

Press release: Valentine's Day of action against illegal waste activity

Environment Agency enforcement officers, on the 14 February, paid unannounced visits to 14 sites across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, Hampshire and West Berkshire in a bid to stamp out waste crime and protect the environment from the threat of pollution.

Named Operation Arrow, officers targeted sites suspected of operating in the waste business without the required environmental permits, flouting the law and committing crime.

Waste that ends up at unregulated sites is often stockpiled in vast quantities and for long periods of time. The waste can pose a significant risks to the environment, blighting communities with smoke fumes and causing noise and odour complaints. Illegal waste operators also undermine the work of legitimate waste companies, creating an unfair playing field for business.

Helen Page, Enforcement Team Leader at the Environment Agency said:

We want to make sure the right waste goes to the right place – to protect the environment and local communities. Site visits on our days of action are just one of the ways we are tackling waste crime to help make sure this happens.

We are really pleased with what we achieved. Of the 14 sites visited, 5 were found to be operating illegally. The information we have gathered is helping us target our work at those involved in organised environmental crime and where their activities pose the greatest risk to the environment.

Everyone can do their bit to reduce waste crime by making sure that any waste for disposal is collected by a licensed waste carrier and taken to a properly permitted, legitimate waste site.

To check if someone is registered please visit environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers.

For all media enquiries please phone 0800 141 2743, or email us at southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk

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Theresa May's lack of action compounds a failed and incoherent energy strategy, clumsily lurching from crisis to calamity – Long-Bailey

Rebecca

Long-Bailey, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy commenting on Theresa May's visit to Copeland said:

"The Prime Minister today failed to assure that the UK is committed to the NuGen nuclear plant at Moorside in Cumbria.

"Taking an equity share as Labour has called for would ensure this vital power station built. Theresa May's lack of action compounds a failed and incoherent energy strategy, clumsily lurching from crisis to calamity.

"Labour supports new nuclear and the growth of renewable energy, but the Tories appear hell bent on preventing either, rushing us out of the Euratom nuclear partnership and slashing low carbon energy support.

"The Tories' failure is forcing up energy bills and threatening jobs."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1 Labour tabled multiple amendments to the recent Article 50 Bills to seek continued membership of Euratom (the European Atomic Energy Community) including [NC192](#). The government rejected those attempts to keep the UK inside the nuclear research and trade community, despite strong [calls from the nuclear industry](#).

a. Leaving Euratom will have [significant implications](#) and [disruption](#) for the nuclear industry, and may [affect the construction of Hinkley Point C](#).

b.

[Legal opinion is split](#) as to whether leaving the EU necessitates the leaving Euratom.

c.
Labour has come out [in support of new nuclear](#).

2
The Government has greatly [rolled back on support](#) for low carbon energy to [international condemnation](#).

a.
It is [months late in its publishing of the legally required Emissions Reduction Plan](#).

b.
And [risks missing it's legally required Carbon Budgets](#) as laid out in the Climate Change Act 2008.

3. Significant disruptions in financial flows to the energy infrastructure makes projects more risky, driving up the cost of capital and impacting bills payers.

[Keith Taylor MEP: European Commission 'final warning' reveals the need for a new UK Clean Air Act](#)



15 February 2017

Keith Taylor MEP: 'The government has been exposed, yet again, as failing in its duty to take even the most basic action to combat an air pollution crisis that needlessly claims the lives of more than 50,000 people in Britain every year.'

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, has slammed the Government's 'repeated failures' on air pollution as the European Commission issues a '[final warning](#)' to the UK over air quality breaches.

The European Commission has sent a "final warning" to the UK for failing to address repeated breaches of legal air pollution limits in 16 areas including

London, Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow.

The notice is being served just 24 hours after a [new poll](#) revealed 58% of Britons believe air pollution levels across the UK are damaging to their health while 65% support ClientEarth's campaign for a new Clean Air Act.

Keith, a vocal air quality campaigner and a member of the European Parliament's Environment committee, said:

"The government has been exposed, yet again, as failing in its duty to take even the most basic action to combat an air pollution crisis that needlessly claims the lives of more than [50,000 people in Britain every year](#). It's no surprise that two-thirds of the public want the Prime Minister to do more to combat the toxic air they are forced to breathe."

"The failure highlighted by the European Commission is as much moral as it is legal; Ministers have displayed an extremely concerning attitude of indifference towards their duty to safeguard the health of British citizens."

"That the European Commission is having to hold to account this government for a public health crisis that costs the British public more than [£20bn a year](#) is a shameful indictment of the Conservatives' irresponsible and deadly apathy."

"Theresa May's administration is failing to do the bare minimum, as required by EU laws the UK itself helped to set, to improve the quality of the air we all breathe. The bare minimum. Where embraced and enforced, EU air pollution limits are helping to [prevent thousands of deaths every year](#) and saving [billions of pounds in direct health costs](#). This government readily acknowledges that it is EU law that has been the [driver of positive air quality action](#) in the UK. But the Prime Minister's plans for an extreme Brexit puts those vital EU safeguards at risk."

"The government must finally face up to its moral and legal responsibility for tackling Britain's air quality crisis. Ministers must now be forced to make a firm commitment to abiding by and fully implementing EU air quality laws. Theresa May must also make a new Clean Air Act a means to maintain and strengthen these vital protections as Britain prepares to leave the EU."

Keith is a co-signatory of a motion which will be presented at the Greens' Spring Conference in Liverpool which calls on the Party to formally back ClientEarth's Clean Air Act proposal.

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UK employment continues to grow to new record levels

The UK has 302,000 more jobs than a year ago, in today's employment figures. There are 2.7m more jobs than in 2010. The UK's employment rate, at 75%, is around the German level, and well above France at 65% and Italy at 57%.

I doubt we will hear these figures on the main news bulletins. All those who tell me a country has to be in the single market to prosper, have to explain two inconvenient facts. Why are Greece, Portugal, Spain and other countries in the single market so cursed with mass unemployment? Why do countries like New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Singapore and the USA flourish with low unemployment by EU standards whilst not being in the single market?