

Press release: River coarse fishing season in full swing

River coarse fishing is back in full swing following the three month close season from 15 March to 15 June.

And to kick off the new season Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement officers in the North East carried out a weekend blitz to ensure anglers were abiding by the law.

Patrols on Saturday saw the team patrol 43 rivers and stillwaters in the region by land and boat checking a total of 185 anglers, with five rod licence offences detected.

During the three-month close season the North East team carried out 87 patrols detecting 26 close season and 7 rod licence offences.

Proactive patrols

Rachael Caldwell, Enforcement Team Leader in North East, said:

Our enforcement team is really proactive in carrying out patrols to prevent and detect rod licence and other associated offences.

They have a close relationship with partners and act on information and intelligence to target patrols to the right areas and at the right time. This is reflected in the close season figures, which are some of the best in the country. Law abiding anglers can be reassured our teams are taking action.

Across the country, the Environment Agency reported 87 close season offences during the first 10 weeks of the annual restricted period for coarse fish. Officers carried out 729 targeted patrols, also detecting 115 other offences, mainly unlicensed fishing, but also several illegally set traps.

Operation CLAMPDOWN

As well as working with partners at the police and angling clubs, the Environment Agency was supported across the country by Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiff Service members on Operation CLAMPDOWN. Now in its sixth year, the operation is a joint initiative between the Environment Agency, Angling Trust's Fisheries Enforcement Support Service and police forces, aimed at gathering intelligence about illegal fishing.

Dilip Sarkar MBE, Angling Trust National Enforcement Manager, said:

These figures show that during Operation CLAMPDOWN 6 Volunteer

Bailiffs throughout England are demonstrating their massive commitment to protecting fish and fisheries and cracking down on illegal fishing. All anglers can help this process, in fact – at any time of year – by reporting information and offences in progress to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60, or the police on 101/999 as appropriate.

The summer is a great time to get out there and go fishing, but the Environment Agency is reminding anglers to make sure they have a fishing licence before they go. Rachael added:

It's a great time to go fishing. So I'd encourage anglers to get out there, enjoy yourselves fishing and make sure you are doing the right thing.

The vast majority of anglers fish legally; sadly there are a small number who cheat others by fishing during the close season. It is still possible for anglers to fish during this time on many stillwaters and canals, which are open all year round.

We respond to the intelligence we receive about illegal fishing by ensuring our patrols are targeted at the right places – and the right people.

You can [buy a licence online](#) and don't forget that all fishing licence income is used to fund work to protect, improve and develop fisheries, fish habitats and angling. If you want to fish a new river this season, why not visit the [fishinginfo website](#) to find details of different venues, river levels and angling clubs.

Anyone who suspects illegal fishing to be taking place should report the matter to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[Press release: Fishing licence money protecting fish from predatory birds](#)

Local anglers at Wedgwood pools had been concerned that a number of Cormorants and Goosanders were eating the fish and leaving very little behind. The birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, so it was up to the Environment Agency to step in and protect the fish.

Last week saw the completion of 2 fish refuge 'floating islands' at Wedgwood pools, Barleston, Stoke on Trent. The islands allow fish cover from the

birds, through the use of cages beneath the islands, allowing fish to swim in but not the birds.

Environment Agency Fisheries Technical Officer, Mick Buxton said:

This has been a really worthwhile project to be involved in. The Cormorants and Goosanders are having a significant impact on the recruitment of fish, so by introducing these islands, the fish have a greater opportunity to thrive.

There is a secondary benefit from the project too. The plants on the island will also help improve the water quality of the pool, because the plants feed off nutrients in the water and this reduces the risk of algal blooms.

The floating islands project was funded through the Fisheries Improvement Program, where the money is collected from anglers through rod licence sales.

An annual fishing licence costs just £30 and now lasts for 12 months from the day you buy it. Money from fishing licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease, restoring fish stocks through re-stocking, eradicating invasive species, and fish habitat improvements. Fishing licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing, to encourage participation in the sport and to manage a voluntary bailiff scheme.

Children under 13 fish for free. Anyone aged 13 to 16 also fish for free, but do need to have a valid Environment Agency fishing licence. Anyone over 16 must pay for an Environment Agency fishing licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England.

More information on fisheries and fishing licences, including how to buy your rod licence is available [online](#).

Press release: Call for feedback on next section of £45m York Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Environment Agency has released further details for three sections of its £45m York Flood Alleviation Scheme and is holding a public drop-in to give information and get feedback on proposals.

As well as the work the Environment Agency is doing on the Clementhorpe, New Walk and North Street sections of the £45m York Flood Alleviation Scheme, and the River Foss catchment, the Agency is developing plans for the sections that run from York Ring Road at Rawcliffe to Lendal Bridge.

This stretch is split into three sections: the ring road to Clifton Bridge; then to Scarborough Bridge; and then to Lendal Bridge.

Clifton Bridge to Scarborough Bridge

Environment Agency project manager for the work, Richard Lever, said:

The middle section of the three, Clifton Bridge to Scarborough Bridge, will be the area we will progress flood defence works first.

We are holding a drop-in so the public can view plans and give feedback on the proposals that will better protect 150 properties, the majority of which are on Almerly Terrace, Sycamore Terrace, Longfield Terrace and Bootham Terrace.

Options include raising the existing flood wall at Almerly Terrace and the embankment at the back of the schools' playing fields, as well as extending the embankment.

Plans also include upgrading the pumping capacity at Burdyke pumping station, which is situated in the middle of the open area between the two bridges. The dike is culverted from near Clifton Backies to where it enters the Ouse.

The drop in will take place at the Environment Agency's community hub on Wellington Row from 12-7pm on Wednesday (20 June).

The proposals will remain on display for a further four weeks for members of the public to provide feedback.

Ring Road to Clifton Bridge

Mr Lever said:

The section from the ring road to Clifton Bridge will be a major

part of the project, better protecting 140 homes, and include raising the embankment and increasing the embankment length towards the Park & Ride, and to behind the Homestead and the YHA.

We are also investigating building a pumping station on Blue Beck, which runs into the Ouse.

We recognise that Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Meadows are a widely used and much loved public amenity, as well as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest and includes important grasslands, the tansy beetle, bats and newts.

We are currently involved in discussions with key partners, including Natural England, Sustrans and Friends of Rawcliffe Meadows, in how we can minimise the impact on the habitat, cause the least inconvenience while work is being undertaken and maintain amenities when work is complete.

Dependent on these discussions, we are aiming to submit the planning permission for this section before the end of the year.

Scarborough Bridge to Lendal Bridge

Mr Lever said:

For the Scarborough Bridge to Lendal Bridge section we are working with partners, including Historic England, on options for flood defence improvements in Museum Gardens, which help better protect homes in the Marygate area.

This includes raising the current embankment at the bottom of Museum Gardens or looking at a flood wall running up the Marygate side of the gardens.

We are also investigating the best way to raise and improve the flood gate at the bottom of Marygate.

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Press release: Edward Donovan nearly jailed for trashing Devon countryside

A waste removal businessman who blighted Devon countryside with 2,000 tons of rubbish – then set fire to it – has narrowly avoided jail.

The Environment Agency prosecuted Edward Donovan, of Churchill Drive, Crediton, for a range of offences after he turned part of an elderly land owners' farm at Spreyton into an illegal waste site. It was here he dumped waste he collected from commercial businesses across central and east Devon as EDS (Ed Donovan Services).

Donovan pleaded guilty to charges under the Environmental Protection Act at Exeter Magistrates Court, which included running a waste site on land owned by a couple in their 70s without a permit, causing pollution and setting fire to waste. He was given a jail sentence of 18 weeks, suspended for 2 years, and banned from the waste trade for 5 years.

He was also ordered to pay Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service £1,232 – the amount it cost the service to attend a large waste fire he set at the location last year. Donovan also has to pay £4,252 costs to the Environment Agency.



The officer in charge of the case said it was one of the worst illegal waste sites he had encountered

Adrian Evans, of the Environment Agency, said:

This is one of the worst incidents of illegal waste management I have come across for some time.

The defendant showed a complete disregard for the environment, health and safety and for the owners of the land and their neighbours.

As well as furniture, plastics, plasterboard and other vast quantities of waste which were strewn across a large area, we found materials containing asbestos.

The land owners were unaware of Donovan's activity, who had been allowed to use the site from May 2017 in lieu of payment for dismantling and removing 3 caravans. When they found out, they were horrified and their son told Donovan to tidy up the site in November 2017. Instead, the defendant set waste alight.



When told to clear the site, Donovan instead set a fire which had to be put out by the fire service

Adrian Evans, of the Environment Agency, said:

This case serves as an important reminder to businesses and the public to be vigilant about who they allow to remove their waste.

Waste producers should always insist on seeing evidence that waste being removed will be taken to suitably licensed or exempt facilities to be properly disposed of or recycled.



Asbestos was amongst waste dumped

The Environment Agency has some simple steps for all householders and businesses to think about when giving your waste items to someone else to dispose of, whether you have paid them or not:

- Check they are a registered waste carrier. Ideally they should have a copy of their registration documents on them, ask to see these. You can check their licence number at environment.data.gov.uk/public-register, or call 03708 506506 and we can check for you.
- Get a written receipt/transfer note showing their contact details, a description of your waste and details of where they are taking it.
- Note down the make, colour and registration number of the vehicle that's taking your waste away.
- If their quote seems too good to be true, it probably is. Get another quote for comparison.

Taking these steps will help us all work together to deter waste criminals and reduce illegal fly-tipping and dumping that blights communities and costs thousands of pounds to clear and make safe.

Note to Editor:

Donovan pleaded guilty and received an 18-week prison sentence, suspended for 2 years, for each of the following offences, to be served consecutively:

1. Regulation 12(1)(a) & 38(1)(a)&(b) Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010:

'Operate a Regulated Facility (or knowingly cause or knowingly permit) except under and to the extent authorised by an environmental permit'.

2. Section 33(1)(a) Environmental Protection Act 1990:
'Deposit or knowingly cause or knowingly permit the deposit of controlled waste on land without the benefit of an Environmental Permit authorising the deposit'.
3. Section 33(1)(b) Environmental Protection Act 1990:
Submit controlled waste (by burning), or knowingly cause or knowingly permit 'controlled waste to be submitted, to any listed operation that is not carried out under and in accordance with an environmental permit'.
4. Section 33(1)(c) Environmental Protection Act 1990:
'Treat Keep or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environmental or harm to human health'.
5. Section 34(6) Environmental Protection Act 1990:
Failure to ensure a waste transfer note (required by the Environment Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991) was completed and signed on the transfer of waste.

Donovan was also given a 5-year Criminal Behaviour Order preventing him from working in the waste industry.