

Press release: Enforcement Undertaking agreed with vegetable company

An enforcement undertaking (EU) has been agreed with a vegetable processing company after it grossly polluted Brook Drain in Wormegay, King's Lynn, Norfolk with water used to wash carrots.

The Environment Agency accepted the offer by Alfred G Pearce Ltd to put right any damage caused by the pollution and to donate to an environmental charity.

As part of the EU, the company has donated £12,000 to the Norfolk Rivers Trust to benefit the local environment and also paid the Environment Agency's costs.

Helen Blower, Environment Agency officer said:

Enforcement undertakings allow those who commit offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence.

When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right voluntarily working with their local communities.

Formal sample results taken after the incident in February 2016 revealed a gross pollution of the water course.

The company told the Environment Agency that an inspection chamber which also acted as an overflow tank had been damaged by a reversing lorry and there had been no system in place to alert them of the damage and no procedure for checking the Brook Drain on a regular basis. This had led to a delay in rectifying the problem.

Since then the damage has been repaired, bollards placed to prevent a recurrence of the damage, installing bunded areas to contain spills and installing a new treatment plant.

The EU was offered in relation to an offence of pollution under regulation 38 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

The EU was completed in July 2017.

[News story: Millions invested in pilot training at state-of-the-art helicopter centre](#)

The simulators put pilots through their paces, replicating extreme real-life scenarios, from flying in blizzards or under enemy fire to dealing with power failures and electronic warfare.

The deal will sustain 70 jobs at the Medium Support Helicopter Aircrew Training Facility based at RAF Benson in South Oxfordshire.

One of the helicopter simulators in action at RAF Benson.

Defence, Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, signed a contract amendment with simulator specialist CAE Aircrew Training Services to deliver training for Chinook, Puma and Merlin aircrews at a purpose-built facility, extending the use of CAE's current contract for another 8 years.

The equipment provides a realistic representation of the operating environments the crews will fly in, including emergency situations like the effects of icing and rotor blade damage, the impact of gun or missile fire and electronic warfare, total electrics failure and fuel management issues.

The contract will deliver training for Chinook and Puma aircrews until the Puma planned out-of-service date. Training for the Merlin Mk3 will continue at the facility for at least two more years as the Royal Navy transitions from the Mk3 to the Mk4 helicopter.

One of the UK Chinooks undertaking relief work in the Caribbean in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

The centre is equipped with six CAE-built dynamic mission simulators (three Chinook, two Merlin and one Puma), four computer-based ground school training classrooms and a Tactical Control Centre that allows for operational mission training.

Adrian Baguley, Director Air Support at the MOD's Defence Equipment and Support, said:

The importance of effective synthetic training cannot be underestimated and continues to play an increasingly important role in our overall training curriculum.

The Medium Support Helicopter Aircrew Training Facility has consistently delivered a high standard of quality training to the operators of our front line helicopter capabilities. This agreement continues to maintain the world-leading ground school and simulator

training facility for our helicopter aircrews.

News story: DIO awards contract for new jetty at HMNB Devonport Oil Fuel Depot

DIO awarded a contract worth approximately £43 million to VolkerStevin to construct a new jetty at Thanckes Oil Fuel Depot which provides fuelling facilities for the Royal Navy at Devonport Naval Base.

The project will deliver a new jetty with fuel loading and fire fighting facilities; the fire fighting facilities within the depot will also be replaced. The jetty will be constructed within a Special Area of Conservation on the River Tamar and the project has to comply with stringent environmental regulations. The completed facility will service all of the Navy fuelling requirements at Devonport.

Bill Hughes, DIO Project Manager said:

This is a key milestone in the Navy Oil Fuel Depot upgrade programme. There have been considerable environmental challenges and constraints that have been successfully navigated through the excellent efforts of the Project team and we look forward to working in collaboration with VolkerStevin to ensure the successful delivery of this operationally critical project.

Terry O'Connor, DIO Account Director for VolkerStevin said:

We are delighted to have been awarded the design and construction of the new jetty at Thanckes Oil Fuel Depot. It continues our long association with the DIO and Royal Navy in providing key critical infrastructure solutions and we look forward to working closely with the project team and key stakeholders to deliver this strategically important scheme.

The dredging and clearing works are due to commence in January 2018 with the main piling works starting in September 2018 to avoid the annual fish migration season. The jetty is due to be in service by November 2019. The Thanckes Jetty is the first in a number of projects to modernise the Oil Fuel Depots in Devonport and Portsmouth to service the fuelling of the Naval Fleet

in both ports.

[News story: United Nations Day 2017](#)

Message from Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson:

[UN Day video message from the Foreign Secretary](#)

Minister for the UN, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

Today is a day of celebration, marking the anniversary of the founding document of the United Nations, the UN Charter coming into force.

As Minister responsible for the United Nations, I am pleased to mark UN Day with a renewal of our pledge to remain a strong and committed supporter of the United Nations.

The UK recognises the enormous challenge Member States were responding to when they agreed in the preamble of the Charter, “to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security” and “to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours”.

The UN’s work to uphold universal values is as significant to the world today as when the UN charter first came into force 72 years ago.

Nowhere is this more visible than the UN coming together to bring Daesh to justice. Through UN Security Council Resolution 2379, the international community has united to ensure that Daesh will be held accountable for the crimes that it has committed, and that reconciliation work will help to heal the sectarian divides that Daesh has exploited and inflamed.

Today I also want to welcome the determination of UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, to reform and refresh the UN, whether this be in the areas of peace and security, development and humanitarian or management reform, in order to render it fit and able to meet the complex challenges of the 21st Century.

The UK is proud to have been a strong supporter of the UN since its inception and a permanent member of the Security Council, and as we look ahead, our commitment remains resolute, both to the UN and to the universal values that it works to uphold.

Press release: Highways England and conservation volunteers pick up top environmental award

Highways England and a group of environmental volunteers have picked up a major award after transforming land alongside the A30 in Devon into a hotspot for wildlife.

The Big Biodiversity Challenge – Maintenance and Management Award was won by Highways England and the Sticklepath and Okehampton Conservation Group (StOC) for an innovative scheme at Blackhall Farm enhancing habitats and creating stepping stones for wildlife species to move across the area.

The land, owned by Highways England, had already been identified as having potential and benefits for habitat connectivity but funding needed to be identified to take the project forward.

With the help of StOC volunteers, labour costs were kept to a minimum and just £1400 was spent on materials and the hire of a mini digger.

Over a three year period a wetland area has been created, new hedges laid and woodland has been looked after and actively managed at the 1.5 hectare site.

Highways England ecologist Leo Gubert, said:

I am delighted for all of us that we have won this CIRIA award. It is a perfect example of how community involvement can result in wonderful benefits for biodiversity on the land we manage while providing a real sense of achievement for everyone involved.

The hard working volunteers from StOC kept working under all weather conditions with a never fading enthusiasm. It has been a real pleasure to work with them.

The new approach of Highways England ecologists working alongside volunteers has seen numerous benefits at Blackhall Farm, including:

- An explosion in wild flower species providing foraging habitat for pollinators
- A large woodland area thinned and coppiced and hedges laid providing habitat for dormice, birds, invertebrates and other small mammals
- Habitat created for aquatic species, including a rare local damselfly

StOC group coordinator Mike Watson said:

The group has thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this project with

Highways England and Kier and it's wonderful the work has been recognised by this award.

It feels good to know that we have made a difference and achieved so much in the three years we have been involved. We are looking forward to getting back to the site and continuing the good work.

The project will continue for the foreseeable future and plans include installing a bee bank using soil from a nearby construction scheme and planting woodland bulbs in the coppiced area.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.