

Press release: Illegally dumped waste at Redbrook Lane cleared

Environment Agency and partners have worked to enable a new landowner to safely remove over 2,500 bales of illegally dumped waste from the former AMI Blaymires site at Redbrook Lane, Rugeley.

In 2013, in a matter of days, baled waste was illegally deposited without the warehouse owner's knowledge. Sadly this type of organised waste crime has a devastating effect: warehouses are filled very quickly and landowners are left with the responsibility and costs of disposing of the waste dumped on their land. These costs can be astronomical. At Redbrook Lane, the Environment Agency has estimated the clear up costs to be in the region of £400,000.

The site is now owned by South Staffordshire Commercials Limited, after Environment Agency action to persuade creditors to write off any debt associated with the site. This has meant that the land could be sold to new owners with the means to safely remove the waste and bring the site back into business use.

Adam Lines, Staffordshire Environment Manager said:

This is very good news. Working with partners and with compassion for the victims of this crime we've worked tirelessly to address the challenges of clearing illegally deposited and abandoned waste from the site.

The Environment Agency take every action we can to clear sites and bring those responsible to account. Unfortunately, as long as there is profit to be made from managing waste illegally there will always be people who are prepared to break the law in pursuit of that profit. We are going hard after that criminal minority.

Since the crime, the Environment Agency has worked in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council, Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service to get the site cleared, to reduce issues with flies, increase security and to reduce the risk of fire at the site. Cannock Chase District Council provided funding to supply shutters and regularly carried out pest control work. Staffordshire Fire & Rescue has also carried out regular site visits and maintained an active plan on how to tackle and contain a fire at the site.

Councillor John Preece, Cannock Chase Council's Portfolio Holder for Environment said:

We are pleased to see the waste removed because it's been a blight

on the local area and a potential hazard to the local community.

Whilst it has been a long time coming, it is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the staff of all organisations involved. It represents an excellent example of how agencies can work together productively.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) Director of Response, Tim Hyde said:

SFRS is fully involved in managing the risks of identified illicit waste sites around the county, regularly monitoring sites and feeding into the county's multi-agency work to tackle the issue.

The news that this site has been cleared is very welcome. Sites like this are a blight on the community and are becoming an increasing problem both locally and nationally. Getting them cleared can be difficult and expensive but we will continue to work with our partners to reduce the risks of fire while they try to achieve this.

Everyone has a part to play to help crack down on waste crime. If you suspect someone is disposing of your waste illegally, or you want to alert us to other illegal waste operations, call our incident hotline on 0800 70 60 50 or Crimestoppers anonymously on: 0800 555 111, or alternatively use the online form at www.crimestoppers-uk.org

News story: Wearable technology for injury prevention

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is seeking novel ways to use data science to prevent injury in service personnel, after a successful event to assess market interest.

The use of wearable and/or nearable technology presents a significant opportunity for the UK Armed Forces to reduce injury. The 3 areas of focus are musculoskeletal injury (MSKI), environmental injury (heat and cold) and noise induced hearing loss (NIHL).

The British Army is seeking rapid innovations to improve the deployability and overall health of service personnel through the use of data science and technology. The aspiration is to employ practical sensors and supporting data analysis that will provide indicators and warnings prior to injury, to allow for early intervention and prevention of injuries.

Consideration must be given to the working and living environments in which the military operate. Technology proposed must function in all climates and environments, and in extreme conditions, with challenges such as dust, sand, wet and extreme temperatures, and it must address security, legal and ethical implications (for instance, encryption, geographical information, transmission and data protection).

DASA is interested in technologies that can be trialled in a realistic military environment within 6 months, reaching a minimum of around technology readiness level (TRL) 6 (technology model or prototype demonstration in a relevant environment) at the end of this phase.

This competition will comprise of 2 challenges:

- hardware to collect data (wearable and/or nearable sensor technology)
- data analysis, management and ability to predict and/or warn of potential injury

This competition has up to £1 million available to fund a number of proposals.

A dial-in session providing further detail on the competition will take place on 8 January 2019 providing a chance to ask questions in an open forum. If you would like to take part in this dial-in, please register on the [Eventbrite page](#).

This competition closes at midday on 25 January 2019

Full details are available in the [competition document](#).

If you have any queries on this competition, please do contact us at accelerator@dstl.gov.uk.

Press release: Homes England opts modular build specialist for south east base

Homes England has chosen offsite construction specialist McAvoy Group to create its new south east office at the new town of Northstowe in Cambridgeshire.

Press release: Homes England opts modular build specialist for south east base

The government's housing agency, which is a leading advocate of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), has selected McAvoy for the off-site manufacture of the two-storey building designed by architects Proctor and Mathews.

Homes England is leading a long-term project to deliver 8,500 new homes in the centre of Northstowe new town.

This includes the off-site construction of a modular build office for Homes England staff, demonstrating the agency's commitment to MMC alongside reducing on-site build time and disruption to the wider Northstowe site.

Paul Kitson, General Manager for Homes England in the South East said: "Homes England champions MMC as a means of increasing building productivity and improving energy efficiency.

"MMC has the potential to be significantly more productive than traditional methods of construction and greatly increase the pace of delivery. It can also improve the quality of construction and help address labour and materials shortages."

"Opting for an office built using MMC shows our strong commitment to non-traditional building methods."

"Working with McAvoy and Proctor and Matthews Architects will enable us to create an office that allows our workforce to experience first-hand the capabilities of modular construction."

Raymond Millar, Construction Director of The McAvoy Group added: "This project is a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the potential of offsite construction and how the approach can realise an ambitious architectural design and deliver a high-quality and flexible office environment. By moving construction into a highly efficient factory environment, we will be significantly reducing the build programme, minimising disruption to local residents and offering greater certainty of completion to the highest quality standards, on time and on budget."

The open plan building will provide a modern, purpose built office environment for Homes England's south east team, along with meeting rooms, a breakout area, conference room and multi-use space which may be used for other events such as public consultation meetings as the Northstowe development progresses.

Stephen Proctor, director at Proctor and Matthews Architects said: "We're pleased to be working alongside Homes England and McAvoy Group on the new

office building at Northstowe, which will be a focus for the emerging new town and a showcase of the benefits of flexible design and modular construction. The design references the local crafts, heritage and textures of this edge of Fenlands location.”

The development reflects Homes England’s commitment to the Northstowe new town project and to the increased pace of delivery offered by MMC.

The organisation has recently tendered its first parcel of land at Northstowe, with a requirement for developers to use panellised construction on at least half of the 400 homes on site. Plans for a plot solely using MMC techniques are also under consideration.

Ends

For more information contact Sarah Foulkes, Communications Officer at Homes England. Tel: 0161 200 6130 or 07967 782162, or email sarah.foulkes@homesengland.gov.uk

Press release: Building underway for new homes in Winttringham

Construction has begun to build almost 3000 new homes in St Neots, Cambridgeshire.