

News story: £3m support scheme launched to reduce air pollution from farming

A scheme, backed with £3m of funding, to help farmers reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture has been officially launched today (18 September, 2018).

The [Catchment Sensitive Farming](#) partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England will support farmers to take action to reduce harmful ammonia emissions.

Farming is responsible for 88 percent of all UK emissions of ammonia gas which can travel long distances, be damaging to the environment, and combine with other pollutants to form particulates, which are harmful to human health.

The money will fund a team of specialists who will work with farmers and landowners to implement the measures to reduce their ammonia set out in the new [Code of Good Agricultural Practice \(COGAP\) for Reducing Ammonia Emissions](#).

The team will provide training events, tailored advice, individual farm visits and support with grant applications, all funded by the programme.

Bob Middleton, Programme Manager, Catchment Sensitive Farming said:

As custodians of the land, farmers have an important role to play in protecting the environment. But reducing ammonia emissions can also bring real business benefits.

The UK loses £138m of nitrogen per year from ammonia emissions, so by taking action to reduce them, farmers can get more value from their manure and fertiliser and save money.

This new initiative adds to the existing, popular programme of advice to improve water quality and prevent flooding from farmed land and a new guidance video which sets out simple steps all farmers can take to reduce ammonia emissions, such as the way they handle livestock feed, and manure and fertiliser spreading.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

There is growing evidence that ammonia emissions can have significant impacts to parts of our environment so we want to help farmers play their part in reducing them.

The specialist team of advisers leading this project can advise farmers on steps they can take, such as improved slurry handling facilities, and grants are available where investment is required.

Reducing emissions from farming is a key element of the government's ambitious new Clean Air Strategy, which has been welcomed by the [World Health Organization](#).

The announcement comes less than a week after the introduction of the government's landmark [Agriculture Bill](#) which sets out ambitious proposals to protect and enhance our environment.

To replace the Common Agricultural Policy, a new system will reward farmers for "public goods", which includes taking action to improve air and water quality and soil health.

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[Press release: Investigation shuts down ‘emergency services’ book publisher](#)

MP (NW) Limited (MPNW) was incorporated in September 2015. Its business was listed as ‘other publishing activities’, with a registered office in Chester. The Insolvency Service launched an investigation following complaints about the company’s activities.

On 28 August 2018, the High Court sitting in Manchester heard the petition presented on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The investigation established, and in winding up the company on that day, the Court accepted that MPNW cold-called other small businesses to sell them advertising space in three very similar quarterly magazines – Insight, Inside Story and Reaction – claiming to offer an alternative look at the way the emergency services operate. MPNW also claimed that around 2,000 copies would be printed and distributed for each issue.

However, investigators found that commission-based sales staff misled advertisers into believing that MPNW was a not-for-profit organisation or was directly affiliated with one or other branch of the emergency services, and the numbers of magazines distributed was far lower than indicated.

Additionally, the company failed to keep adequate accounting records with the result that it was not possible to ascertain how many magazines had actually been printed and distributed. Nor has it been possible to know whether all receipts from advertisers were accounted for and what remuneration/commission was paid to directors/staff.

Scott Crighton, a Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

MPNW attracted customers by exploiting their generous and benevolent nature and by misleading them into believing that income generated from advertisements would benefit the emergency services whereas, in reality, just 0.3% of revenue was paid out by way of charitable donation.

The actions of the court in winding up this company has prevented further loss to the businesses community and demonstrates that the Insolvency Service can and will use its powers to take action against those who would seek to profit from the charity and goodwill of others.

Any business owner who is solicited in this way should exercise discretion before agreeing to purchase advertising space.

On the winding-up of the company, the Official Receiver was appointed liquidator.

MP (NW) Limited (Company number 09781619) was incorporated on 17 September 2015. Its registered office is at Unit 20, Evans Business Centre, Minerva Avenue, Chester, CH1 4QL.

The petition to wind up the company was presented in the High Court Manchester on 26 June 2018, under the provisions of section 124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 following confidential enquiries by Company Investigations under section 447 of the Companies Act 1985, as amended. MPNW was wound up on 28 August 2018 and the Official Receiver was appointed as liquidator.

The petition was heard by District Judge McNall and the Secretary of State was represented by Richard Tetlow of counsel and Gowling WLG (UK) LLP solicitors. The company was not present or represented. Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Further information about live company investigations is available [here](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, 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.

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

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: High tech system promotes wildlife around Devon and Cornwall roads](#)

Images from space and computer wizardry have helped Highways England develop a ground breaking approach to promoting wildlife habitat along trunk roads in Devon and Cornwall.

Satellite photos and earth observation techniques have been combined with Highways England wildlife data in a software system that can predict areas where biodiversity schemes will pack the biggest punch.

And the system is proving so successful it has been nominated for an environmental award from CIRIA Big Diversity Challenge.

Highways England's ecologist, Leo Gubert, explained:

It sounds complicated but essentially the software crunches our data on habitats and species together with information on the surrounding landscape to find the best locations for habitat creation and enhancement schemes as well as landscape management projects.

We look at the populations and habitat connectivity for wildlife such as dormice, bats, endangered butterflies and also species of plants that are of conservation priority and then decide which schemes to prioritise.

The system has been used to deliver a vast woodland and hedgerow connectivity scheme at 21 sites along the A30 and A38 in Devon and Cornwall with 10,000 native trees and shrubs filling or reducing gaps in hedgerow and woodland along the roadside. In total the planting has connected over 105 miles of habitat on the verges and wider landscape adjacent to the roads.

Tree planting scheme on the A30/A38

Last winter a heathland creation scheme was also undertaken, with a vision to connect existing heathland on important sites such as Dartmoor, Bodmin and Goss Moor.

A planting scheme promoting habitat for the super rare marsh fritillary butterfly in the Goss Moor area in Cornwall has also been delivered.

The system which was developed in conjunction with CEH (Centre of Ecology and Hydrology) picked up second place in the medium/large scale award at the

Ciria BIG Biodiversity Challenge ceremony at the Royal College of Physicians in London..

Leo added:

I am delighted we have been shortlisted amongst so many other projects. It is a perfect example of how new technologies can be a powerful tool in the decision making process maximising our efforts to enhance biodiversity on our road verges.

The result can be wonderful benefits for biodiversity on the land we manage while providing a real sense of achievement for everyone involved.

Highways England is committed to a national Biodiversity Plan which is being supported by a £30 million national investment programme over the next five years.

The plan recognises road verges and associated land can be managed to provide areas of habitat, relatively free from human access that may be scarce in the surrounding landscape.

These road verges can also be used to connect fragmented habitats in the wider landscape, enabling plant and animal populations to move and interact, and so become stronger and more resilient.

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.