

Suspended prison sentences for brothers who illegally stored waste at Shropshire site

Shrewsbury Crown Court sentenced brothers Jonathan and Mark Nicholson from Armagh, Northern Ireland, to 8 months imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, on 24 February 2022. They were ordered to undertake 100 hours of unpaid work and were disqualified from being a company director for 3 years. The brothers were also told to pay a total of over £23,000 towards the costs of the prosecution.

Both men admitted the charge of breaching the environmental permit for the site which was run through a company, Greenway Waste Recycling Ltd, they were directors of.

They admitted, between 12 October 2016 and 19 January 2017, they had stockpiled bales of waste, inappropriately at a site on land at Recycling House, Rock Road, Ketley, Telford in Shropshire.

The waste included plastics, wood, metal, paper, and cardboard. It is referred to as Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF), as its intended use was burning as a fuel to produce electricity.

In all, officers from the Environment Agency estimated the waste dumped amounted to more than 26,000 cubic metres or roughly the equivalent of 10 olympic-sized swimming pools.

Following the eviction of the company run by the brothers, efforts were made to secure the removal of the abandoned waste by them. Only one load, comprising 26 bales of waste was removed.

Throughout the time the waste was being stockpiled on the site in breach of the permit, Environment Agency officers inspecting the site highlighted the fire risk posed by the waste.

A significant waste fire took place at the site in April 2021 which led to the M54 being partially closed as well as a number of neighbouring primary schools.

David Hudson, Environment Manager for the West Midlands Area of the Environment Agency, said:

Waste crime can have a serious environmental impact. It puts communities at risk and undermines legitimate business and the investment and economic growth that go with it.

We support legitimate businesses and we are proactively supporting them by disrupting and stopping the criminal element. This is

backed up by the threat of tough enforcement as in this case.

We continue to use intelligence-led approaches to target the most serious crimes and evaluate which interventions are most effective.

If you see or suspect waste crime is being committed we urge you to report it immediately to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Charges

Greenway Waste Recycling Limited did, between 12 October 2016 and 7 September 2017 at Recycling House, Rock Road, Ketley, Telford, breach condition 4.4.2 of Environmental Permit number EPR/PB3632RM in that it kept waste accepted at the site other than in accordance with section 4.6 of the working plan, that being an offence by it by virtue of Regulation 38(2) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

Defendants

Jonathan James Nicholson, of Drumman Heights, Armagh, Northern Ireland.

Mark Alexander Nicholson, of Dobbin Street, Armagh, Northern Ireland.

Background information

Greenway Waste Recycling Limited (Company No. 07281560) had its lease for the site terminated by the land owner, for failing to pay rent in January 2017. Greenway subsequently went into administration.

In excess of 20,000 cubic metres of waste remained stockpiled at the site after Greenway was evicted.

On 31 August 2018, the Environment Agency granted an environmental permit reference EPR/RP3237YR to Johnson's Aggregates & Recycling Limited (Company No. 04366658) to process pulverised fuel ash into products at the site.

In December 2019 the permit holder's appeal against refusal of planning for the activity was allowed by a Planning Inspector. The permit holder has not sought to begin operations.

Between the departure of Greenway Waste Recycling Limited in 2017 and the fire in 2021 the Environment Agency has been in regular contact with the landowner and carried out regular inspections of the site.

The Environment Agency is leading an ongoing investigation into the fire at the site in April 2021.

If local residents are concerned about the site they should call our 24/7 hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

PM call with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine: 4 March 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Ukrainian President Zelenskyy in the early hours of this morning.



The Prime Minister spoke to Ukrainian President Zelenskyy in the early hours of this morning about the gravely concerning situation at Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station.

Both leaders agreed that Russia must immediately cease its attack on the power station and allow unfettered access for emergency services to the plant.

The Prime Minister said the reckless actions of President Putin could now directly threaten the safety of all of Europe. He said the UK would do everything it could to ensure the situation did not deteriorate further.

The Prime Minister said he would be seeking an emergency UN Security Council meeting in the coming hours, and that the UK would raise this issue immediately with Russia and close partners.

Both leaders agreed a ceasefire was crucial.

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£288 million fund opens for green heating projects

- Next generation of heat network projects in England can bid for funding as government's £288 million green energy scheme opens
- projects where a central energy source provides heat to multiple properties and businesses can play a key role in cutting carbon emissions
- the Green Heat Network Fund will support low carbon technologies, such as heat pumps, and deliver emissions savings equivalent to taking 5.6 million cars off the road for a year

Households and businesses across England are set to benefit from greener heating as a £288 million government funding scheme is opened – boosting the roll out of next generation heat network projects as part of cutting emissions.

Schemes that will deliver clean heating to homes, offices, commercial and public buildings will be able to apply for grants to the [Green Heat Network Fund](#) over the next 3 years, allowing more towns and cities across England to take up this tried and tested technology.

The fund is expected to reduce carbon emissions equivalent to taking 5.6 million cars off the road for a year.

Heat networks offer carbon emissions savings by supplying heat to buildings from a central source, avoiding the need for households and workplaces to rely on individual, energy-intensive heating solutions – such as gas boilers.

Funding will support the uptake of low-carbon technologies like heat pumps, solar and geothermal energy as a central heating source. Applications for grants can be made from 14 March.

Energy Minister Lord Callanan said:

Heating in buildings forms a significant part of the UK's carbon footprint, so changing how we warm our homes and workspaces is vital to meeting our world-leading climate change commitments.

Heat networks are an effective way of reducing carbon emissions and this fund will enable us to accelerate the roll-out of these cutting-edge and green technologies.

The scheme is also expected to fund the delivery of an estimated 9.7 million tonnes of total carbon savings by 2050 with the independent Committee on Climate Change estimating that, with continued support, heat networks could meet nearly 20% of overall UK demand for heating by 2050.

CEO of the Association for Decentralised Energy Lily Frencham said:

We're delighted that the government is invigorating the transition to zero-carbon heating across the UK that uses good old-fashioned pipes and water to transport heat from green energy centres to homes and businesses.

Heat networks offer the most cost-effective tried and tested way of decarbonising our towns and cities and it is great to see government's continued support for the sector through the launch of the Green Heat Network Fund.

Heat networks have a critical role to play in the UK's net zero future – and 2022 will be a crucial year for the heat networks sector.

UK District Energy Association (UKDEA) chairman Simon Woodward said:

The UKDEA is excited to see the launch of the Green Heat Network Fund as another significant measure to help support the growth of the heat network sector.

The Green Heat Network Fund is the successor scheme to the government's Heat Networks Investment Project (HNIP), which has provided more than £250 million of funding for schemes across England and Wales since 2018.

More than 20 heat network projects have received HNIP funding, including 2 innovative schemes in the North-East of England, which source their heat from water in abandoned mine shafts and a community-led project in Cambridgeshire, which could be a model for other rural communities seeking to decarbonise their heating.

The Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) will be open to public, private and third sector applicants in England. It will open for applications on 14 March 2022 and is anticipated to run to 2025.

At present, there are over 14,000 heat networks in the UK, providing heating and hot water to around 480,000 consumers.

The GHNF will be a key part of plans to reduce carbon emissions from heating homes and businesses by 2050 as it succeeds the Heat Networks Investment Project scheme when it closes in March 2022.

Anyone wishing for further information on the GHNF can contact the GHNF team via their mailbox: ghnfcorrespondence@beis.gov.uk.

The Heat Networks Investment Project has focused on accelerating the growth of the heat network market and has permitted fossil fuel sources of heat provided they offer carbon reductions and will be replaced by low-carbon

alternatives over time.

The UK government has appointed Ofgem as the heat networks regulator for Great Britain to ensure consumers receive a fair price and reliable supply of heat.

[Ukraine: what you can do to help](#)

The people of the United Kingdom are standing with Ukraine. Across the country, everyone wants to do their bit to support those who have been forced to flee their homes because of the conflict. Here is how you can help #StandWithUkraine.

Financial donations

If you want to donate money, there are a number of charities providing humanitarian relief in Ukraine.

The UK Government will match public donations to this appeal pound-for-pound up to £25 million.

Make your donation safely

There are lots of organisations across the UK and internationally who have launched appeals, and you may wish to donate through these organisations instead. There are some simple steps you can take to ensure your money is safe and being used effectively:

- Check the charity's name and registration number using the [search the charity register tool](#)
- Most charities with an income of £5,000 or more must be registered, which means they are regulated by The Charity Commission
- Make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information
- If in doubt, ask the charity or organisation for more information

Donating essential supplies

One of the best ways to help is by donating cash through trusted charities

and aid organisations, rather than donating goods. Cash can be transferred quickly to areas where it is needed and individuals and aid organisations can use it to buy what is most needed. Unsolicited donations of goods, although well-meant, can obstruct supply chains and delay more urgent life-saving assistance from getting through.

Organisations across the UK are gathering essential supplies, such as clothes, first aid and sanitary products. Many charities and community groups will have lists of items they need.

Charities with experience of responding to disasters are best placed to reach victims on the ground.

The government will be launching a new sponsorship scheme to make sure that Ukrainians who have been forced to flee their homes have a route to safety.

The scheme will match people, charities, businesses and community groups to Ukrainians who do not have family ties to the UK.

Details of the scheme and how you can apply will be published shortly by the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#).

The UK Government, Ukrainian Government and others have been sharing messages of support on social media using the hashtag #StandForUkraine

Take care what you share! There is a lot of false information about the conflict circulating online – this is often called misinformation and disinformation. You can do your part to stop the spread:

- Ask yourself – does this look right? Does this sound right? Does this information come from a source I recognise?
- The [SHARE checklist](#) can help you decide if information can be trusted, before you interact with or share it on your social media channels

Cyber security

The National Cyber Security Centre is not aware of any specific cyber threats to the UK in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However we strongly encourage organisations and citizens to follow NCSC guidance on steps to take when the cyber threat is heightened. Visit the [Cyber Aware website](#) where you find practical steps and tools to help keep you, your family or business more secure online.

Government announces sanctions against Russian oligarchs Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov

- Oligarchs Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov – worth a combined \$19bn – sanctioned with immediate effect.
- Putin associates now cut off from their significant UK interests including mansions worth tens of millions.
- Pair's assets frozen, both are hit with travel bans and no British citizen or business can deal with them.
- Oligarch Taskforce to target Russian elite expected to be launched next week

Today the Government has announced that a full asset freeze and travel ban has been imposed against Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov, two of Russia's leading oligarchs with significant interests in the UK and close links to the Kremlin.

Alisher Usmanov has had significant interests in English football clubs Arsenal and Everton. He owns Beechwood House in Highgate, worth an estimated £48m, and the 16th century Sutton Place estate in Surrey.

Igor Shuvalov's assets in the UK include two luxury apartments in central London worth an estimated £11m. He is a core part of Putin's inner circle, and headed up Russia's bid for the 2018 Football World Cup.

The Foreign Secretary will also establish an Oligarch Taskforce of Ministers and officials from departments including the Home Office, Treasury, Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the National Crime Agency. This expert group will coordinate cross-government work to sanction oligarchs, helping build cases against the list of oligarchs it has identified as targets.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Our message to Putin and his allies has been clear from day one – invading Ukraine would have serious and crippling economic consequences. Sanctioning Usmanov and Shuvalov sends a clear message that we will hit oligarchs and individuals closely associated with the Putin regime and his barbarous war. We won't stop here. Our aim is to cripple the Russian economy and starve Putin's war machine.

These latest sanctions are part of a tough package against Russia, including sanctioning the Russian Central Bank, and banning the Russian State and all Russian companies from raising funds in the UK. The government will also

asset freeze every Russian bank. In coordination with the US and other allies, these measures amount to the largest set of financial sanctions in history.

The government will continue to ratchet up pressure and use sanctions to degrade the Russian economy on a scale that the Kremlin, or any major economy, has never seen before.

Notes to editors

- Alisher Usmanov is founder of USM Holdings which works in sectors including extractives and telecoms. USM Holdings sponsors the Everton training ground and has bought the naming rights for their new stadium. His net worth is an estimated \$18.4bn.
- Igor Shuvalov's positions in the Russian Government include as First Deputy Prime Minister, Government Chief of Staff, and he has twice worked as an aide to Vladimir Putin. He has been chair of the management board of VEB since 2018, one of the banks recently subjected to a full asset freeze.
- Since the invasion, the UK has sanctioned 11 of Russia's leading oligarchs, so with these designations the number rises to 13.
- Overall, 15 oligarchs now sit on the sanctions list with one of them, Mikhail Gutseriev, sanctioned under the Belarus sanctions regime.
- Since the invasion, more than 220 individuals and entities have been caught by our sanctions. This includes individuals, entities and their subsidiaries.
- In total, more than 500 Russian individuals, entities and their subsidiaries across all sanctions regimes now sit on our sanctions list.