

# Angler ordered to pay more than £1,200 after obstructing water bailiff

The [Environment Agency](#) has successfully prosecuted Callum Copeland, 22, of White Alder, Stacey Bushes, with a total penalty of £1,234.72.

Copeland was convicted of wilfully obstructing a water bailiff, fishing without a licence and failing to state his address to a bailiff when required to do so. He was found guilty in his absence in a case held at Northampton Magistrates' Court on 8 October 2019 following the offences at Silver Lake, Wappenham, Northamptonshire, on 5 March 2019.

The court was told that Environment Agency enforcement officers were patrolling at the lake and attempted to speak to Copeland, however after initially refusing to provide details when requested, or a valid fishing licence, he eventually provided false details.

Officers identified Copeland's vehicle, which he confirmed belonged to him, and used the associated address to later issue him with a court summons.

Copeland did not attend court but was fined £660, ordered to pay costs of £530.72 and a victim surcharge of £44.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

"This case shows how determined we are in catching and prosecuting people who flout the laws and obstruct our officers in carrying out their duties.

"An annual fishing licence costs just £30, yet a small number of anglers continue to risk prosecution for fishing without a licence.

"Money raised from fishing licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, including improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.

"For those caught cheating the system, we will always prosecute."

People caught fishing without a licence can be fined up to £2,500. Children under 13 do not need a licence. Licences for children aged between 13 and 16 are free, but a junior licence is required.

Anyone who suspects illegal fishing to be taking place should report the matter to the Environment Agency's incident hotline, on 0800 807060. Buy a rod licence and find out more on [GOV.UK](#)

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# South Sudan: Troika Statement, October 2019.



The text of the following statement was issued jointly by the governments of the United States, Norway, and the United Kingdom:

South Sudan faces a critical moment in the journey toward a peaceful and prosperous future. There are now less than four weeks for political leaders to form a transitional government as they committed to in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Norway (the Troika) have consistently welcomed assurances by the parties to implement the agreement and meet its deadlines, and hoped that recent meetings between South Sudan's leadership show a renewed spirit of cooperation. We commend the actions of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to broker the agreement and maintain momentum and take hope from the continued reduction in overall violence in South Sudan.

For too long, conflict has been waged at the expense of South Sudan's most vulnerable and continues to exacerbate humanitarian needs. We encourage the parties, especially the current government, to take concrete steps to build trust through enhanced cooperation. With the November 12 deadline looming, extended from May, much more needs to be done urgently to ensure the success of the transitional government. Progress would help maintain the confidence of all the parties and the international community, demonstrate that the parties have the political will to work together during the transitional period, and provide the opportunity for the international community to engage productively with an inclusive, new government.

We welcome the discussions of IGAD countries in Addis Ababa last week; the region and the international community's investment and engagement in a peaceful South Sudan remains important. The Troika will continue to stand with and support the people of South Sudan, who want and deserve peace and a government that that protects its people. We urge the South Sudanese parties to meet the November 12

deadline to form a transitional government that will enable the conditions for a constructive relationship during the next phase of South Sudan's peace process. The UNSC visit to South Sudan offers an opportunity for the international community to discuss with South Sudanese leaders how to accelerate such progress.

## **Further information**

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# **[Housing minister calls for a digital revolution in the property sector](#)**

Housing Minister, Esther McVey, is today (21 October 2019) announcing plans to release data held by local bodies to enable the UK PropTech sector to thrive and for them to "bring about a digital revolution in the property sector."

The Housing Minister will announce measures to:

- Open up Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) data for the first time in a transparency drive and enable PropTechs to obtain things like energy performance certificates and the square footage information of properties.
- Introduce a national index of all brownfield data, simplifying and improving the quality of Brownfield Land Registers to help developers to find brownfield land to build on.

Esther McVey will today host a roundtable discussion with some of the 700 PropTech firms in the UK who are helping house builders and communities all over the country.

The UK PropTech sector, a growing industry potentially worth £6 billion in the UK, is leading the world in the property building and buying market and the sector already receives 10% of global PropTech investment.

Roundtable participants include:

- Urban Intelligence – a tool that helps developers and landowners to locate development sites more easily
- The Future Fox – which is transforming community engagement in the

planning process, enabling developers and local authorities to engage a much larger and more diverse range of voices in creating positive planning outcomes

- Wayhome – which aspires to make home ownership more realisable for many more people by co-investing in property with its customers

The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP said:

We've had revolutions in the way that financial services, online banking and transport are provided, turning once unimaginable possibilities into everyday realities. Now it's the turn of the UK property market.

Whatever homebuyers prioritise, whether it's the quality of local schools, the probability of getting a seat on a train, or having easy access to leisure facilities, this technology could transform the way we find and purchase homes.

And new technology will link builders to brownfield sites more easily, enhance how developers engage with local communities, help builders deliver new homes and modernise the way we buy and sell land and houses, cutting the time it takes to get housing from the drawing board to families getting the keys.

The UK property sector is on the cusp of a digital revolution. It's time to harness new technology to unlock land and unleash the potential of housebuilders in all parts of the country and to revolutionise the way in which we buy homes.

In addition, new technologies could allow:

**Communities to:**

- see models and interactive maps of planned development rather than one or two pictures
- comment on planning applications online, on phones and on the go (in the same way that they use online banking services)

**Prospective home buyers to:**

- use commute time calculators when they are looking at properties
- explore financing options to help buyers afford their new home or enable gradual home ownership
- receive step-by-step assistance to help them navigate the buying process

**Developers to:**

- identify sites so that more houses are built more quickly
- quickly locate suitable brownfield sites suitable for development

SMEs don't often have the resources for dedicated teams to find sites,

appraise them and craft planning applications, so access to tools that analyse multiple datasets to do this for them can save them valuable hours, and in turn help support the wider industry.

It has been reported by SME builders that “lack of available and viable land” was the most commonly cited barrier to increasing output (43% of respondents) for the fifth year in a row (FMB, 2019), despite there being capacity to build 1 million homes on brownfield council land.

Digital disruption in the property and development sector is happening globally. Spacemaker AI, a Norway-based start-up, secured \$25 million in Series A funding in June 2019, which included participation from UK real estate technology fund, Round Hill Ventures, who will attend the roundtable event today.

We will be opening up data about Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) to make this important process more transparent. When used appropriately, CPOs are a valuable tool for local planning authorities to use to deliver housing and regeneration and have been used successfully by local planning authorities across the country since 2004. For example, a large proportion of Birmingham’s regeneration has been delivered via CPOs in the past 15 years.

Brownfield Land Registers aim to provide up-to-date and consistent information on potential brownfield sites that local authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development. We are simplifying and improving the quality of Brownfield Land Registers to help developers to find brownfield land to build on.

Creating a national index of all brownfield data will be of value to local authorities and housing developers. It will ensure local planning authorities publish brownfield land data in a standardised way nationally. New guidance has been written to support local planning authorities to implement the new standards and a number of tools have been built to help validate the data to meet the standards and make the process of publishing and collecting data easier.

We have recently completed research into which data can most easily be made available from local plans and existing planning systems. Currently, most Local Plan and planning application documentation is issued in a PDF format and specific policy detail is not easy to find and inconsistent across local authorities. A department initiative could deploy a natively digital product to make essential information accessible to policy makers, citizens and digital entrepreneurs in a consistent and standardised format.

The Geospatial Commission is a government commitment to maximise the value of geospatial data, with £80 million of allocated funding. It will also help the growth of the digital economy and consolidate the UK’s position as the best place to start and grow a digital business. The commission will also demonstrate innovative solutions for identified strategic challenges, and accelerate delivery of economic, social and environmental benefits derived from geospatial data. More information can be found on the [Geospatial Commission website](#).

A Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is a tool that can be used by certain bodies to authorise the acquisition of land and property. Its use can help make possible a wide range of development, regeneration and infrastructure projects, where there is a compelling case in the public interest.

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## Action to detect, deter and disrupt the misuse of drones

The government will develop a new mobile counter-drone unit to be deployed to drone-related incidents and major events across the UK, as part of the government's ["Counter-Drone" Strategy](#) launched by Security Minister Brandon Lewis today.

The world-leading strategy will ensure individuals, businesses and emergency services in the UK can continue to harness the economic and social benefits of drones, while cracking down on misuse and disruption.

It includes plans to drive forward the establishment of international design standards for manufacturers to enable safety features to be designed in from the start and make drones safe to use in the UK. This will happen with input from a new industry action group to encourage collaboration with government, drive progress and stay ahead of malicious drone users.

A new mobile counter-drone unit will be created, containing detection and disruption equipment, which can be deployed by police and other emergency responders to protect major events and rapidly respond to drone incidents across the UK.

Security Minister Brandon Lewis said:

This government is proud of the UK's burgeoning drone industry and we will do all that we can to ensure that the UK firmly establishes itself as a world leader in this industry.

But to ensure the drone industry can thrive in this country we must be able to crack down effectively on those who would use drones to cause harm or disruption.

There is no silver bullet to help protect our infrastructure and our citizens from malicious or careless drone use. That's why this Strategy outlines a broad range of work to ensure we can effectively tackle the threat.

The use of unmanned aircraft has grown significantly in recent years and the industry is expected to contribute an extra £42 billion to the UK economy by

2030, with more than 76,000 commercial and public sector drones expected to be in use by this date.

However, this also increases the risks of malicious use. Latest statistics show there were 168 police recorded drone incidents in England and Wales in 2018, and 165 drones were recovered at prisons in 2016 and 2017.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere said:

Unmanned aircraft, including drones, could transform how we move people and goods, boost our economy and even save lives. Unfortunately, they can be, and have been, used recklessly at airports and in our skies.

The UK has been at the forefront in tackling the malicious use of unmanned aircraft. This strategy, alongside existing and planned legislation, will let us tap into the benefits of this technology while helping keep people safe both in the air and on the ground.

The strategy also includes:

- the Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech, which will give police increased powers to tackle illegal drone use
- a new national standard for police recording of illegal drone activity to help build a picture of the drone threat
- national guidance for police to assist them during malicious drone incidents
- the government's ongoing work with industry to research and test the latest counter drone equipment so that police across the country are able to respond to threats – building on the work already done across government
- over the next 3 years, the government will work with partners to compile a catalogue of approved counter-drone technology to assure police and the owners and operators of critical national infrastructure sites that they are investing in the most effective and appropriate technology
- a government communications campaign to educate the general public and continue to encourage safe drone use
- Earlier this year it was announced that from 30 November 2019, every operator of a drone weighing more than 250g will need to register with the Civil Aviation Authority and all remote pilots will have to have passed an online competency test

Like many emerging technologies, drones play an ever more important role in business and there are currently more than 5,000 commercial users currently registered in the UK. They also provide an increasingly vital tool to assist the work of our emergency services.

This strategy is underpinned by the government's desire to seize and develop the opportunities that the sector has to offer.

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# [Welcome new MHRA senior appointments](#)

Graeme Tunbridge has been appointed interim Director of Devices. Graeme is currently the Group Manager for Devices Regulatory Affairs at the MHRA, and will take up his new post from 21 October 2019 following the retirement of John Wilkinson.

Graeme Tunbridge commented: "I am delighted to have been asked to take on this role. It is a time of unprecedented change and challenge for the regulation of medical devices, both in the UK and globally. During this time, I want to ensure that the MHRA continues to strive to improve outcomes for patients and the public by driving continuous improvements in the safety, effectiveness and usability of medical devices."

Dr Sarah Branch has been appointed interim Director of Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines (VRMM). Sarah has been the Deputy Director and Head of Operations in VRMM for 6 years and took over as Director on 23 September 2019, following Dr June Raine's appointment as the Agency's interim Chief Executive.

Dr Sarah Branch commented: "I am honoured to take up this role at this important time. I am looking forward to working with Dr Raine and fellow Directors as the Agency adapts to its new environment, whilst keeping patient safety as a highest priority."

## **Graeme Tunbridge – biography and role**

### **Biography**

Graeme first joined the MHRA in 2011 and has spent much of his time negotiating, and now implementing, a package of measures to strengthen the regulation of medical devices.

Graeme has been a civil servant for 15 years and spent his early career working on healthcare policy. He has previously held Deputy Director roles at the Department of Health and spent 18 months as Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Health.

He has a Master's degree in biochemistry from the University of Oxford.

### **Role**

The Director of Devices leads the division in the Agency that is responsible for the operation of the regulatory framework that ensures the safety and performance of medical devices on the UK market. This includes:

- investigating reports of problems involving medical devices and taking action in response to these, such as advising healthcare professionals



on the safe use of devices, working with manufacturers to improve device safety and, where needed, taking enforcement action

- reviewing proposals to undertake clinical investigations using medical devices on patients in the UK
- overseeing the UK notified bodies for medical devices, which are responsible for the pre-market assessment of higher-risk product
- ensuring the smooth operation of the regulatory framework, including the provision of regulatory advice

## **Dr Sarah Branch – biography and role**

### **Biography**

Sarah joined the Agency in 1994 after a career in academia. She brings a wealth of regulatory experience to the Director role having worked in both Licensing and Post-Licensing Divisions. In particular, Sarah has built a strong Paediatric Unit and over the last 10 years has helped deliver more authorised medicines for children.

Sarah is a Fellow of the Faculty of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians.

### **Role**

The Director of Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines has responsibility for pharmacovigilance of medicines, including the Yellow Card Scheme for reporting adverse drug reactions, benefit-risk assessment and updates to safety information.

VRMM Division is also responsible for renewal of authorisations, changes in legal classification and advertising of medicines, and for assessment of studies relating to the development of paediatric medicines.