

Fiona Dickie appointed Pubs Code Adjudicator



The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has today [announced](#) the appointment of Fiona Dickie as the next Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA).

Ms Dickie, who has served as Deputy Pubs Code Adjudicator since November 2017, will take over from the current Adjudicator, Paul Newby, when he steps down at the beginning of May.

Commenting on her appointment, Fiona Dickie said:

“I am delighted to have been appointed Pubs Code Adjudicator in succession to Paul Newby. I intend to be a strong champion for the rights and protections Parliament has given to tied tenants through the Pubs Code. The regulated pub companies know I will be clear and frank with them about my expectations when it comes to Code compliance. As Adjudicator, I intend to use my position to ensure that they deliver on their statutory obligations, and to make sure Code rights are understood by tied tenants and that accessing them is straightforward.”

Priorities for the new Adjudicator will include working with BEIS on the delivery of their statutory review of the Pubs Code; ongoing efforts to raise and maintain Pubs Code awareness amongst tied pub tenants and the wider industry; and embedding into pub-owning businesses’ policies and processes the PCA’s expectations about how Market Rent Only (MRO) proposals must be prepared. The regulatory work of the PCA and the office continues, including the current statutory investigation into the stocking policies of Star Pubs and Bars (Heineken UK).

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'Plymouth's worst fly-tipper' jailed after 3 years on the run

A Plymouth man who fled to Ireland after committing a year-long fly-tipping spree has been jailed.

Martin McDonagh, 26, was called 'Plymouth's worst fly-tipper' by the press for dumping rubbish collected from people's homes in the countryside. He caught a ferry to Ireland 9 days before he was due in court in February 2017 and was sentenced in his absence to 20 months in prison.

A European arrest warrant was issued and McDonagh turned himself in to the police in Ireland late last year. He has now been extradited back to Devon to serve his sentence.

McDonagh dumped rubbish at 18 sites in the space of a year

Adrian Evans of the Environment Agency said:

McDonagh was described by the judge during his original sentencing as a 'persistent offender who showed a ruthless determination to dump waste wherever it suited.'

We have been determined to catch him to show there is severe punishment for fly-tipping and no escaping it. Any short-term financial reward is dwarfed by the penalty when you get caught.

McDonagh would call on people uninvited and offer to take rubbish to the tip for cash. The rubbish did not go to the tip. Instead McDonagh dumped it in the countryside. He pleaded guilty to doing so at 18 different locations over a 12-month period.

On one occasion McDonagh was seen transferring concrete rubble from one van to another in Teignmouth. The latter was abandoned and asbestos discovered inside. The van was later destroyed.

After being extradited, McDonagh appeared in Plymouth Crown Court on 24 February 2020 and was told he would begin serving his sentence along with an additional six weeks in prison for failing to surrender to custody.

McDonagh's van was seized and destroyed

McDonagh's extradition from the Republic of Ireland was the result of close partnership working between the Environment Agency, Devon and Cornwall Police and the National Crime Agency.

Inspector Phil Williams, of Devon and Cornwall Police's Intelligence Directorate, said:

Cases such as this highlight the positive working relationship between partner agencies.

It is always challenging when offenders leave the country, requiring coordination with international counterparts in order to facilitate their return to the UK.

It is particularly pleasing that, after three years of work from the Environment Agency and Devon and Cornwall Police international liaison officers, McDonagh's return has been secured.

Government appoints new Pubs Code Adjudicator

The government has appointed Fiona Dickie as Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA).

The PCA has responsibility for enforcing the statutory [Pubs Code](#), which governs the relationship between large pub-owning businesses and their tied tenants in England and Wales.

As PCA, Ms Dickie will have powers to arbitrate individual disputes about breaches of the Pubs Code and market rent only options – when tenants opt to only pay rent to the pub company, rather than have any further ties. She will also be able to investigate suspected breaches of the code by pub owning businesses and impose sanctions, including financial penalties, when there is non-compliance.

The PCA also provides advice and guidance about the code and leads a team based in Birmingham.

About Fiona Dickie

Fiona Dickie was appointed as the Deputy Pubs Code Adjudicator (DPCA) in November 2017 and reappointed in October 2019. Fiona was called to the Bar in 1993. She has been a Vice President of the Valuation Tribunal for England from 2009 until 2020 and was appointed Judge of First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) in 2013 (after serving as a Lawyer Chair of its predecessor tribunal from 2006). She was also appointed as a Road User Charging Adjudicator in 2004. Fiona has been a mediator in civil disputes since 2005 and a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators since 2018.

Additional information

The [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment \(SBEE\) Act 2015](#), requires the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to introduce a statutory Pubs Code and to appoint a Pubs Code Adjudicator. The code governs the relationship between large pub-owning businesses (those that own 500 or more tied pubs in England and Wales) and their tied tenants.

Fiona Dickie will take up her appointment for a 4-year term when the current PCA's term ends in May 2020 and she will step down as DPCA at that point.

This appointment is regulated by the [Commissioner for Public Appointments](#) and has been made in line with the [Governance Code for Public Appointments](#).

[400 Marsquakes detected by UK sensors in one year](#)

The seismic vibrations on Mars were detected by a set of silicon sensors developed in the UK for InSight's Seismic Experiment for Interior Structure (SEIS).

Imperial College London, Oxford University and STFC RAL Space worked in partnership, with £4 million in funding from the UK Space Agency, to develop three sensors which are sensitive enough to detect motion at sub-atomic scales.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

Detecting hundreds of Marsquakes on a planet 140 million miles from Earth, using sensors developed in the UK, is an important achievement.

This is an example of how world-leading UK science and our growing space sector contribute to international missions, furthering human understanding of the Solar System.

The NASA InSight mission is the first to look deep beneath the Martian surface and detected the first ever recorded Marsquake on 6 April 2019. By the end of last year it was detecting an average of two quakes every day. The findings suggest that Mars experiences quakes more often, but also more mildly than expected with the largest measuring 4.0 on the Richter scale.

Seismic waves change as they move through different materials and this allows scientists to understand the inner structure of Mars. From this, they can

also learn how other planets, moons and meteorites with rocky surfaces, including Earth, formed billions of years ago.

Professor Tom Pike, from Imperial College London, who leads the UK team, said:

From the tremors, we can build a picture of Mars' interior, building up a cross section of the planet all the way down to the core. The remains of a liquid core could suggest that Mars once had a magnetic field. Like on Earth, the field would have protected it from harmful solar winds billions of years ago. Back then, Mars then was much warmer and wetter, and much more hospitable for life.

Studying Mars lets us travel to the solar system's ancient past. While Earth and Venus' tectonic systems have destroyed most of the evidence of their early history, much of the Red Planet has remained static for more than three billion years.

Dr Neil Bowles, from the University of Oxford's Department of Physics, said:

The measurement of the first events from the surface of Mars by InSight are showing that the planet is still seismically active. As InSight continues to monitor the planet over the next year, we are working with our colleagues on the mission team to help understand the interior and atmosphere of the planet in a completely new way.

Dr Anna Horleston, Research Associate in Planetary Seismology at the University of Bristol, said:

The UK's involvement in InSight has given us a unique opportunity at the forefront of planetary science. Working for the frontline analysis team for the Marsquake Service, I've witnessed the quakes on a daily basis and I'm very pleased that we can share the results with the public today. Seeing seismic signals from another planet and using them to look inside it is an amazing experience.

InSight carries other instruments to measure the Martian wind, magnetic field and temperature. Scientists set out the findings from the mission in a series of six papers published today in Nature and Nature: Geoscience.

PM meeting with Prime Minister Plenković: 24 February 2020



The Prime Minister met with Prime Minister Plenković of the Republic of Croatia this afternoon.

The Prime Minister began the meeting by wishing Prime Minister Plenković success with the EU Presidency which began in January this year.

In their first meeting since the general election, the Prime Minister emphasised the UK's commitment to the bilateral relationship with Croatia and spoke about the two countries' shared priorities such as climate change, defence, security and people to people links.

The leaders spoke about the future relationship between the EU and the UK. The Prime Minister set out the UK's vision based on friendly cooperation between sovereign equals and centred on free trade.

The Prime Minister highlighted that we are not seeking a special or bespoke agreement, but rather one like those the EU has already struck with other friendly countries like Canada. He emphasised that the UK will not extend the transition period or accept any arrangements which subordinate us to EU rules.

The leaders also spoke about the situation in Bosnia & Herzegovina and the wider Western Balkans region. The meeting ended with the leaders looking forward to COP26 in November.

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