

# [Press release: Xylella fastidiosa: UK secures added EU protections](#)

The European Commission's Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOPAFF) has approved (Thursday 19 October) increased protections against *Xylella fastidiosa*. The plant disease has devastated olive plantations in southern Italy and is killing plants and trees in areas across Europe.

Last month the Environment Secretary Michael Gove [wrote to the European Commission](#) stressing that if EU protections were not increased, we would consider our own national measures, which could include a suspension of high risk imports. The disease, which could be deadly to our oak trees, would be difficult to eradicate if it was to arrive, which is why the UK has pushed hard for these increased protections to help keep it out.

The new measures incorporate key proposals from the UK and include strengthened movement requirements on high risk plants and require quicker responses to potential findings of the disease.

Following the vote Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Xylella poses a serious threat to our plants, trees and horticulture sector and as I made clear to Commissioner Andriukaitis last month, we need to see robust action by the EU against the disease.

I am therefore pleased this has been taken forward. These increased protections will add to our own efforts to protect our horticulture sector and our famous ancient oaks which have stood tall and proud for centuries as a national symbol of strength and survival.

While the measures we pressed for will come into force, we will keep the risk level under continuous review to determine if further measures are needed to keep the disease out of the UK.

When we leave the EU we will have an opportunity to examine all our national biosecurity measures on plant imports to ensure they are as robust as possible and we are doing everything we can to protect the UK against diseases like Xylella.

The new measures will take effect around the end of November, following a formal adoption process in the European Commission and will supplement measures already in place in the UK which require certain plants to be notified to the plant health authorities when they are brought into the country. This enables the Animal and Plant Health Agency to carry out targeted inspections as well as surveillance for disease in the wider environment.

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## **[News story: Civil news: help with how to submit a civil tender](#)**

Keep an eye on our tender pages for the latest information on the 2018 civil contracts which will support you in the procurement process.

### **Answering your questions**

We are regularly updating this page and this includes answers to questions about the process submitted by providers through the e-Tendering system.

The deadline for submitting questions was 23.59 on 19 October 2017 for the Selection Questionnaire, face to face and CLA contracts.

We are now working through the answers which will be published in full on our tender pages in the week beginning 30 October 2017.

Meanwhile, interim documents are already available for you to download.

The deadline for questions on the Housing Possession and Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) contract tender is 23.59 on 7 November.

### **Face to face and CLA tender deadline**

The deadline for submitting a tender for a face to face or CLA contract is 5pm on 10 November 2017 and must include a response to the Selection Questionnaire.

### **HPCDS tender deadline**

Applicants wishing to submit a tender for HPCDS must submit a response to the Selection Questionnaire and Face to Face Contract Housing and Debt Invitation to Tender (ITT) by 5pm on 10 November.

In addition, a response must also be submitted to the HPCDS applicant ITT and each of the scheme area ITTs they wish to bid to deliver by 5pm on 4 December 2017.

### **Further information**

[e-Tendering system](#) – for submitting bids and using the message boards

[Legal aid civil tender 2018](#) – information for potential applicants

Email [help@bravosolution.co.uk](mailto:help@bravosolution.co.uk) or telephone 0800 0698630 for technical questions about using the e-Tendering system

[Tender process for 2018 contracts opens](#) – GOV.UK news story on 19 September

## [Press release: River restoration project wins national conservation award](#)

A partnership project between the Environment Agency and the Box Moor Trust in Hemel Hempstead has been recognised with a national award.

The project has transformed a 1 kilometre stretch of the River Bulbourne in Hemel Hempstead from a straight, wide and silty river into a meandering chalk stream, which is a globally rare habitat.

The 'Bringing Back the Bulbourne' project scooped the 'best medium scale' award at The Wild Trout Trust Conservation Awards held at the Savile Club in London. The awards seek to recognise and encourage excellence in habitat management and conservation and celebrate effort, ingenuity and imagination.

Nancy Baume from the Environment Agency said:

We are delighted that our work to restore the River Bulbourne has been recognised by the Wild Trout Trust. This project represents years of hard work for us and our partners.

The Environment Agency is committed to working with partners to protect and restore our chalk streams for the benefit of wildlife so future generations are able to enjoy these unique resources.

The £60,000 project has breathed new life into the river. The natural meander of the river has now been restored, creating new habitats for plants and wildlife. Removing a weir has allowed fish to move along the river, while cutting back trees has allowed more light to reach the river.

An aerial photo showing the straight river before the project works started.

An aerial photo showing the restored river after the project works.

Volunteers have installed woody habitat features along the channel which create refuge areas for fish and other wildlife.

Other works include installing fencing to reduce bank erosion from livestock, creation of kingfisher banks to increase nesting opportunities, and improving ford crossing points across the river. The project has been designed to incorporate natural flood management techniques, and the final phase of the

project, to create wetland scrapes, will take place later this year.

People walking through the moors can now appreciate a rare and iconic chalk stream with all of the rich diversity of wildlife that it supports.

The River Bulbourne is an example of a chalk stream, which is a watercourse that flows from chalk-fed groundwater. Chalk streams are a very rare habitat globally, with more than 85% of all the chalk streams in the world found in England.

David Kirk the Chairman of the The Box Moor Trust said:

The Box Moor Trust would like to thank all of those involved at the Environment Agency, in particular Nancy Baume and Jack Herriot, for all of their hard work and dedication over the last few years. The Trust would also like to thank Allen Beechey of the Chilterns Chalk Stream Project for his help and our dedicated team of volunteers whose tireless work has been integral to the success of the project.

This project is part of a wider programme of works which the Environment Agency are working on, alongside partners, to deliver improvements to chalk streams in the Hertfordshire and North London area. These works include river restoration improvements and abstraction reductions.

For more information contact: [HNLenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:HNLenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

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## **[News story: First director general appointed to lead new Independent Office for Police Conduct \(IOPC\)](#)**

Major reforms to the IPCC – including its renaming as the IOPC – were announced by Prime Minister Theresa May during her time as Home Secretary. The IPCC oversees the police complaints system in England and Wales and sets the standards by which the police should handle complaints. The changes to the IPCC include a new governance model to improve efficiency.

The IOPC will have new powers, helping it to become more effective and more decisive in addressing public concerns, including to initiate its own investigations without relying on a force to record and refer a particular case for investigation, and to determine appeals and recommend remedies.

Michael Lockwood's crown appointment means he will be the single executive head of the organisation when the IPCC officially becomes the IOPC in January

2018, replacing the current commission.

He will ultimately bear responsibility for all decisions made in the IOPC's investigations and appeals, including the investigation of the most serious and sensitive allegations involving the police.

Nick Hurd, Minister for Policing and the Fire Service said:

I'm delighted to announce Michael Lockwood as the first director general of the IOPC. His appointment is a key milestone in the reform of the IPCC, and will ensure clear accountability and oversight for the running of the organisation.

We are absolutely determined to make the police complaints and discipline systems simpler and more transparent for the benefit of the public, and the new, more efficient and effective IOPC will be a vital part of that.

I am very grateful to the IPCC for its considerable support in developing the proposals for the IOPC.

A board, appointed by the Home Secretary, that includes a majority of non-executive directors, will provide independent support and challenge to the director general as well as oversight of the overall running of the organisation.

Mr Lockwood has a background in both the public and private sectors and has been Harrow Council's chief executive since 2015.

Michael Lockwood said:

It's an honour to be appointed as the first director general for the IOPC.

This is an important time for the organisation, as the IPCC transitions to the IOPC. I look forward to working with the dedicated staff there as we reshape the organisation to ensure the police disciplinary and complaints system is as effective and as clear as possible.

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**[Press release: Directors' conduct in](#)**

# [fine wine investment scam leaves sour taste](#)

Customers who thought they were investing in fine wines investment scheme have been left out of pocket by nearly £1 million.

The investigation by the Insolvency Service found that Crimson Fine Wines Limited, based initially in London and then in Sittingbourne in Kent, used cold calling tactics and then failed to purchase or allocate wines to customers who had paid for their investments. The scheme offered investors returns over 12 months to five years, at a time when they claimed the property market and shares were less attractive.

The Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted disqualification undertakings from Craig Cooper and Jefferey Kushner, preventing them from acting as directors for 11 and 9 years respectively.

Kushner was the listed director of Crimson Fine Wines Limited but lived in Canada, and allowed Cooper, who had previous experience in the industry, to run the operation.

As a result of this failure, at the time of liquidation of Crimson Fine Wines Limited there was insufficient wine held in the bonded warehouse to satisfy customers' claims.

Additionally, Cooper used the company's bank account for his own personal benefit, used his own personal bank account for the receipt of company funds and was paid at least one third share of £114,106 in dividends. Kushner was negligent in failing to monitor the company account, allowing it to be used for non-commercial benefits, but also received at least one third share of £114,106 in dividends.

Customer claims in the liquidation totalled £989,258, of the overall debts on liquidation of £1,080,724.

Karen Jackson, Official Receiver, said:

One of the main purposes of the Company Directors Disqualification Act is to ensure proper standards of conduct of company directors are maintained and to raise those standards where appropriate.

These disqualifications should serve as a reminder that the Insolvency Service will investigate unacceptable conduct by company directors.

The Insolvency Service will take action against directors who do not take their obligations seriously and abuse their position.

## Notes to editors

Jeffrey Kushner's date of birth is December 1980 and he resides in Ontario, Canada.

Craig Cooper's date of birth is January 1983 and he resides in Chatham, Kent.

Crimson Fine Wines Ltd (CR0 No. 07537346) was incorporated on 15 January 2008 and latterly traded from Sears Business Centre, 3-9 Station Street, Sittingbourne, United Kingdom, ME10 3DU.

Cooper was initially appointed as the company's co-director with Kushner from incorporation on 1 February 2011. Cooper then resigned as a director at Companies House on 22 March 2011 but continued to act as a director until the company went into liquidation on 17 August 2015. The estimated deficiency at the date of Liquidation was £1,080,724.

On 18 July 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a Disqualification Undertaking from Craig Cooper, effective from 8 August 2017, for 11 years.

On 25 May 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a Disqualification Undertaking from Jeffrey Kushner, effective from 15 June 2017, for 9 years.

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](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: