

Press release: Harron Homes fined £120,000 over construction pollution

A Leeds-based house building company has been fined £120,000 for illegally polluting a watercourse from a Huddersfield construction site.

Harron Homes Limited was sentenced yesterday (20 November) at Leeds Magistrates' Court after admitting one charge of causing illegal discharges from its Farriers Croft estate in 2015.

The Environment Agency prosecuted the firm after investigating reports of contaminated run-off which was entering a tributary of Grimescar Dyke.

Rosalind Emsley-Smith, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that an officer visited the site on 20 November 2015 and saw polluted water flowing out of the entrance of the construction site. The company was also pumping silt contaminated water from site excavations which also entered the watercourse.

Following the Environment Agency's visit, Harron Homes attempted to control the silt run-off by setting up settlement tanks. However, further incidents of pollution were reported in November and December 2015 and subsequent inspections revealed that this system was inadequate. Silty water was found to be discharging, resulting in further pollution.

Samples taken from the discharges showed that they were having a significant impact on the water quality in the watercourse up to three kilometres further downstream. Some samples showed there to be nearly 35,000 milligrams of suspended solids per litre of water, whereas a healthy watercourse is expected to have a concentration lower than 30 milligrams per litre.



The firm's attempt to contain the muddy water was inadequate; silt was seen flowing off the site

Mark West, environment management team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

These pollution incidents had a significant impact on the water environment over a number of weeks, and were entirely avoidable. In West Yorkshire there has been a worrying increase in the number of pollutions incidents reported to us that on investigation are attributable to the construction sector.

Construction companies should consider the potential environmental impact of developments they undertake at the initial planning stage and must adhere to environmental permitting rules and invest in appropriate management systems to prevent their activities from affecting the local environment.

If anyone spots pollution of this kind, they are urged to contact the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 807060 so we can investigate.

In mitigation, Harron Homes told the court that it had now put procedures in

place to prevent future pollution incidents.

In addition to the fine, the company was ordered to pay £8,706.71 in legal costs and a £120 victim surcharge.

Press release: Harron Homes fined £120,000 over construction pollution

A Leeds-based house building company has been fined £120,000 for illegally polluting a watercourse from a Huddersfield construction site.

Harron Homes Limited was sentenced yesterday (20 November) at Leeds Magistrates' Court after admitting one charge of causing illegal discharges from its Farriers Croft estate in 2015.

The Environment Agency prosecuted the firm after investigating reports of contaminated run-off which was entering a tributary of Grimescar Dyke.

Rosalind Emsley-Smith, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that an officer visited the site on 20 November 2015 and saw polluted water flowing out of the entrance of the construction site. The company was also pumping silt contaminated water from site excavations which also entered the watercourse.

Following the Environment Agency's visit, Harron Homes attempted to control the silt run-off by setting up settlement tanks. However, further incidents of pollution were reported in November and December 2015 and subsequent inspections revealed that this system was inadequate. Silty water was found to be discharging, resulting in further pollution.

Samples taken from the discharges showed that they were having a significant impact on the water quality in the watercourse up to three kilometres further downstream. Some samples showed there to be nearly 35,000 milligrams of suspended solids per litre of water, whereas a healthy watercourse is expected to have a concentration lower than 30 milligrams per litre.

The firm's attempt to contain the muddy water was inadequate; silt was seen flowing off the site

Mark West, environment management team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

These pollution incidents had a significant impact on the water environment over a number of weeks, and were entirely avoidable. In West Yorkshire there has been a worrying increase in the number of pollutions incidents reported to us that on investigation are

attributable to the construction sector.

Construction companies should consider the potential environmental impact of developments they undertake at the initial planning stage and must adhere to environmental permitting rules and invest in appropriate management systems to prevent their activities from affecting the local environment.

If anyone spots pollution of this kind, they are urged to contact the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 807060 so we can investigate.

In mitigation, Harron Homes told the court that it had now put procedures in place to prevent future pollution incidents.

In addition to the fine, the company was ordered to pay £8,706.71 in legal costs and a £120 victim surcharge.

Press release: October 2017

Transaction Data

This data provides information about the number and types of applications that HM Land Registry completed in October 2017.

In October:

- HM Land Registry completed more than 1,740,000 applications to change or query the Land Register
- the South East topped the table of regional applications with 407,148

The transaction data shows HM Land Registry completed 1,740,068 applications in October compared with 1,586,987 in September and 1,532,007 last October, of which:

- 408,685 were applications to update existing titles compared with 363,990 in September
- 823,267 were applications to obtain an official copy of a register compared with 747,090 in September

- 226,488 were official searches compared with 210,805 in September
- 26,260 were postal applications from non-account holders, compared with 24,136 in September

Applications by region and country

Region and country	August 2017 applications	September 2017 applications	October 2017 applications
South East	392,737	372,168	407,148
Greater London	313,338	298,966	329,865
North West	186,030	176,591	195,045
South West	164,325	155,495	168,802
West Midlands	143,074	135,283	145,121
Yorkshire and the Humber	128,718	122,127	135,347
East Midlands	115,673	111,411	120,689
North	76,810	72,506	82,710
Wales	79,289	76,292	80,938
East Anglia	71,789	66,034	74,202
Isles of Scilly	47	47	106
England and Wales (not assigned)	87	67	95
Total	1,671,917	1,586,987	1,740,068

Top 5 local authority areas

Top 5 local authority areas	August applications	Top 5 local authority areas	September applications	Top 5 local authority areas	October applications
Birmingham	25,179	Birmingham	23,631	Birmingham	26,232
City of Westminster	21,516	City of Westminster	20,892	City of Westminster	24,087
Leeds	19,102	Leeds	18,076	Leeds	19,895
Manchester	17,499	Cornwall	16,809	Manchester	17,810
Cornwall	17,193	Manchester	16,290	Cornwall	17,794

Top 5 customers

Top 5 customers	August applications	Top 5 customers	September applications	Top 5 customers	October applications
Enact	37,513	Enact	39,349	Enact	48,058
O'Neill Patient	26,888	O'Neill Patient	24,273	O'Neill Patient	24,610
Optima Legal Service	21,031	Optima Legal Service	20,688	Optima Legal Service	23,721

Top 5 customers	August applications	Top 5 customers	September applications	Top 5 customers	October applications
Eversheds LLP	20,189	Eversheds LLP	18,307	HBOS Bank PLC	20,980
HBOS Bank PLC	18,235	Barclays Bank PLC	16,491	Eversheds LLP	19,123

[Access the full dataset](#) on data.gov.uk.

Notes to editors

1. Transaction Data is published on the 15th working day of each month. The November Transaction Data will be published at 11am on Thursday 21 December 2017 at [HM Land Registry Monthly Property Transaction Data](#).
2. The monthly Transaction Data showing how many applications for new titles, leases, splitting titles, updating existing titles, official copies of the register and searches were completed, reflects the volume of applications lodged by customers using an HM Land Registry account number on their application form.
3. Completed applications in England and Wales shown by region and by local authority include postal applications as well as those sent electronically.
4. Transaction Data excludes pending applications, withdrawn applications, bankruptcy applications, bulk applications and discharge applications.
5. Transactions for value are applications lodged involving a transfer of ownership for value. Discharge applications remove a charge, for example a mortgage, from the register. For an explanation of other terms used, see [abbreviations used in the transaction data](#).
6. Most searches carried out by a solicitor or conveyancer are to protect the purchase and/or mortgage. For example, a search will give the buyer priority for an application to HM Land Registry to register the purchase of the property. This can give an indication of market activity.
7. Reasonable skill and care is used in the provision of the data. We strive to ensure that the data is as accurate as possible but cannot guarantee that it is free from error. We cannot guarantee our data is fit for your intended purpose or use.
8. Transaction Data is available free of charge for use and re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL). The licence allows public bodies to make their data available for re-use.
9. If you use or publish the Transaction Data, you must add the following attribution statement: "Contains HM Land Registry data © Crown copyright and database right 2017. This data is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0".
10. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
11. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
12. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth more than

£4 trillion, including more than £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 24 million titles, which show evidence of ownership, covering more than 84% of the land mass.

13. For further information about HM Land Registry visit

www.gov.uk/land-registry

14. Follow us on:

Contact

Press release: No escape from illegal worker fine for Coventry clothing company director

Mr Dewitt gave a disqualification undertaking to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy for six years which is effective from 27 November 2017.

Mr Dewitt was the director of Mystique Coventry Ltd, a company trading as a clothing wholesaler, and on 15 November 2016 Home Office Immigration Enforcement Officers discovered that they were employing seven workers who were not eligible to work in the UK.

The company went into liquidation on 16 March 2017 owing £74,394 to creditors, including the £70,000 penalty imposed by the Home Office Immigration and Enforcement for employing illegal workers.

Martin Gitner, Deputy Head of Investigations with the Insolvency Service said:

Illegal workers are not protected under employment law, and as well as cheating legitimate job seekers out of employment opportunities these employers defraud the tax payer and undercut honest competitors.

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, makes employers responsible for preventing illegal workers in the UK. To comply with the law, a company must check and be able to prove documents have been checked prior to recruitment that show a person is entitled to work.

The public has a right to expect that those who break the law will

face the consequences and this should serve as a warning to other directors tempted to take on illegal staff.

Mr Ajay Dewitt, date of birth June 1988 and he resides in Bedworth, Coventry.

Mystique Coventry Limited, company number 10000072 was incorporated on 11 February 2016.

Mr Dewitt was a director from 11 February 2016 to liquidation. The Company went into Creditors Voluntary Liquidation on 16 March 2017 with an estimated deficiency of £68,125.

On 06 November 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a Disqualification Undertaking from Mr Dewitt, effective from 27 November, for a period of 6 years.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, 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 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: Flood defences put to the test in Bewdley

Environment Agency along with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Wyre Forest Council and the community flood group have conducted a successful barrier deployment exercise on the Stourport Road, Bewdley, Worcestershire.

The exercise, which ran from 9am to 3pm, tested the barrier deployment plan and procedures, and working arrangements with partners and the local Community Flood Group. This ensures barriers can be quickly and safely erected when needed during a flood with minimum disruption to residents and businesses.

Environment agency staff were on hand to talk to members of the public about the work they do during flooding and other times of the year and also how people can better protect themselves and their properties during times of flood. Students from the local school were given a tour of the barriers and shown how they are assembled, they also discussed the issues of flooding in the local area.

Mark Bowers, Flood Risk Manager said:

This exercise allowed us to practice and test our barrier deployment plan for Bewdley, gaining valuable training experience with our partners as well as the opportunity to identify ways in which we can further refine our plans. This in turn will enable us to better respond during floods.

Temporary barriers are just one of the ways we aim to better protect people and properties. It's important to remember we can never fully protect against flooding, which is why we encourage people to go online at <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>, check their flood risk by entering their postcode, and find out what they can do to protect themselves and their property when flooding hits.

Nick Farress, Bewdley Town Council Clerk added:

The exercise was an opportunity to test the community flood plan and prepare our group of volunteers for the real thing. We are very grateful to the Environment Agency for organising the event and continuing to support the use of the temporary barrier. The community flood group, managed by the Town Council, is a vital resource in a flood event and is always in need of new volunteers, so I would encourage anyone who can help to get in touch with the Town Council.

Wyre Forest Station Commander, Daryl Justice, said:

Our involvement with the Bewdley Flood Barrier response is a new arrangement that will see our firefighters add even more value to the Wyre Forest community.

When flooding is predicted our on-call firefighters will be given a period of notice which will minimise the impact on their primary employment and, although deployed under the direction of the Environment Agency, they will remain available for life threatening emergencies.

This is one of the first initiatives of its type in the UK and is a great example of how fire crews can add value in other areas. It also supports Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's wider vision of 'Saving More Lives'.