

From Dumfries to Africa – environmental challenges faced in studying cow fertility

SRUC PhD student, Bridgit Muasa, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has swapped Dumfries for Nairobi as she continues her studies into the fertility of dairy cows.

Notice: Y026 8HZ, Mr Tim Bradshaw and Mrs Jacky Bradshaw: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: Mr Tim Bradshaw and Mrs Jacky Bradshaw
 - Installation name: Longfield Grange Farm and New Moor Farm Pig Units
 - Permit number: EPR/LP3439UW/V004
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Press release: Enjoy our excellent bathing waters this summer

The school holidays are well underway – even if summer isn't – so grab your bucket and spade and visit one of our brilliant bathing waters this month.

There are 34 bathing waters in the North East. All are classed as either an 'excellent' or 'good', and every one of them has passed high standards for water quality.

The results are based on regular water sampling by specially trained officers from the Environment Agency.

!!n Environment Agency officers visit each bathing water beach from May to

September every year to see what levels of bacteria are present in the water. Officers use results to maintain and improve bathing water quality. They were out taking water samples from beaches along the coastline from Blyth to Roker on Monday 14 August.

Mick Donkin, Sampling and Collections Team Leader, said:

Sun or no sun, the beach is a great day out for the kids during the school holidays. Our bathing waters are the cleanest they've ever been – not just here but across the country.

Samples are taken regularly throughout the bathing water season and this enables us to check they are safe for people to enjoy. We know how much people like going to the beach and the great benefit this has on the local economy. We will continue our work to ensure these standards are upheld.



A sample of bathing water taken from Roker, Sunderland.

Huge strides have been made to improve water quality, helping to make our beaches even more attractive for the increasing numbers of tourists who visit from around the world. Northumbrian Water has invested £1bn over 20 years in enhancing the quality of water on the region's coastline.

Richard Murray, Head of Wastewater Treatment and Bioresources for Northumbrian Water, said:

Two decades of investment have seen significant improvements to the North East bathing waters and this is something we are extremely proud of. Back in 2000, only four of the region's beaches met requirements and now all 34 meet the high standards.

We know there is more work to be done, by ourselves and our partners, as great bathing water relies on constant attention to detail. To ensure our beaches are a great place to visit we continually look for new ways of working to help protect and improve our environment.

The public can also do their bit to keep our beaches clean. On Monday 14 August, the Environment Agency and partners launched the #binit4beaches campaign to raise awareness of the importance of only flushing the 3P's down the toilet: pee, poo and (toilet) paper, and always putting wet wipes in the bin.

While many wet wipes claim to be 'flushable', they may not break down quickly once they've been flushed. This can add to the risk of blockages. Millions of wipes are wrongly flushed down the toilet each year which means some of them reach our much loved beaches and seas after sewers are overloaded by heavy rain or flooding.

The Marine Conservation Society's annual beach litter survey shows that the number of wet wipes found on UK beaches have echoed this trend, increasing by 700% over the last decade.

All of the latest information and advice about bathing waters can be found online: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/>

The Environment Agency works 24 hours a day to protect people and wildlife from pollution incidents and we encourage people to report such incidents to our Incident Hotline on 0800 807060.

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News story: Environment Agency chair visits Grogley and Coverack

Emma Howard Boyd met residents of Coverack to see the progress of recovery work 3 weeks after flash flooding hit the Cornish village.

The chair of the Environment Agency spent 2 days in Cornwall, where she also visited a project to boost fish numbers.

On Wednesday 9 August Emma travelled by bike using the Camel trail to Grogley, where she was shown the Water for Growth project – a £2.2 million project to restore freshwater fish habitats to the Camel and Fowey rivers.

The project is a partnership with the Environment Agency, Westcountry Rivers Trust, Natural England and South West Water to remove obstructions to fish migration, making it easier for salmon and trout to spawn in Cornwall. The river restoration project will create an improved environment for people and wildlife while adding value for local businesses that depend on sustainable fisheries. The Camel trail itself is a very popular tourist destination all year round providing an important contribution to the local economy.

During the trip Emma met a staff member inspired to learn to cycle by her visit. Gitty Ankers is an Environment Agency catchment co-ordinator who has worked on the project since its inception in 2015 and was very pleased the chair would be visiting.



Emma Howard Boyd's visit inspired Gitty Ankers to learn to cycle

But when Gitty learned Emma was a keen cyclist and would be making the trip by bicycle, a cultural barrier from Gitty's childhood threatened to spoil the visit.

Gitty said:

My parents wanted me out of Iran during the revolution in 1979, so I came over to the UK to do my master's degree. But in my native country they don't teach girls two things: swimming and cycling.

And those two things have been on my wish list ever since.

When area director Richard Stockdale said Emma Howard Boyd wanted to come and look at Grogley, I was so pleased as I had really worked hard on this project. But when he said it would be part of a cycling trip my heart sank. I thought it would be too difficult to keep up with everyone. So I gave myself a week to learn to cycle.

Borrowing a colleague's bicycle, bought for his daughter 5 years ago for £5, Gitty began to learn, which is not without its own unique difficulty in hilly Cornwall.

Gitty said:

Learning to cycle is the scariest thing I have ever done. The worst is the speed coming downhill. And finding somewhere flat in Cornwall is challenging. But I found a quiet residential street and every morning I would go up and down that road. Since then I have cycled from Bodmin to Grogley and from Grogley to Wadebridge and back. That's 7 miles each way.

If I don't learn to cycle now, then there will be no other opportunities. You always need someone to inspire you to do something, no matter how old you are.

Gitty's next goal is to learn to swim. Emma and Gitty have committed to swimming together next year so watch this space.

On Thursday 10 August Emma Howard Boyd visited Coverack to see how the village has recovered since flash flooding.



Area director Richard Stockdale shows Emma Howard Boyd around Coverack

Cornwall Council declared a major incident at 5.40pm on 18 July when flash flooding affected about 50 properties in Coverack. More than 105mm of rainfall fell within 3 hours. The recovery effort saw Environment Agency staff:

- transport 100 tons of silt from a river bed and take it 50m upstream
- remove 50 tons of debris from the beach
- dispose of 40 tons of green waste blocking watercourses
- remove 30 tons of silt, fallen trees and other blockages
- clear blockages from culverts

One of these culverts threatened to flood the home next door. Environment Agency staff cleared the watercourse that flowed within yards of the kitchen window and dug family possessions out of the silt by hand.