

Press release: Company owner jailed for 15 months

A waste criminal whose actions resulted in the closure of the M60, polluted a river and blighted communities has been disqualified from being a company director for 6 years and sentenced to 15 months in prison.

Barry Kilroe, Shareholder and Director of J25 Recycling Ltd, Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd and Asset and Land Group Ltd was sentenced at Manchester Court (on Friday 31st March).

Transport Manager and Company Director, Jane Williams was fined a total of £500 and Richard James Davies, Financial Director, was given a conditional discharge for 12 months.

Mr Kilroe pleaded guilty to ten charges relating to the unlawful operation of three waste sites, in Stockport, Salford and Warrington Docks.

Ms Williams pleaded guilty to 2 charges; 1 relating to the Salford site for storing waste in excess of its 10,000 tonne capacity, the second charge was for operating the Warrington site without an Environment Agency permit.

Mr Davies pleaded guilty to a charge relating to the Stockport site where he failed to provide and implement an adequate environmental management system.

Environment Agency investigation

The Environment Agency brought the case against Mr Kilroe and the other directors after a lengthy investigation. The investigation identified the unlawful operation and mismanagement of the 3 sites. Excessive amounts of waste were imported on to the sites, which breached their environmental permits, and the defendants failed to comply with Enforcement and Suspension Notices.

A major fire broke out in August 2013 at the J25 Recycling Ltd site in Bredbury, Stockport that lasted for 41 days. The manner in which the site was managed increased the impacts the fire caused to the environment and local community. The fire resulted in the closure of the M60 Motorway and 3 weeks of disruption to traffic as well as significant disruption to local residents and businesses. A nearby river was polluted by the fire-fighting water run-off.

A fire also broke out in March 2014 at the Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd site in Salford. This led to Network Rail closing the railway line in Salford. Local roads and main routes to Manchester City Centre were also closed. The manner in which the site was operated increased the impacts of the fire, which lasted for 19 days. It caused severe disruption to local residents and businesses, which were affected by smoke and ash. Mr. Kilroe failed to remove the waste following the fire, leaving the landowner to remove more than

14,000 tonnes.

Further waste was also transferred to Asset and Land Group Ltd at Warrington Docks, adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal. The Environment Agency's modelling also advised that a fire at the site would have affected the Ship Canal, West Coast Railway, and also flights in and out of Manchester and Liverpool airports. There would have been a significant effect on UK PLC because industry from Manchester to Liverpool would have shut. There is still a significant financial impact to the landowner who now has to pay to clear the site which has an estimate of 75,000 tonnes of waste to clear with a cost in excess of £10 million to send to landfill.

Case results in 'significant financial impacts'

Lee Rawlinson, the Environment Agency's Area Director for Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, said:

This is one of the biggest cases the Environment Agency has prosecuted, we have been committed to do so because of the severity of the offence and cost and impact on the environment, communities and business. It has resulted in significant financial impacts to legitimate businesses.

The Environment Agency would like to thank partners including Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) and United Utilities as the impact would have been even greater had it not been for their tireless effort and cooperation to get the fires under control.

We would also like to thank Excalon, Salford who assisted GMFRS at Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd. The Environment Agency has also been offering advice and support to the landowner at Warrington Docks.

Following this case GMFRS has invested in an Aerial Imagery Reconnaissance (AIR) unit. Now working in partnership with the Environment Agency Enforcement Team they use the remote controlled AIR unit to take pictures and videos of waste sites and to detect elevated heat sources within waste piles.

During Barry Kilroe's sentencing Judge Driver said Mr Kilroe whilst on bail acted for financial gain and failed to comply with the Environment Agency's warnings. Summing up, Judge Driver thanked the Environment Agency for all its help with a complex case.

Anyone who believes any illegal waste activities are taking place is urged to report the matter to our incident hotline on 0800 807060 or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111 so that we can investigate.

Illegal waste activities pose a significant threat of harm to the environment and local communities, so it is important that everyone plays their part in

stamping out waste crime.

News story: UK and US continue collaborative nuclear agreement

On March 8 2017, the 16th Standing Committee Meeting was held on the fringes of the annual Waste Management Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

The meeting included members of the US Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM), Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL), UK's Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and its subsidiaries RWM and Sellafield Ltd along with the UK National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL) and the UK Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. They discussed the current collaborative activities between the organisations under the DOE/NDA/NNL trilateral Statement of Intent (SOI).

The SOI has been in place since 2007 and was recently renewed for a further 5 years through to March 2022. Since its inception, numerous information and lessons learned exchanges have taken place under the auspices of the SOI on a wide variety of topics ranging from contracting strategies to plutonium management. Current activities are focused on start-up and commissioning, aging infrastructure management and robotics/remote technology development and implementation.

All participants agreed that, going forward, they will focus more effort on developing tangible collaborative projects to better leverage the excellent long term relationships that have been formed and maximise the financial and technical benefit of the arrangement on both sides of the Atlantic.

Adrian Simper, Director of Technology and Strategy at the NDA, said:

The intangible benefits of this relationship have been excellent in terms of the sharing of know-how and lessons learned but to get the greatest value out of the partnership, we need to identify some tangible projects where we can pool our resources and expertise.

Ana Han, Head of US Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management's International Program said:

The US/UK collaboration continues to set the benchmark for other government-to-government collaborative efforts but we both know that we can do better and that will be the focus of effort over the next 5 years.

The 17th Standing Committee Meeting is planned to take place in Manchester in November in the margins of the NDA Estate Supply Chain Event.

Press release: Innovative moveable weirs now in place

The first phase of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme has reached a major milestone as all three moveable weir gates have now been successfully put in place at Knostrop Weir on the River Aire.

Costing in the region of £50million, the scheme is being led by Leeds City Council in partnership with the Environment Agency.

The final stages of the work at Knostrop include the removal of the remaining cofferdam ahead of it becoming a fully operational flood defence later in May.

The three gates have been constructed as part of an innovative approach using moveable weirs, which can be lowered in flood conditions to reduce river levels and the threat of flooding. This is the first time that moveable weirs are being used in the UK for a flood defence.

The weirs can be lowered, and raised, by deflating and inflating 'bladders' fabricated from a bullet proof neoprene material under each gate, which act like giant air filled pillows.

The first of the weir gates at Knostrop Weir has already been tested. Later this month the cofferdam structure, which was installed to allow a dry working area in the river for the construction of the weir gate, will be flooded with water and the sheet piles then removed.

New fish and eel passes are also being constructed at Knostrop. The structures consist of a number of shallow trays which the fish and eels can swim and jump up, allowing them to migrate upstream. The previous stone weir was approximately three metres high and a barrier to fish and eels moving up the River Aire.

Moveable weirs are also being constructed further upstream at Crown Point in the city centre, where the installation of the first of two weir gates has been completed. Last month, reinforced concrete works were finished which meant the bladders and gates could be fixed in place prior to testing.

Now this gate has been installed and tested, the cofferdam has been flooded and the sheet piles are being removed to allow for work to begin on the final weir gate adjacent to Fearn's Island.

The Leader of Leeds City Council, Cllr Judith Blake, recently visited both sites to see first hand how the weirs will be reducing the risk of flooding to the city.

Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

It was fascinating to see the new flood scheme up close and especially to see the amazing technology and engineering involved in putting these moveable weirs in place to control the flow of the River Aire.

It is such a simple idea but it is fantastic to see Leeds at the cutting-edge of the field using the latest technology in this way.

The value of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme in terms of the reassurance it will offer residents and businesses over the coming years and decades is incalculable, so we very much look forward to seeing phase one complete later this year while we continue to make the strongest possible case for further significant measures to help protect all our communities threatened by flood-risk across the city as soon as possible.

Work on flood defence walls in the Holbeck area are also still underway. Temporary traffic management remains in place and will do so until September 2017. The traffic management has been coordinated with the Bridgewater Place wind baffle scheme in an effort to minimise disruption.

The site works for Phase 1 of the Leeds Flood Alleviation scheme commenced in January 2015 and are due to be completed this summer. It is one of the largest river flood defences in the country. When complete, it will provide an increased level of protection from flooding from the River Aire and Hol Beck for residents and businesses in the city centre. The scheme also includes defences at Woodlesford.

Further information on Phase 1 of the scheme can be found at www.leeds.gov.uk/fas.

Work on phase 2 of the project is currently underway to develop a proposal for how to increase the standard of protection in Leeds including areas such as Kirkstall and Stourton.

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News story: New water choice for English businesses

The world's biggest competitive water market officially opened on April 1st, which for the first time gives more than 1.2 million businesses, charities and public sector bodies the chance to choose their water provider wherever they are in the country.

Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom welcomed the launch of the market, which will deliver up to £200 million of benefits to the economy and water customers over the next 30 years, through improved service and better value for money.

By opening the market, companies ranging from businesses with very few employees to multinationals, as well as charities and public sector organisations, will be able to shop around for the best deal from all water utilities in England.

Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

Over a million businesses, charities and public sector organisations will now be able to find the water deal that works best for them. Opening the market is an historic milestone, paving the way for innovation and efficiency and giving customers the same choice over their water retailer as they currently have for their energy and other essential services.

Defra has worked with partners Ofwat, which will regulate the new market, and Market Operator Services Ltd (MOSL), which will operate the market on behalf of its water company members, to ensure there is a smooth transition for customers.

Ofwat Chief Executive Cathryn Ross said:

Business customers have been crying out for choice over their provider of water and waste water services for years. From today businesses, charities and public sector organisations in England will be able to choose their retailer to get a better deal.

The opening of the business retail market takes us into new territory. It is the single biggest change to the water sector since privatisation and I am hugely optimistic about the changes that lay ahead and the benefits they will bring to customers.

But it is important that we at Ofwat maintain effective oversight of how the new market is working and what customers are experiencing. This will mean that we can step in if we need to, to make sure customers are protected.

MOSL Chief Executive Ben Jeffs said:

This launch marks the successful delivery of the largest and most complicated transformation programmes undertaken by the water sector since privatisation. Delivering a programme of this scale and complexity has involved a huge team effort across Government, Ofwat and the entire industry.

Competition not only offers non-household customers the prospect of a better price for a better service, it will create new opportunities and challenges for the sector as a whole. The level of engagement we have had to date has been exemplary and, as the market operator, we look forward to working with companies to ensure the new market delivers on its promise to customers.

The new market in England now becomes the biggest of its kind in the world and Defra will continue to support the water sector as the market develops.

Scotland is the only other country with a competitive water market for businesses and this government has been working closely with its Scottish partners in the lead-up to the opening to draw from their learnings and expertise.

Businesses, charities or public sector organisations interested in changing their water retailer should shop around. There is more information available about available water retail suppliers on the [Open Water website](#).