

Press release: Environment Agency's efforts see Norfolk's eel population boosted

Increased numbers of eels have been observed at a Norwich fish pass, as well as sightings further upstream on the River Tud, the first to be found in that location for nearly 40 years.

Jez Wood, a specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

Last month 2 small eels were found on a routine fish survey on the Tud, a tributary of the Wensum.

Two doesn't sound like many, but these are the only small eels we've found on this stretch for years, and only the fifth and sixth of this size found in the Wensum catchment since 1973.

Whilst this does not herald the recovery of the species as a whole, it does show the positive benefit of eel passes at barriers to migration and the monitoring programme at the Environment Agency.

The global eel population has dropped dramatically over the past 40 years, with numbers down by as much as 95%. Whilst there are thought to be many reasons for this decline, barriers to upstream migration are one that we can do something about.

These barriers reduce access to freshwater habitat in which many eels prefer to live while they mature, before migrating back across the Atlantic to the Sargasso Sea where they spawn and die.

In Norfolk barriers include tidal sluices, weirs and mills. Eel passes are helping the Environment Agency ensure the population can be restored and stabilised.

The status of the European eel is still regarded as "critical" and the Environment Agency is creating passes at several key obstruction locations on Norfolk Rivers, such as New Mills Yard, in Norwich.

Eel numbers are monitored by the Environment Agency at various tidal structures and also in fish monitoring surveys on the rivers. Since the New Mills pass was installed in 2009, the number of eels have ranged from the hundreds to a record 34,000 in 2016.

These are not new eels fresh from the Sargasso, but older eels which have spent time in the Broads for maybe 2 or 3 years before attempting to migrate upstream.

Whilst it's not known why the numbers of eels fluctuate so greatly, the general increase in numbers and the findings upstream are positive signs for the health of our rivers.

Factfile: Lifecycle of eels

Much is still unknown about the lifecycle of the European eel.

It is catadromous, which means it spends most of its time in freshwater but returns to sea to breed.

The larval stage of the eel, called Leptocephala, migrate across the Atlantic drifting on the Gulf Stream before metamorphosing into the glass eel stage 7 centimetres when they enter continental waters around September.

They reach the estuaries in the UK from October/November in the South West and spread over the rest of Britain over the next few months, though don't tend to actively migrate upstream until the spring.

Glass eels start passing tidal structures in April and through the summer and gradually become pigmented elvers. The urge to migrate upstream is not consistent – not all glass eels migrate past the tidal barriers in the first year. Some elvers stay in the estuary never entering the rivers, some stay in the estuary and enter the river in subsequent years.

Those that do enter the rivers can migrate upstream for several years, moving during the warmer months so the downstream reaches tend to be dominated by younger age-classes whilst upstream areas can contain only old/large individuals, predominately female.

Growth rates vary, but females reach between 45 and 85cm 10 to 12 years post-metamorphosis and males between 30 and 45cm 6 to 10 years post-metamorphosis.

At this point physical changes occur, and they change from yellow eels to silver eels and they start the downstream migration in late summer and autumn and return to the Sargasso where it is believed that they spawn and die, though this behaviour has never been witnessed.

[News story: National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 – regional finalists announced](#)

91 employers and 84 individuals are competing for awards in ten categories in the regional stage of the [National Apprenticeship Awards 2017](#), after beating off competition from almost 800 entries.

[National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 – Regional Apprentice of the Year Finalists](#) (PDF, 92.9KB, 2 pages)

[National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 – Regional Apprenticeship Champion of the Year Finalists](#) (PDF, 73.4KB, 1 page)

[National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 – Regional Employer of the Year Finalists](#) (PDF, 84.1KB, 2 pages)

The 2017 awards, run by the National Apprenticeship Service and now in their 14th year, recognise employers and apprentices from across England. The awards recognise excellent businesses that grow their own talent with apprenticeships and apprentices, who have made a significant contribution to their workplaces.

The award categories are:

Employer categories

- Small Employer of the Year
- Medium Employer of the Year
- Large Employer of the Year
- Macro Employer of the Year
- Newcomer SME of the Year
- Newcomer Large Employer of the Year

Apprentice categories

- Intermediate Apprentice of the Year
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year
- Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year
- Apprenticeship Champion of the Year

The very best employer category entries will also feature in the prestigious Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers List 2017.

Sue Husband, director, National Apprenticeship Service said:

Our awards are an exciting opportunity to recognise the hard work and success of apprentices and the commitment of apprenticeship employers. The regional finalists announced today demonstrate promise and drive and have a real enthusiasm for the apprenticeship programme.

Our finalists show clearly the impact of apprenticeships on skills and on how businesses perform. I applaud every finalist for getting this far and I look forward to celebrating the achievements and loyalty of winners. I wish everyone the best as we move into the next phase of this competition.

Winners and highly commended entries from all regions across England will be

recognised at one of 6 celebration events held across the country this autumn. After the regional ceremonies, winners will progress to the next stage of the competition, where their applications will be assessed by a national judging panel. National finalists will be announced in December and will be invited to a national, final ceremony on 18 January 2018 at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London.

Last year's Advanced Apprentice of the Year regional award winner Emma Goulding from Siemens concluded:

Every apprentice deserves the opportunity to showcase their achievements and be recognised for their contribution to both their business and industry which they work in. It's humbling to be recognised for my hard work and determination in the National Apprenticeship Awards 2016 as a regional winner. Good luck to all the finalists this year!

Share your #AppAwards17 success on social media: tweet [@Apprenticeships](#).

Press release: Demolition company directors buried under long ban

George Beattie (senior) signed a seven year disqualification undertaking on the 12 April 2017; Michelle Beattie signed a three years and six month disqualification and George Beattie (junior) was disqualified on 31 May 2017 from acting as a director of a limited company by Order of the Glasgow Sheriff's Court for seven years.

On 20 April 2015, George Hunter (Demolishers) Limited was placed into Liquidation with an estimated deficiency to creditors of £1,755,782.

An investigation by the Insolvency Service revealed the directors had caused or allowed the company to trade to their own benefit and incur further liabilities to the risk and detriment of creditors in full knowledge that HMRC had presented a winding up petition to Court on 14 January 2015 and the company's liquidation on 20 April 2015.

Despite knowing this, the directors made net payments of at least £155,310.45 to the benefit of connected parties and further offset liabilities due to the company from the directors and connected companies of at least £457,395.72 against unverified charges to the detriment of creditors as liabilities increased by at least £359,097.33.

Rob Clarke, Head of Insolvent Investigations North, part of the Insolvency

Service, said:

This was a cynical attempt by the directors, in the clear knowledge that their company was insolvent, to extract money that should have been paid to other creditors.

The Insolvency Service will take robust action against this sort of misconduct which is a clear abuse of limited liability

Notes to editors

George Beattie (senior) and Michelle Beattie were appointed as directors of George Hunter (Demolishers) Limited on 2 April 2003 and remained directors to the company's Liquidation on 20 April 2015.

George Beattie (junior) was appointed as a director of the company on 1 June 2012 and remained a director to the company's Liquidation on 20 April 2015.

George Hunter (Demolishers) Limited (company number SC032889) went into liquidation on 20 April 2015 with an estimated deficiency to creditors of £1,755,782. The company operated as demolition contractors.

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. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

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.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: Bubble bursts for wholesaler who failed to keep proper records](#)

Javid Mogra, aged 32 of Bolton, Lancashire, admitted that he had failed to keep sufficient company records and gave an undertaking to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy not to be a director of a limited company, for 9 years, from 7 August.

Mr Mogra was the sole director of Middleborough Ltd (Middleborough) which was wound up by the Court in the public interest on 14 November 2016.

The company owed creditors at least £2,119,589 despite filing accounts showing turnover of £2,321,657 for the period ended 31 August 2015.

In giving his undertaking, Mr Mogra did not dispute that he failed to ensure Middleborough Ltd kept adequate accounting records, and that as a consequence, it has not been possible to:

- verify his explanation for the shortfall of £54,229 paid to Middleborough by a customer in respect of beverages supplied between 29 June 2015 and 27 August 2015
- verify his explanation for an underpayment of £1,435,954 to the supplier, a shortfall of £1,235,302 received from the customer and an overall loss of £348,390 incurred on sales of car parts between 02 January 2015 and 16 September 2015
- verify his explanation regarding the sale of 6,136 sets of accident data and a debt due to a supplier of at least £624,929 incurred between 01 July 2015 and 16 September 2015
- determine the accuracy of financial statements filed at Companies House for the periods ending 28 February 2014, 10 February 2015 and 31 August 2015
- determine the accuracy of Middleborough's VAT returns submitted to HMRC

in relation to the 03/2015 to the 03/2016 VAT periods

- determine the nature and extent of Middleborough's assets and liabilities
- verify the legitimacy of Middleborough's trading or show that all transactions have been carried out in the usual course of business and to the benefit of the company

Commenting on the disqualification, Ken Beasley, Official Receiver of the Insolvency Service's Public Interest Unit, said:

The Insolvency Service will not tolerate Directors who cannot show that their Companies are being run for legitimate purposes.

The director of this company has fallen far short of the standard of record keeping that can be reasonably expected and as a result, there were serious concerns over the true nature of this business.

Notes to editors

Middleborough Ltd (Company number 08384563) was incorporated on 1 February 2013. The registered office of Middleborough Ltd is currently situated at 2nd Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1 3BN. The registered office and trading address of Middleborough prior to the liquidation was situated 9 Maplewood Gardens, BOLTON, BL1 3NR.

Javid Mogra gave an undertaking to the Secretary of State not to be a director for 9 years in respect of his conduct in Middleborough on 23 June 2017. The undertaking has been accepted and the period of disqualification commenced on 07 August 2017.

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
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