

Press release: North Tyneside man fined for illegal fishing

A man from North Tyneside has been fined £319 for fishing illegally on the River Tyne and obstructing an enforcement officer in the execution of his duty.

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David Hetherington, 27, of Matfen Gardens in Wallsend, was charged with fishing without a licence and failing to give his name and address to an Environment Agency officer.

Hetherington had his case heard at Newcastle upon Tyne Magistrates' Court on Thursday 2 May. He was ordered to pay a total of £649 in fines, victim surcharge and costs, and his fishing tackle was confiscated.

Prosecuting for the Environment Agency, Matthew Treece told the court that on 28 September 2018, David Hetherington fished without a fishing licence and without permission from Wylam Angling Club, which owns the fishing rights.

Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officer, David Shears, was on patrol along a stretch of the River Tyne in Wylam, Northumberland, where he found Mr Hetherington fishing.

The officer approached Mr Hetherington, who was sitting on a bank downstream with a spinning rod. Hetherington was asked to produce his licence, which he could not. Hetherington refused to cooperate and a scuffle took place, after which Mr Hetherington ran away, leaving his fishing equipment behind.

The officer was able to track down Mr Hetherington to his home address, when it was confirmed that Hetherington did not hold a licence.

The Environment Agency is reminding anglers of the importance of having a fishing licence.

David Shears, Senior Fisheries Enforcement Officer for the Environment Agency in the North East, said:

The majority of anglers fish legally and buy a fishing licence. Those that don't are cheating their fellow anglers and endangering the future of the sport.

In addition, those that flout the law risk a criminal conviction, a fine, and could lose their fishing equipment. It's just not worth it.

The River Tyne is an important habitat for salmon, trout, coarse fish and eels. It is among the premier salmon rivers in England and Wales.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and Angling Trust. Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Income from licence sales is used to fund Environment Agency work 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.

Buying a fishing licence is quick and easy. You can buy [fishing licences online](#).

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

[Press release: Call for caravanners to "check it before towing it" this summer](#)

If you're a caravanner ready to hit the road this summer, Highways England is reminding you to "check it before you tow it!".

[Press release: Call for caravanners to "check it before towing it" this summer](#)

There are around [4,000 incidents every year](#) involving all forms of trailers,

which equated to around 11 per day in 2017.

Highways England is reminding anyone towing, before setting off, to ensure they have the correct licence and insurance to tow whatever the weight, that the vehicle is connected correctly and that the load is secure and within the limits for the vehicle.

Highways England's Assistant Regional Safety Co-Ordinator Marie Biddulph said:

Safety is our top priority and we want caravanners and everyone towing vehicles on our motorway and major trunk road network to get to their destinations safely. Our advice is simple: check it before you tow it.

Besides ensuring they and their vehicles are properly prepared, Highways England is reminding people towing mirrors are a legal requirement when towing a unit and should be fitted to both driver and passenger sides to improve rear visibility.

The advice comes in the wake of the launch of a new All-Party Parliamentary Group to raise awareness of trailer and towing safety in the UK.

The primary focus of the Trailer and Towing Safety All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) will be to bring together parliamentarians, industry representatives and consumer groups to discuss and raise awareness of trailer and towing safety.

The National Towing Working Group, chaired by Highways England, aims to reducing towing-related incidents, both business and domestic related, across Great Britain's road network.

Highways England Traffic Officers give advice to caravanners at an event at the Barn Hill services on the M40 in Warwickshire. Image supplied courtesy of Iain Geddes / Camping and Caravanning Club.

Highways England held a recent event at Barn Hill services on the southbound M40 in Warwickshire to raise awareness about the significance of checking the vehicle before setting off.

The event was supported by organisations including Halfords, Vin Chip, The Camping and Caravanning Club and Warwickshire Police.

Senior Technical Advisor at the Camping and Caravanning Club Iain Geddes added:

We're pleased to be working with Highways England to raise awareness amongst people towing and this event was a great way for us to speak to people towing caravans or trailers to make sure they were safe and equipped for the journey ahead.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: New Immigration Services Commissioner appointed](#)

John Tuckett has been appointed as the Immigration Services Commissioner, responsible for regulating immigration advisers and services across the UK.

Currently Chief Executive of the Marine Management Organisation, John will lead the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to protect people from illegal immigration advice, set clear standards for the sector and reduce abuse.

He will take up the role in summer 2019 and remain in post for the next five years.

Immigration Services Commissioner John Tuckett said:

We have a duty to improve the quality of immigration advice and I want to ensure that people feel confident with the services they receive.

I am delighted to take on this new role and intend to do all I can to stop illegal immigration advice and promote good practice.

Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes said:

Our immigration system is fundamental to the UK's success and it is important that we make sure people are not given illegal and false immigration advice.

The commissioner plays a key role in setting strong industry standards and I look forward to working with John to build confidence in the UK's immigration system.

The OISC is a public body established by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and is independent of government, allowing it to challenge processes and regulations to improve the system. Where individuals and organisations have acted illegally, the OISC has the power to prosecute.

To help the public make informed choices, the OISC publishes a list of competent organisations and individual advisers who have been through a rigorous process of assessment. There is also a robust complaints procedure so people can report those who they feel have given inappropriate immigration advice.