

# Press release: Doncaster teens take lead on environmental improvements

The children at XP Secondary School have been working with experts from the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to research and improve how surface water drains away from the land.

Their findings have helped with the installation of a new sustainable drainage system (SUD) on the school's grounds, designed to mimic nature in the way it allows water to soak away.

Dave Newborough from the Environment Agency said:

SUDs help slow down the flow of surface water, giving it time to soak into the ground and for pollutants to be naturally filtered out before entering local watercourses.

In doing so, they help reduce the risk of flooding and improve water quality, as well as enhance the environment for people and wildlife.

XP's students carefully studied their school grounds, carrying out environmental experiments to determine how a SUD would work best. They presented their findings to a panel of experts, including Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, before helping to plant hedges that form an important part of the new drainage system.

The project has given the kids a real sense of ownership in their local water environment, which they can pass on to their family and friends," says Dave.

They've also learnt first hand how the water cycle works and how it can be affected by urbanisation and pollution. And they've had the opportunity to explore local wetland at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's Potteric Carr Nature Reserve, discovering its importance for biodiversity and for managing flood risk.

The work at XP Secondary School is part of Inspiring Water Action in the Torne (iWAIT), an Environment Agency led project restoring almost 50 hectares of rare wet woodland priority habitats at 7 sites in Doncaster.

Around 450 children and young people across 7 schools, each linked with one of the woodland sites, are using the project to learn about flood risk, water quality and management, and ecology.

Three of the schools, including XP, will have SUDs fitted to manage the quantity and quality of surface water feeding the restored wetlands, as well as helping to involve young people in environmental activities and learning.

iWAIT is a Torne Catchment Partnership project led by the Environment Agency and involving Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Natural England and local communities.

ENDS

## Notes for editors

- The iWAIT project is turning 46.5ha of non-priority habitat into priority habitat – this is 11% of the Environment Agency’s nationwide target 400ha for habitat creation.
- A priority habitat is one identified as being the most threatened and requires conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Wet woodland is a biodiversity habitat, important for animals and plants. It supports a large number of species, many of which are now rare in the UK.
- For more information on the iWAIT project, see this [previous news release](#).
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust is a local charity which works to create a Yorkshire rich in wildlife for the benefit of everyone. Our goal is nature’s recovery, on land and at sea. We stand up for Yorkshire’s wildlife wherever it is under threat, and work with others to find solutions that benefit both wildlife and people. We inspire thousands of children, families and others every year, reconnecting them with their local environment and wildlife. With the support of these people, we are restoring and recreating a habitats in Yorkshire and raising awareness of, and fighting for, Yorkshire’s seas.

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## [Press release: Man fined for running illegal waste site](#)

A Gateshead man has been fined and ordered to pay thousands of pounds in compensation after he illegally stored waste at a site and then abandoned it.

John James Armstrong, 52, of Park Lane, Winlaton Mill, appeared at North Tyneside Magistrates’ Court on Friday 7 April.

He pleaded guilty to one offence of operating a waste site without a permit.

He was fined £1,000, ordered to pay compensation of £7,069.49 to the landowner to cover the costs they paid to clear the site, and £1,591.26 costs.

Armstrong was Director of Canterhall Builders Limited, a construction company which dissolved on 23 May 2016.

Prosecuting on behalf of the Environment Agency, Simon Crowder told the court that on 20 April, 2016, two Environment Agency officers attended the unit at Unit 1 Felling Business Centre, Green Lane.

They saw the site was covered in construction waste, including bricks, broken concrete, wood, plaster board, insulations, pallets, old kitchen units, benches and electrical waste. There was also a skip full of building waste.

Enquiries revealed that Canterhall were tenants at the site but had abandoned it earlier in the month.

On 16 May a letter requesting removal of the waste was given to the landowner.

On 23 May Environment Agency officers traced the defendant to a site in Swalwell, where he was given a letter inviting him to be interviewed.

Two days later the site at Felling was cleared by the landowners, at a total cost to them of more than £7,000.

The defendant has no previous convictions and was co-operative during the investigation.

During an interview on 2 June he said that if it was not cost effective to hire a skip to remove waste from carrying out construction work, then he would instead transport the waste back to the unit. When there was enough waste at the unit he would then order a skip to have it removed.

He said in January 2016 more and more waste was deposited at the unit and due to financial problems he could not afford skips to get the waste removed. He said he left the unit on 10 April and had made no attempts to clear the waste.

He added he was unaware of the need for an environmental permit or registered exemptions.

The Environment Agency's Paul Whitehill said:

We take waste crime very seriously. It can cause serious pollution to the environment, put communities at risk and undermine local businesses.

The defended flouted the law for financial gain – he cut costs by not hiring skips at the sites where work was taking place to ensure disposal of the waste.

He also avoided the cost of an environmental permit and annual subsistence fees. Illegal waste activities that avoid regulatory controls don't have the appropriate infrastructure to protect the environment, and can have a detrimental impact on local

communities.

The sentence follows calls from the Environment Agency warning landowners about criminals looking to profit by dumping waste illegally on their land.

Landowners can often find their property filled with waste and abandoned by tenants, leaving owners with an expensive clean-up bill. The Environment Agency is cracking down on waste crime and taking tough action to deal with this behaviour.

This ruling demonstrates that people can be made to pay for the cost of clearing the mess they leave behind.

Information and advice about environmental permits can be found on the Environment Agency website. To report illegal waste activity contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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## [Press release: Environment Agency tests new powers for volunteer bailiffs](#)

The Environment Agency and Angling Trust are running a pilot project, funded by the fishing licence, testing the benefits of giving members of Voluntary Bailiff Service powers to make fishing licence and byelaw checks. If successful, the initiative's expansion would allow Environment Agency fisheries officers to focus on investigations into other types of fisheries crime.

In the first phase of the project, the Angling Trust recruited over 300 volunteers across England to help Environment Agency fisheries officers by providing information and reporting suspicious incidents on riverbanks and lakes.

In the second phase, the pilot project has now trained 10 of the Voluntary Bailiff Service members from the south east to undertake fishing licence and byelaw compliance checking patrols, reporting offenders in the same way that Environment Agency enforcement officers do.

Judy Proctor, head of fisheries at the Environment Agency said:

The volunteer bailiffs already provide a great service to angling by helping our officers catch people fishing illegally. We will be evaluating the pilot carefully to see what more can be done and how

we can improve the service.

There is no excuse for illegal fishing. A fishing licence costs from just £30 for a whole year and you can get one on GOV.UK. Anyone fishing illegally can expect to be prosecuted and face a fine of up to £2,500 and up to £50,000 for byelaw offences. In 2015/16, the Environment Agency's patrols checked 62,076 rod licences and brought 2,043 successful prosecutions for fisheries crime.

The Voluntary Bailiff Service recently inducted a further 35 new Phase 1 recruits in the North East and is currently recruiting in the rest of England. Induction and training days are being held this spring and anyone expressing an interest in joining the VBS should email [karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net](mailto:karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net)

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## **Press release: £6.8m Lincshire scheme starts soon to reduce coastal flood risk**

The Environment Agency's flagship Lincshire scheme involves dredging sand from the seabed and pumping it onto the beach, replacing levels lost to the sea during the winter.

This reduces the risk of waves reaching and overtopping the main sea defences, protecting them from damage and erosion.

This year, the £6.8m project will begin Monday, 24 April at Boygrift. Over the next 6 weeks, beaches at Trusthorpe, Mablethorpe, Ingoldmells, Trunch Lane, Wolla Bank, Chapel Six Marshes and Huttoft will be replenished.

Mark Robinson, senior coastal advisor at the Environment Agency, said:

The beaches take the brunt of the waves' energy, which would otherwise impact on coastal defences such as sea walls. Storms and large waves are more frequent during winter months, leading to erosion of the sand from these beaches.

" Replacing the sand helps extend the life of the sea defences – defences that reduce coastal flood risk to more than 30,000 homes and businesses, 19,000 static caravans and 35,000 hectares of land.

Additionally there's an amenity value, benefitting and encouraging tourism on the coast, as otherwise there would be very little sand

on our beaches.

Mark added:

We time our works to minimise disruption to local communities and visitors, but unfortunately we will need to close off sections of beach while we're working on them to keep people safe.

This work is important to maintain coastal flood defences, so we appreciate residents' ongoing patience if there's minor disruption.

This year, around 350,000m<sup>3</sup> of sand will be dredged from designated areas 20km offshore. The dredger used will be the HAM316, which carries about 10,000 tonnes of sand at a time. Additionally, the equipment used to move sand on the beach has the lowest carbon footprint of its class.

Lincshore first began in 1994 and covers 20km of beach frontage between Skegness and Mablethorpe.

The Environment Agency is currently reviewing how coastal flood risk will continue to be managed in the future and will be seeking the views of local communities, businesses and partners to help shape this.

While Lincshore helps maintain an excellent standard of protection from flooding, those living and working in coastal communities should take steps to ensure they know what to do in an emergency – such as knowing your risk, making a plan, and signing up for our free flood warnings. To find out more, call 0345 988 1188 or visit our [website](#).

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## **Press release: River inspectors scuttle boaters' registration evasion**

Four boaters who did not register their vessels have been landed with penalties totalling almost £4,000.

It's after river inspectors found 6 boats without registration plates moored on the Nene in Northamptonshire, part of the Environment Agency's Anglian Waterways network. Three of the vessels were owned by just one offender.

It is a legal requirement for boat owners to register any vessel they keep, use or let for hire on Environment Agency waterways, and to clearly display a valid registration plate. None of the 4 boat owners had done so.

Andrew MacGillivray of Kestrel Lane in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, Jim

Brown of Station Road in Ringstead, Northamptonshire, Steve Caines of Abbey Road in Lancing, West Sussex, and Raymond Davis of Friars Avenue, Northampton, all failed to register their vessels as required by law.

Their cases were heard at Northampton Magistrates' Court on Tuesday, 28 March, and resulted in fines and costs totalling £3,927.23. Mr MacGilliuray, who owned 3 of the 6 boats, was ordered to pay a total of £1,357.96, Mr Brown £1,112.29, Mr Caines £838, and Mr Davis £628.98.

Nathan Arnold, Partnerships and Development team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

Our historic and precious waterways are an important part of our nation's heritage and are enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people every year.

A significant part of caring for them, protecting them, and ensuring people continue to enjoy them is funded by boaters paying their way. Those who don't contribute as they should are threatening the future of our waterways – and we won't hesitate to take action against them.

As well as not contributing to the upkeep of waterways, unregistered boats can be unsafe, hazardous to other river users, and a pollution risk to the local environment and wildlife.

The Environment Agency looks after 353 miles of navigable waterways in the Anglian network, which includes the Ancholme, Black Sluice, Glen, Welland, Nene, Great Ouse and Stour, as well as associated locks and navigation facilities like moorings, showers and toilets.

More information about boating and waterways, including registering vessels, is available at [www.gov.uk/ea](http://www.gov.uk/ea). If you suspect a boat is illegal, please contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or email our waterways team (<mailto:waterways.enforcementanglian@environment-agency.gov.uk>).

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Andrew MacGilliuray of Kestrel Lane, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, pleaded guilty and was fined £960.96. He was also ordered to pay costs of £300 and a victim surcharge of £97. The total penalty was £1,357.96. He kept three unregistered vessels, namely Dee Jay, Big Dee II and Barbara Lee, on the River Nene at Willy Watt Marina, Northamptonshire.
- Jim Brown of Station Road, Ringstead, Northamptonshire, pleaded guilty and was fined £783.29. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £79. The total penalty was £1,112.29. His vessel,

called Tee Hee III, was found on the River Nene at Blackthorn Lake Marina.

- Steve Caines of Abbey Road, Lancing, West Sussex, was proved guilty in absence and fined £535. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £53. The total penalty was £838. His vessel, called Sunflower, was found on the River Nene at Willy Watt Marina.
- Raymond Davis of Friars Avenue, Northampton, Northamptonshire, pleaded guilty by post and was fine £343.98. He was also ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £35. The total penalty was £628.98. His vessel, called Galton, was found on the River Nene at Northampton Marina.