of strategically important airfields to help the general aviation sector develop.

The new General Aviation Champion, who was the founding chairman of the General Aviation All Party Parliamentary Group, will deliver a report on the value of general aviation to the economy. He will also have the help of York Aviation, which has been commissioned by the government to carry out research on airfields of strategic significance.

Establishing a strategic network of aerodromes will ensure a balance between transport and housing development priorities, protecting the general aviation sector's contribution to the UK economy.

Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg said:

Smaller airfields and the pilots who use them contribute £3 billion to our economy and support more than 38,000 jobs, be that through business jet operations, flying schools or leisure flying.

We want to preserve these benefits of general aviation and ensure appropriate and proportionate protection for the significant parts of this network that underpin that contribution.

Byron brings both passion and expertise to the role and I am confident he will work closely with fliers and researchers to shape the future of the general aviation network within the UK.

Byron Davies will work with commercial, business and leisure fliers to understand how their activity contributes to the sector.

Commenting on his appointment as General Aviation Champion, Byron Davies said:

This is an exciting opportunity for general aviation and I'm delighted to have been asked to undertake this piece of work.

The sector makes a major contribution to the economy and it's only right that its voice is heard at all levels of government.

I look forward very much to engaging with the aviation community over the coming months.

The General Aviation Champion has been appointed for 12 months and will gather evidence of the sector's value to the economy and the need for a protected network of airfields.

General aviation has played an important part in the valuable aviation economic eco-system. Many of today's pilots, aircrew and engineers first came into contact and were inspired by the sector through general aviation leisure activities. At the other end of the wide general aviation spectrum the business aviation sector ensures high value individuals are able to access the destinations they need to quickly and efficiently go about their business. Business which delivers high economic value to the UK. Across the spectrum of general aviation activity research has indicated that the sector delivers in excess of £3 billion of added economic value to the UK annually, supporting in excess of 38,000 jobs.

As we seek to develop the UK's aviation sector it will be important to ensure that we balance the economic contribution of the general aviation sector with housing and commercial priorities, and that we identify exactly how this contribution is delivered, and what constitutes the critical infrastructure that is necessary to deliver them.

The General Aviation Champion will have 2 roles, one to help government develop an understanding of these issues and the other to engage with stakeholders to ensure that understanding is grounded in the knowledge and experience of the sector. The champion will steer research into the value of the sector to the economy with the aim of providing evidence to underpin the identification and protection of a strategic network of airfields critical to the long term delivery of the sector's economic benefit.

Press release: Swansea claims management directors disqualified for 28 years

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy has accepted disqualification undertakings from the five directors of McCaskill & Morse Ltd (McCaskill). Timothy Chapple has been disqualified for eight years, Richard Adams for six, Catherine Wood for five, Gary Richards for five and James Bell for four years.

The five directors are now prevented from acting as a director of a company, they cannot take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership, as well as being unable to be a receiver of a company's property.

McCaskill was first incorporated in March 2012, offering claims management services for people miss-sold payment protection insurance and bank charges reclaims.

But clients started to complain to the Ministry of Justice, the regulators of the claims management sector, that while McCaskill claimed to offer a no-win-no-fee service, they had failed to return upfront fees and were often late paying refunds following unsuccessful claims.

The Ministry of Justice issued a warning to McCaskill that they were engaging in unfair trading practices before the company was put into administration in November 2015.

The Insolvency Service investigated McCaskill after it had gone into administration and found that the claims management company had failed to repay upfront fees to clients who were due a refund.

Using complaints data, the Insolvency Service also found that clients received their refunds between 180 and 380 days after the start of the claims process, exceeding the contract terms that stated McCaskill would pay refunds within 90 days.

Further investigations showed that, during their directorships, Mr Bell and Mr Richards failed to properly deal with complaints, prevent delays on refunds and return upfront fees to clients. McCaskill also failed to inform the Ministry of Justice about changes to its business model, including the charging of up-front fees which they had previously declared it did not intend to charge.

Investigators concluded that McCaskill had been engaging in unfair trading practices in breach of the Conduct of Authorised Persons Rules 2006 and 2013

(COAPRs). This meant that they had failed to comply with the Compensation (Claims Management Services) Regulations 2006.

Following the disqualification orders, Robert Clarke, Investigations Group Leader at the Insolvency Service said:

Compensation regulations are there to protect the general public from unfair sales techniques by companies operating within the claims management sector.

It's ironic that McCaskill, a company established to support consumers claw back money owed to them, consistently failed to return what was rightfully owed to their clients.

The length of the bans should serve as a warning to other directors who may feel tempted to breach legislation intended to protect the public, that the Insolvency Service will seek lengthy periods of disqualification.

He added: "I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Ombudsman for their hard work and co-operation in achieving this outcome.

McCaskill & Morse Ltd (Company Registration No. 08002835) was placed into administration on 11 November 2015 with a deficiency as regards creditors of £93,700. The company which was incorporated on 2 March 2012, traded in claims management, offering claims management services including mis-sold payment protection insurance and bank charges reclaims. McCaskill traded from Suite 1, 4th Floor, Alexandra House, Alexandra Road, Swansea, SA1 5ED.

Mr Chapple, of Tackley, Kiddlington, date of birth December 1976, has been disqualified for eight years commencing 22 December 2017.

Mr Adams, of Swansea, date of birth August 1977, has been disqualified for six years commencing 23 January 2018.

Mrs Wood, of Swansea, date of birth January 1980, has been disqualified for five years commencing 24 October 2017.

Mr Richards, of Swansea, date of birth July 1974, has been disqualified for five years commencing 19 October 2017.

Mr Bell, of Swansea, date of birth October 1983, has been disqualified for four years commencing 18 October 2017

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a

court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: GC team contributes to ongoing discussions on honey authenticity](#)



Michael Walker, Selvarani Elahi, Franz Ulberth and John Warren

Validating honey authenticity claims with regards to botanical source or geographical origin is a global issue. An [EU Coordinated Control Plan](#) on honey adulteration indicated that 38% of the 2,264 honey samples examined in the EU were non-compliant with authenticity criteria.

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) convened a Technical Round Table on Honey Authentication on 25 January 2018 to help in the fight against food fraud.

The meeting was opened by the Director of the JRC, Elke Anklam and was chaired by Franz Ulberth (Head of Fraud Detection and Prevention at JRC). It was attended by approximately 45 delegates from EU member States and included policy officials, academic researchers, Official Control Laboratory scientists, industry scientists and the Chairman of the UK Honey Association. [Selvarani Elahi](#), [Michael Walker](#) and John Warren, from the UK Government Chemist team, attended and contributed to the meeting.

The meeting identified many technical areas where further work and clarity would be beneficial for the authentication of honey. These will be covered in a forthcoming note from the JRC.

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