

Jail sentence for businessman who filled former quarry with dangerous waste

Mark Foley, of Cardiff, was jailed for 2 years and 3 months for illegally disposing of 100,000 tonnes of waste at Stowey Quarry, a former limestone quarry near Chew Valley reservoir. The offence happened within the first nine months of 2016, sparking an intensive investigation by the Environment Agency into the management of the site.

The illegal operation, which accepted waste from around England, was described at Bristol Crown Court as one of the most serious risks of harm in the country during the past 30 years. Foley was also jailed for a further 18 weeks, to be served concurrently, for supplying false information to the Environment Agency.

Foley's firm, M E Foley (Contractors) Ltd, which ran the site under an environmental permit, failed to provide the court with any company accounts and was fined £72,000.

Plastic, metal, foam and other materials were illegally deposited at the site

Rebecca Kirk of the Environment Agency said:

It has taken 3 years of meticulous work for our investigation into Stowey Quarry to reach this stage. This was environmental offending of the highest order

I am pleased the judge acknowledged the seriousness of the offences committed and this is reflected in the sentences being handed down to those who orchestrate and take advantage of such criminal practice and show a blatant disregard to the environment and public health.

Stowey Quarry was only permitted to accept 'clean' and 'non-hazardous' material including soil and construction waste for recovery purposes – to build bunds and embankments in the quarry. Foley, as the site operator, was responsible for checking waste arriving at the site to ensure it was suitable. An investigation showed the rules were routinely flouted.

Despite repeated warnings, the illegal tipping and waste disposal continued and in October 2016 the Environment Agency served M E Foley (Contractors) Ltd with a Suspension Notice that cancelled its permit with immediate effect and stopped the site from operating.

The Environment Agency launched an investigation to establish the potential risk to human health and the environment from the illegal waste activities at the site. Samples taken from trial pits and bore holes revealed a high percentage of chopped/shredded plastics, metals, foam and other man-made materials. Analysis showed that about half the samples were hazardous and either carcinogenic or ecotoxic.

Leachate has appeared in some areas due to the pollution

The investigation included the monitoring of landfill gases and sampling of nearby streams that showed an elevated concentration of gases together with leachate breaking out onto the surface of some surrounding fields.

Much of the waste arriving at Stowey Quarry was misleadingly described as a 'soil substitute' in a deliberate attempt to circumvent the rules. The storage and disposal of hazardous material contravened the site's permit that only allowed clean/inert waste.

Not only was the site dishonestly accepting the wrong type of waste, the operator was also lying about the amount being received. After checking waste transfer notes provided by the waste producers and hauliers, it is estimated that in 2016 alone, almost 95,000 tonnes of waste was deposited at Stowey Quarry – double the 44,950 tonnes declared by M E Foley (Contractors) Ltd.

The investigation also questioned the true amount of waste received by the site since its operation began in 2012. The amount deposited at the site by 2016 was closer to 200,000 tonnes – well above the 65,000 tonnes Foley was permitted to store for the purpose of restoring perimeter bunds and embankments using clear, inert waste.

Further defendants in the case will be sentenced in July at Bristol Crown Court and hearing dates for proceeds of crime proceedings have been set.

[**A letter from the Chancellor in response to Anneliese Dodds**](#)

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Appointment of Second Permanent Secretary at the Cabinet Office

Press release

Appointment of Sue Gray as the new Second Permanent Secretary in the Cabinet Office.



The Cabinet Secretary, with the approval of the Prime Minister, has announced the appointment of Sue Gray as the new Second Permanent Secretary in the Cabinet Office, leading on the Union and the Constitution.

Sue is currently Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance in the Northern Ireland Executive. Previously she was Director General, Propriety & Ethics in the Cabinet Office from 2012-2018.

Notes for Editors

- Since May 2018, Sue has been the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance in the Northern Ireland Executive.
- She worked in a number of government departments (including the Department for Transport, Department for Health and the Department for Work and Pensions) before joining the Cabinet Office in 1998 where her most recent role was as Director General, Propriety and Ethics.
- From 2015-2016 Philip Rycroft was Cabinet Office Second Permanent Secretary with responsibility for constitutional and devolution issues.
- Sue will be taking up the role later this month.

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A statement from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Press release

All communities in Northern Ireland must work together to resolve the tensions that we are currently facing. The people of Northern Ireland deserve better than a continuation of the violence and disorder that we have witnessed in recent days.



Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis said:

All communities in Northern Ireland must work together to resolve the tensions that we are currently facing. The people of Northern Ireland deserve better than a continuation of the violence and disorder that we have witnessed in recent days. I know, from my ongoing contact with party leaders, that this is a view that is shared by all. The only way to resolve differences is through dialogue and in that regard we must all lead by example.

Those engaged in this destruction and disorder do not represent Northern Ireland.

I have seen first hand the true spirit of Northern Ireland – the creativity, the optimism and the determination to never return to the conflict and division of the past. We cannot allow that spirit to be crushed by a small minority intent on violence.

The strength of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement lay in providing a framework for all communities in Northern Ireland, through mutual respect and tolerance, to live and work together.

I am aware of the ongoing concerns from some in the unionist and loyalist community over recent months and I have been engaging and listening to those concerns. However, I remain clear that the right way to express concerns or frustrations is through dialogue, engagement, and the democratic process, not through violence or disorder.

Today, I will be meeting with community, faith and political leaders. Following engagement earlier today, I welcome the statement from the Executive and join them in appealing for calm. I will do all I can to continue to facilitate further constructive discussions on the way forward over the coming days. I remain in close contact with the Prime Minister to keep him updated.

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[Specialist job coaches to help young people onto the jobs ladder](#)

Thousands of young people will benefit from six-month intensive employment support packages as the Department for Work and Pensions recruits an extra 150 specialist Youth Employability Coaches across the UK.

Youth Employability Coaches are specially trained to support young jobseekers facing significant barriers to get on the first rung of the jobs ladder, such as young people without formal skills or qualifications.

For up to six months, young jobseekers will get intensive support and mentoring training as well as access to training, apprenticeship placements, suitable job opportunities, the Sector Based Work Academy Programme and the Kickstart Scheme. Support will even continue for six weeks after the young person has started work, to make sure they're given help to settle into the role and find their feet.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies MP, said:

Many young people just need a chance to show what they're capable of, but a lack of qualifications and experience can make it tough to get started.

These Youth Employability Work Coaches are vitally helping young people onto that first rung of the jobs ladder – setting them on

track for a successful future. Our Plan for Jobs is getting people of all ages back into work as we push to build back better.

Adam Sharp, Work Coach Team Leader at Oldham Jobcentre, said:

Thanks to the recruitment of our new Youth Employability Coaches, we will be able to provide that intensive support to our vulnerable young people who need it most. No matter how complex the need, or significant the barrier, the Youth Employability Coaches will strive to support our most vulnerable, supporting them on every step of their journey into employment.

Jessica, who benefitted from the dedicated support of Youth Employability Coach Nichole, said:

I left school at 16 with no formal qualifications whatsoever, and have never worked or taken part in any work experience. Since working with my Coach Nichole for the past couple of months, I have been applying for jobs, looking at courses and trying to better myself.

Nichole has helped me every step of the way. I now have a laptop and a CV, which has lifted barriers which were stopping me from being able to look and apply for work. If it wasn't for the time Nichole has put in to helping me and motivating me, I don't think I'd be where I am now. I have a new sense of self achievement and I know now I can do whatever I set my mind to. All I needed was a chance and Nichole gave me one. I am so thankful for people like her.

Sam Windett, Director of Policy at Impetus, said:

With young people under 25 accounting for three in five of the jobs lost during the pandemic, the need for quality, joined up support couldn't be more urgent.

Being out of work can have scarring effects, so investing in Youth Employability Coaches and Youth Hubs, together with specialists and local partners, is vital to offer the support young people need to succeed.

Along with employment support, the Coaches will also offer guidance on issues such as budgeting, debt management, and housing – helping break down barriers that can sometimes stop people from finding new opportunities. This can include attending appointments with support organisations, Local Authorities and other activities to meet the needs of the jobseeker.

The Youth Employability Coaches, located in jobcentres, are working alongside additional Work Coaches based in specialist Youth Hubs. Separate from jobcentres, these Hubs are co-located and delivered in partnership with external partners such as colleges, charities and local councils – providing access to more services in one location, and helping reach even more young jobseekers in the communities where they live.

Some Youth Hubs offer a drop-in service for all young people who need support to find work, including those not claiming Universal Credit.

The Youth Employability Coaches and Youth Hubs form just one part of the government's multi-billion-pound Plan for Jobs aimed at protecting, supporting and creating jobs.

To help spearhead efforts to get Brits back in work the DWP has hired an additional 13,500 new Work Coaches meaning people of all ages can access bespoke support to fire up their job hunt. Later this year the new Restart Scheme will help over a million people who have been out of work for more than a year get back into work.

For more information on support available for jobseekers aged 18-24, visit the [guidance page](#).

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