

# Press release: Wiltshire waste dealer forced to pay back £200,000

Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been confiscated from a Wiltshire man who ran an illegal waste operation leading to a serious fire at one of his yards.

Lee Averies is serving a five-year ban from the waste industry after environmental offences at sites in Swindon he operated with his brother, David Averies, and another one in Calne. The yard at Marshgate in the town suffered a significant blaze in 2014.

At Swindon Crown Court on Monday, the Environment Agency recovered £200,000 for the taxpayer from Lee Averies under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. He could face prison if he doesn't pay up within three months.

Judge Jason Taylor QC ordered Averies, 49, of The Marsh, in Wanborough, to pay a contribution of £15,000 towards the Environment Agency's legal and investigation costs. His company, Calne Aggregates Holdings Ltd, currently in liquidation, was given a nominal penalty of £1.

The court had frozen seven personal and business bank accounts linked to the waste dealer at an earlier hearing, after an application by the Environment Agency.

Colin Chiverton, Environment Manager for the Environment Agency in Wiltshire, said:

The Environment Agency will do everything in its power to prevent waste crime and punish those who profit from it.

Our extensive investigation found companies linked to Lee Averies earned significant amounts of money from stockpiling waste, and failing to exercise proper controls over the sites. He benefitted personally.

We have ensured neither Averies nor his businesses operate any permitted waste sites, or become registered waste-carriers, such as providing skips for hire. Averies remains subject to a five-year criminal behaviour order, preventing him from any involvement in the waste business until 2021.

In the past four years, Environment Agency officers have worked with other agencies like the Insolvency Service and the Traffic Commissioner, which oversees HGV licences, to investigate other offences.

David Averies was fined and ordered to pay £50,000 in costs by the court in

2016.

The Environment Agency encourages anyone needing waste removed to only use companies listed on its [waste removal register](#)

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## **News story: National Drought Group – EA Chairman’s Statement – March 2019**

The National Drought Group (NDG) met on Monday 18 March, chaired by Harvey Bradshaw, Executive Director at the Environment Agency, to assess the latest water resource situation and actions being taken to reduce risk for the summer.

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## **News story: Plans launched to boost quality of post -16 qualifications**

[Plans](#) to stop funding qualifications that do not provide the same high-quality education as new T Levels and world-class A Levels have been published today (19 March) by Education Secretary Damian Hinds.

The move is the latest step in the Government’s drive to boost the quality of education and training available to young people post-16, which includes the introduction of new T Levels from 2020 – the technical equivalent to A Levels – and more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities.

A Levels, T Levels and apprenticeships will be the gold standard option for young people after they take their GCSEs, but if a student chooses another qualification the Government wants to make sure they are as high-quality and will set them on a clear path to a job, further education or training.

If a 16-year-old wants to study history, they know they can take an History A Level which is understood and trusted by parents, universities and employers. But if a student wants to study an engineering qualification after GCSEs there are over 200 different options to choose from – leaving them at a loss as to which ones will give them the best chance of getting the skills they need and leaving employers with no clue as to which qualifications they should be looking for.

To help streamline and boost the quality of education on offer, Mr Hinds has launched a consultation reviewing qualifications at level 3 and below –

excluding A Levels and GCSEs – such as Applied General Qualifications, Tech Levels and Technical Certificates.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

We have made huge progress to boost the quality of education and training on offer for young people. From 2020 we will start to roll out new T Levels which will offer young people high-quality technical courses alongside our world class A Levels. These will be the gold standard choice for young people after they take their GCSEs.

But we also want to make sure that all options available to students are high-quality and give them the skills they need to get a great job, go on to further education or training, and employers can be confident they can access the workforce they need for the future.

We can't legislate for parity of esteem between academic and technical routes post 16. But we can improve the quality of the options out there and by raising quality, more students and parents will trust these routes.

In the first part of a [two-stage consultation](#), the government is consulting on:

- only providing public funding for qualifications that meet key criteria on quality, purpose, necessity and progression
- not providing public funding for qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds that overlap with T Levels or A Levels

[Analysis](#) published by the Department for Education today has highlighted a confusing landscape of over 12,000 courses on offer to young people at level 3 and below, with multiple qualifications in the same subject areas available – many of which are poor quality and offering little value to students or employers.

Matthew Fell, CBI Chief UK Policy Director, said:

Young people need clear, high-quality and easy to understand options at 16 – whether that's A-levels, new T-levels, or doing an apprenticeship. Each route is valued by employers, but it can sometimes be difficult to understand the difference between the thousands of qualifications and different grading systems out there.

The Government is absolutely right to address this by giving employers a part in shaping the reforms, ensuring qualifications relate to the modern world and give young people the skills they need to succeed.

In 2011, the Government asked [Professor Alison Wolf to carry out a review of vocational education for 14- to 19-year-olds](#) in this country to support more young people into jobs or into higher level education and training. Following this, in 2015 the Government also commissioned [Lord Sainsbury to carry out an independent review] and make recommendations on how to improve the quality of technical education. Both reviews led to improvements in the system, including the development of new, tougher criteria for qualifications included in performance tables and the introduction of new gold standard T Levels from 2020.

The Government announced that it would carry out a review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below in May 2017 as part of its [response](#) to the T Level consultation.

The review launched today will build on the progress made so far to deliver the vision set out by Professor Wolf and Lord Sainsbury.

Lord Sainsbury said:

I am very pleased that this review will shine a spotlight on any current qualifications that exist that do not best serve our young people or their future employers.

The key priority for the Independent Panel on Technical Education, which I chaired, was to raise the quality of technical education to that of academic education in this country, and we strongly recommended that public subsidy should be withdrawn from college-based technical education that didn't set young people on the best possible path to employment or further learning.

If we are going to ask our young people to work hard to get qualifications, we must make sure that those qualifications deliver real benefits to them.

The Government reformed GCSEs and A Levels to make them more rigorous and put them on a par with high performing countries, so they better prepare pupils for further study and employment.

The response to the first consultation will be published alongside the launch the second consultation later in the year. It will set out more detailed proposals for change, including the criteria that will be used to determine whether a qualification will be approved for public funding.

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## News story: CNC Police Officer receives MBE

CNC Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC) Duncan Worsell has received an MBE from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales during an investiture at Buckingham Palace.

The award was in recognition for T/ACC Worsell's services to policing.

Duncan has worked for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) for over 25 years. For the last five years he has been responsible for a complex operational division containing over 800 police officers and staff, based at high profile sites such as Sellafield and Dounraey, as well as four EDF nuclear power station sites.

Speaking after the investiture Duncan said: "I am delighted and very proud to have received this award. It is an enormous privilege to be one of the leaders of the CNC. I have the pleasure of working with some fantastic people, and this award is also recognition for the hard work they display on a daily basis."

Duncan's entire career has been spent in public service. He began his working life at 17 and prior to joining the CNC served with the Royal Navy.

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## Speech: Sir Alan Duncan speech on Kazakhstan success with UNSC

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and thank you Ambassador for giving me this opportunity.

This fine building has a habit of witnessing historic occasions.

Both Houses of Parliament moved into Church House at some stage during the Second World War, and [as the Ambassador rightly said] the very first United Nations Security Council meeting took place here in 1946.

So this is absolutely the right place in which to be celebrating Kazakhstan's successful first spell on the Council.

Given Central Asia's pivotal place at the centre of the world, it was about time that we saw it represented at the heart of the international system.

I hope that Kazakhstan's obvious success in the UN over the last two years will encourage other states in the region to follow in your footsteps and

become key players on the international stage in the way you have been. Your significant contribution to the workings of the UN is a good illustration of the way in which Kazakhstan, and the region, are attracting more and more attention and interest.

Kazakhstan's more active role on the international stage is undoubtedly one of the reasons for that – their successful Caspian Summit was a good example, and that forged an agreement to settle the previously unresolved status of the Caspian after 20 years of negotiation. This represents a key step in unlocking future international investment in the Caspian Basin.

Two particular highlights I would like to commend are its work on promoting regional partnership between Afghanistan and Central Asia, and its success in organising the first visit since 2010 of a Security Council Delegation to Kabul.

Beyond its membership of the UN Security Council, Kazakhstan has also demonstrated its commitment to international peace and security by deploying peacekeeping troops in Lebanon. This is a significant contribution to the pursuit of peace in the Middle East.

In connection with that deployment, I am proud that the UK's close partnership with Kazakhstan played a role in readying their troops for peacekeeping, by providing them with English Language Training and supporting what was called Exercise Steppe Eagle, which is an annual peacekeeping training exercise.

But our collaboration goes much further than the mere military. 2018 was a spectacular year for bilateral trade and investment. We saw the launch of the Astana International Financial Centre, with its associated Court, based on English Law. We also saw the successful dual listing of the Kazakh uranium company, KazAtomProm, for its IPO, in both London and Astana.

I really welcome these closer trade and investment links and look forward to collaborating on trade policy as Kazakhstan prepares to host the World Trade Organisation 12th Ministerial Conference in Astana in June 2020. Of course, every successful partnership ultimately depends on the bonds between its people, and especially its young people. And here, too there is a good story to tell. Many Kazakhs have deep connections with Britain, in part thanks to the 'Bolashak' higher education programme, which has brought thousands of students to the UK over the last 25 years. And overall, we issue 3,000 visas to Kazakh students every year; and I have to say, it's nice to know that at least some visas can be issued without difficulty.

We plan to strengthen these personal links even further in 2019, which President Nazarbayev has helpfully declared the year of youth. And I have decreed that includes me. We will build on the successful model pioneered by the British Council's 'Creative Central Asia' programme, to link up young leaders across a range of fields, from politics and business to culture and social engagement.

Our vision for Central Asia is of a peaceful, prosperous and well-governed

region, whose countries are free to exercise their independence and sovereignty, and which are able to continue cooperating peacefully with each other and with the wider neighbourhood.

This is a vision shared by our partners in the region, including Kazakhstan, and by the EU. We want the EU to continue to take an ambitious role in the region and that is why we have remained an active participant in discussions on the new EU-Central Asia Strategy.

It is also why, regardless of the nature of our future relationship with the EU after we leave, we remain committed to cooperating with them and other partners in Central Asia, and to further developing our strong relationship with Kazakhstan and its neighbours.

I very much look forward to working with Kazakhstan's new Foreign Minister to further develop our bilateral relationship, including by continuing to collaborate in the UN and other multilateral fora.

Your excellencies, Erlan, I offer my congratulations once more to Kazakhstan on your successful two year stint in New York, and I commend you all on your wider efforts to embrace international cooperation and the support you've given to the rules-based international system. In doing so, Kazakhstan has not only shown a determination to step up and play its part on the world stage; it has also set an example for the region to follow.

I believe that we share with the government of Kazakhstan a vision of a region working together for the common good, one that plays a positive role on the international stage, and most importantly one that realises its considerable potential, to the benefit of all its citizens and the wider world.

So we remain committed to supporting Kazakhstan to realise that vision, in 2019 and beyond. And once again I congratulate you for your service to the world over the last two years.