

[\\$730 million to secure Mersey Hospital](#)

The Turnbull Government will provide \$730 million to secure the Mersey Community Hospital's future, give certainty to 470 staff and deliver vital health services for the people of North-West Tasmania.

The Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments have reached an agreement to ensure the Mersey Community Hospital, which has 100 beds, remains a key health service for Devonport and surrounding regions.

The Commonwealth purchased the Mersey in 2007 amid community concern about the downgrading of services and the hospital has had no long term funding agreement since.

Under the new agreement, ownership of the Mersey will transfer from the Commonwealth to Tasmania on 1 July 2017. The Commonwealth will provide \$730 million upfront so the Tasmanian Government can run the hospital for the next decade. The Mersey will then operate in the same way as other public hospitals.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said this provided valuable long-term certainty to the hospital's 470 staff and patients, and delivers on the Turnbull Government's determination to ensure all Australians have access to high quality, well-funded healthcare.

The terms of the agreement will ensure the continued delivery of the best possible health services to North-West Tasmanians.

Premier Will Hodgman said the \$730 million payment, which will be fully exempt from GST calculations, is the biggest single cash transfer from the Federal Government to the Tasmanian Government ever.

The Mersey is a crucial part of Tasmania's health system, and critical North-West health infrastructure, and it is important the two Governments have been able to deliver the long-term certainty for the hospital the community deserves.

The Tasmanian Government will now be able to manage its public hospital system as a whole, meeting the community's health needs in the years ahead.

[Nicola Sturgeon address at Stanford University on Scotland's place in the](#)

world

Below is a speech given by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at Stanford University, California. Check against delivery.

Scottish Water works – Blackness Street – an update



Scottish Water is writing to residents in Blackness Street to unfortunately advise of a further delay in completing infrastructure works in the street.

This is due to the deteriorated condition of the existing water main which meant a requirement to change the method of mains upgrade to open cut replacement. This has meant progress has been much slower than anticipated as it is necessary to lift, clean and relay the old cobble stones to ensure the area is reinstated correctly after the new pipe is installed.

Open cut which means full replacement of pipes and is a longer process than sliplining.

Scottish Water's update to residents reads :

"As you will be aware we are currently working in Blackness Street upgrading the water pipes to ensure you continue to enjoy clear, fresh drinking water, and reduce the chance of pipes bursting.

Due to the condition of the existing water main we have been required to change the method of mains upgrade to Open cut replacement. This has meant progress has been much slower than anticipated as it is necessary to lift, clean and relay the old cobble stones to ensure the area is reinstated correctly after the new pipe is installed.

Work will continue in Blackness Street for a further 4 – 6 weeks :

- There will be some roadworks during the dates above. This will include the use of temporary traffic management. There will be NO road closures during these works. Please follow all signs put in place. Local access will be maintained wherever possible. Pedestrian access will be maintained at all**

times.

- There will be parking restrictions in place however access will be maintained at all times.
- We may need to turn off your water supply. If we do, we will send you further information at least 48 hours in advance, detailing the dates and times that your supply will be affected and what to do.
- During the works you may experience a change in water pressure and/or discoloured water. If this happens don't be alarmed, turn on the cold water tap in your kitchen, let the water flow slowly until it runs clear.
- Please note that this is part of a wider programme of work and dates maybe subject to change depending on progress.

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding while we complete this essential work and see below for details of how to keep up to date with what we are doing in your area.”

[Labour fail to back Lib Dem bid to kill Tory restrictions to disability benefit](#)

A Liberal Democrat motion designed to kill the Government's attempts to severely restrict disability benefits has been lost after Labour peers failed to support it.

[Press release: Environment Agency takes a stand on illegal waste](#)

Farmers, landowners, big and small business, and members of the public are being asked to be more vigilant after a number of incidents where large amounts of processed or baled waste has been dumped across the West Midlands.

Over the last 12 months the Environment Agency in the West Midlands has seen an increase of illegally dumped waste on public and private land. Fly-tipping is the responsibility of the local council however the Environment Agency becomes involved when the waste is more than 20 tonnes (about 20 cubic metres); more than 5 cubic metres of fibrous asbestos or 75 litres of potentially hazardous waste in drums or containers; or if it is linked to

criminal business activity or organised crime.

What is being done to tackle waste crime

Through the Government Spending Review 2015, nationally the Environment Agency secured an additional £23m to tackle waste crime in England, up to the end of March 2020. This is being spent across the country, targeting priority areas. £20m of this is from the landfill community's tax fund. It has been used locally to fund additional temporary staff to further target illegal waste operators and high risk sites of concern.

The Environment Agency are determined to make life hard for criminals and support legitimate business, proactively supporting these businesses by disrupting, and stopping, the criminal element backed up by the threat of tough enforcement action and prosecution. The new Disruption and Prevention team – part of the Environment Agency's National Enforcement Service – is leading the way in finding new approaches to disrupt waste crime and stop it happening. Working in partnership with law enforcement agencies, HMRC, DVLA and Companies House, as well as employing a number of techniques to track and trace vehicles and waste from different sites.

What businesses and the public can do

Everybody has a part to play to help solve the waste crime problem and make sure waste is managed responsibly. The Environment Agency is asking members of the public to be vigilant; to contact them with information on anything suspicious as long as it is safe for people to do so. Dumping commercial waste like this is a crime. Individuals involved in such illegal activity can be hostile and we would urge members of the public to not put themselves in any danger if they encounter any such activity and to avoid any direct contact with the culprits.

Lisa Pinney, Environment Agency Area Manager for West Midlands, said:

It's crucial that all businesses understand their duty of care responsibilities for the waste they produce, who they allow to transport it and ultimately where it goes. Too often, when these responsibilities are misunderstood or ignored, we see the impact of waste crime where waste is deliberately dumped on land with no permit. This can cause serious pollution, put communities at risk and undermines legitimate businesses that are doing the right thing. And even if the landowner has no involvement, legally they may still be responsible for that waste and that could mean a large clear up bill.

Waste stored inappropriately can create issues for neighbours through smells and pests. It can also have a detrimental effect on the environment and impact on rivers and streams. If you see or suspect illegal waste activities, report it anonymously to

Crimestoppers [online](#) or by calling 0800 555 111. Alternatively report it to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Notes to editors

We all create waste, and all have a responsibility to ensure our waste is handled correctly. Whether you're a business, local council or householder you must make sure you know where your waste goes so it doesn't end up in the hands of operators who break the law and dump it to avoid paying for its legal disposal. Illegal waste sites undercut legitimate business, can cause severe damage to the environment and misery for local residents.

Many businesses don't realise they have a legal Waste Duty of Care and could be committing an offence if their waste is dumped by an illegal operator. Hauliers are at risk of unwittingly becoming involved in waste crime by not asking the right questions about the loads they're collecting.

Make sure you know what your legal responsibilities are: [manage your waste responsibly](#)

Check the [public register](#) to see if a site is permitted or a waste carrier is registered

You could be breaking the law if your waste isn't managed properly. Visit [Right Waste Right Place](#) to help you comply with the law. You can also refer to the Defra [waste duty of care code of practice](#)