

Press release: UK aid helps Welsh charity to train Ethiopian beekeepers

The honey and wax produced by Ethiopian bees is helping to generate income for beekeepers across the country, and now Welsh charity Bees for Development is helping to grow the numbers of entrepreneurial Ethiopian beekeepers further.

UK aid has awarded Bees for Development, based in Monmouth, Wales, £50,000 through the Small Charities Challenge Fund (SCCF). This funding will train and start the new businesses of beekeepers in the Amhara region of Ethiopia. Bee keeping offers young people without access to land a viable income earning opportunity with very low start-up costs.

Penny Mordaunt, International Development Secretary said:

Small, UK-based charities up and down the country, often staffed by volunteers, are incredibly valuable in making a difference around the world. DFID's Small Charities Challenge Fund celebrates their innovative work in some of the world's poorest countries.

Bees for Development is a great example of how a small community in Wales is helping to make a huge difference in Ethiopia. They are providing an invaluable entrepreneurial experience to young people, helping them thrive and support their own community.

Alun Cairns, Secretary of State for Wales said:

I am delighted that the hard work of Welsh charities such as Bees for Development is being rewarded for the international impact they have in encouraging entrepreneurship in a way that protects our environment. I hope that the funds awarded will go a long way to continue the great work they do across Ethiopia.

The Bees Ethiopian project has four aims:

- To deliver beekeeping training to vulnerable communities to build sustainable and resilient livelihoods
- Help beekeepers secure best value for their bee produce by accessing strong market chains, which are fair and rewarding
- Ensure that honey bee populations thrive as a result of environmental protection

- Enable beekeepers to access high quality, relevant information about methods, market opportunities and policy development

Dr Nicola Bradbear, Director of Bees for Development said:

Bees for Development helps the poorest people earn extra income through beekeeping. We are a specialist organisation, with a niche set of skills. This grant from the Small Charities Challenge Fund will enable us to help families in Ethiopia keep bees profitably, so they can earn extra income to buy school uniforms, pay medical costs, buy food and pay-off debts.

All SCCF projects are chosen for their ability to strengthen the capacity of grassroots development organisations working with the most marginalised to ensure that no one is left behind.

Note to Editors:

- The Small Charities Challenge Fund was launched in 2017 specifically to provide funding to smaller charities with an income of £250,000 or less. Bees for Development is the first recipient to be announced from the first round, other successful applicants will be announced later this summer. More information on the Small Charities Challenge Fund can be found here: www.ukaidirect.org/apply/sccf
- For more information on Bees for Development please visit their website: www.beesfordevelopment.org

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Official Statistics: Carbon Intensity Indicators for Northern Ireland 2018

Emissions intensity is concerned with capturing the amount of CO2 equivalent generated per unit of output or per capita, rather than measuring absolute emissions levels. For example, power sector emissions per unit of electricity generated or total NI emissions per head of population. The value of taking such an approach is that, whilst overall emissions might be seen to be increasing for a particular sector in line with an expanding economy, the carbon intensity might actually be decreasing which could still be viewed as a positive outcome. The carbon intensity indicators are therefore another way of measuring the progress being made in NI towards reducing GHG emissions in terms of intensity as opposed to absolute emissions.

National Statistics: Monthly sea fisheries statistics May 2018

The monthly landings statistics will be released at 9.30am on the 4th Friday of each month, or the next working day if this is a bank holiday.

News story: Plastic bag sales in 'big seven' supermarkets down 86% since 5p charge

Plastic bag sales in England's 'big seven' supermarkets have dropped by 86% since the Government introduced its 5p plastic bag charge in 2015, helping to tackle the devastating impact of plastic waste on our environment.

[New figures](#) reveal customers of the country's biggest supermarkets bought nearly a quarter fewer plastic bags last year compared to 2016/17 – a decrease of nearly 300 million bags.

This is equivalent to just 19 bags per person in England, compared to 140 bags since the government introduced a 5p charge in 2015 – a dramatic reduction of 86%.

Welcoming today's figures, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

These figures demonstrate the collective impact we can make to help the environment by making simple changes to our daily routines. We want businesses to continue to look at what they can do to help improve our environment to leave it in a better state than we found it.

It is only by working together we will reverse the rising tide of plastic waste finding its way into our rivers, seas and oceans and the catastrophic impact this is having on our marine environment.

Plastic bags have a significant impact on the environment. Government scientists believe plastic in the sea is set to treble in a decade unless marine litter is curbed – with one million birds and over 100,000 sea mammals dying every year from eating and getting tangled in plastic waste.

A recent study by Cefas revealed since the 5p charge on plastic bags was introduced, which has taken over 9 billion plastic bags out of circulation, there has been an estimated 50% reduction in plastic bag marine litter.

Thomas Maes, Marine Litter Scientist at Cefas said:

Every plastic bag not purchased is one which will not end up in our sea, damaging habitats or harming marine life. Since efforts from across Europe came into effect, including the UK's 5p charge, we have observed a sharp decline in the percentage of plastic bags captured by fishing nets on our trawl surveys of the seafloor around the UK as compared to 2010.

It is encouraging to see the efforts to reduce plastic bag usage by all of society, whether the public, industry, NGOs or government. These figures show that by working together we can tackle the marine litter problem by reducing, reusing and recycling.

The UK continues to be a global leader in protecting our seas, oceans and marine life. The Government has recently announced a range of measures to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste including a [world-leading ban on microbeads](#) and proposals to extend the 5p plastic bag charge and explore plastic free aisles in supermarkets.

Earlier this year we announced our intention to [ban the sale of plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds](#), plans for a [deposit return scheme](#) to increase recycling rates of drinks bottles and cans, and launched a [call for evidence](#) on using the tax system or charges to address single-use plastic waste.

Today's figures also reveal that for 2017/18 5p plastic bag sales contributed nearly £60m toward charities and other good causes.

Background

1. The seven biggest retailers in the UK are Asda, Marks and Spencer, Morrisons, Sainsbury, The Co-operative Group, Tesco and Waitrose.
 2. The figure that plastic in the sea is set to treble is taken from the [Future of the Sea](#) report.
 3. The statistic that there has been an estimated 50% reduction in plastic bag marine litter since the 5p plastic bag charge was introduced in 2015 is from Cefas's [Below the Surface](#) report.
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[News story: New guide for farmers to help reduce air pollution from ammonia](#)

Updated: We have added the animated video produced to support the launch of the COGAP to reduce emissions of ammonia from agriculture.

A new guide published today sets out the steps farmers, advisors and contractors can take to reduce ammonia emissions and help improve air quality.

Our [Clean Air Strategy](#) highlights that agriculture is responsible for 88% of UK emissions of ammonia gas, which 'over-fertilises' natural habitats with nitrogen and combines with other pollutants to produce fine Particulate Matter pollution which is harmful to human health.

The [Code of Good Agricultural Practice \(COGAP\) for Reducing Ammonia Emissions](#) sets out simple steps all farmers can take to reduce ammonia emissions, such as using a nutrient management plan to calculate fertiliser application rates.

It also includes more significant changes to slurry storage, spreading equipment and infrastructure, alongside innovative techniques such as slurry and digestate acidification and separation.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Air pollution is not just an urban issue and with 88% of ammonia emissions coming from farming, the government is taking concerted action.

With clear new guidance and financial support we will help farmers across the country to take action, reduce emissions and help improve air quality.

In addition to the new guidance, Defra is providing a package of financial and technical advice to help farmers reduce their emissions.

Defra is investing £3 million over the next three years to fund a specialist team of experts who will offer support, advice and guidance on the most effective ways to reduce emissions from ammonia on their land.

It will fund demonstrations of the latest low-emission spreading equipment and one-to-one advice on reducing ammonia emissions which will be available from Catchment Sensitive Farming officers by the end of this year.

A video has also been produced by Defra to support the launch of the COGAP. [Ammonia emissions from agriculture video](#)

The RDPE Countryside Productivity scheme is currently offering 40% grants towards much of the manure management equipment recommended in the COGAP to reduce ammonia emissions. This includes low-emission spreading equipment, slurry and digestate storage bags, digestate processing equipment and mild acidification equipment. Farmers in priority catchments for reducing water pollution may also be eligible for grants towards covers for slurry stores and lagoons under the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

The voluntary code has been written by Defra in collaboration with the National Farmers Union (NFU), the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board and the Agricultural Industries Confederation.

Contributions have also been made by other organisations including ADAS, the British Egg Council, the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers, the Environment Agency, Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF), the National Association of Agricultural Contractors, Natural England, Plantlife and the Tenant Farmers Association.

The guide includes information on how to reduce emissions when:

- storing organic manure
- applying organic manure
- applying manufactured nitrogen fertiliser
- feeding livestock
- housing livestock

NFU environment forum chairman Mark Pope said:

The NFU welcomes the launch of the Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions. The code contains a variety of measures to reduce ammonia emissions on farm, which in many instances provide multiple benefits to the environment and resource efficiency.

Farmers have recognised there is a need to reduce their ammonia emissions and the sector has made improvements with levels dropping by 10% in the past 30 years. However, further reductions are required from the industry in order to meet targets set under the

Government's Clean Air Strategy. We urge Defra to continue to offer farmers guidance on this issue alongside targeted financial support where necessary.

Robert Sheasby, chief executive of the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC), which represents companies delivering both inputs and advice to farmers said:

We are pleased to note that the new code recognises the importance of professional advisers in guiding farm practice. Those on the Feed Adviser Register and FACTS Qualified Advisers are already undertaking additional training that will update some 4,500 professionals on the code's requirements.

By delivering advice tailored to the needs of individual farms, their crops and livestock, we will make a significant contribution to meeting Defra's ambition for productivity and ammonia mitigation.

Jill Hewitt, Technical Consultant at the National Association of Agricultural Contractors added:

Spreading manures, slurry and digestate waste has become a predominantly contractor operation and the NAAC welcomes new guidance to help farmers and contractors make decisions about the best way to apply waste to land to maximise nutrient content, and minimise air pollution.

Nigel Penlington, Head of Environment and Buildings at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board said:

There is increasing pressure on farmers to control ammonia so we welcome this as a first step to help raise awareness and provide simple, practical steps to make a difference on the farm, improve the image of farming and its environmental performance and, at the same time, save farmers money and provide some benefits to the health and welfare of livestock and crop health.