

High street discount retailer donates £35,868 for waste packaging offences

The donation will be used to help environmental studies for the Tame Valley Wetlands Landscape Partnership based at Hams Hall, Coleshill, Warwickshire.

This financial contribution is from an Enforcement Undertaking (EU) offered to the Environment Agency by The Works Stores, a high street (and online) discount retailer of books, art and craft materials, gifts, toys, games, whose head office is based in Coleshill.

The company admitted that between 7 April 2010 and 7 April 2016 it had not been registered as a producer of waste packaging due to lack of awareness of The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations.

These regulations ensure packaging materials such as cardboard, plastics and glass are recycled and do not end up in landfill.

Companies with a turnover of £2 million or more and which handle more than 50 tonnes of packaging per year, must ensure a certain percentage of waste packaging is recycled.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow businesses who fail to comply with legal requirements or pollute the environment to come into compliance or positively address and restore any harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for less serious cases to restore and improve the environment, change behaviour and improve practices of the offender.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

A spokesperson for the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust said:

The money is being used by the Tame Valley Wetlands Landscape Partnership to deliver a wide range of environmental activities.

Primarily it will be used to deliver education sessions to primary school groups about the importance of rivers and wildlife based at the partnership's Environment Centre at Hams Hall.

Some of the funding will also be used to deliver training sessions

to groups in environmental conservation and to support the willow tit, one of the UK's rapidly declining native birds.

Funding will help the partnership's volunteers Tameforce to undertake tree planting and other activities to improve the habitat for willow tit.

Notes for editors

Enforcement Undertakings (EUs) enable firms and individuals who have damaged the environment or operated outside of legislative requirements to offer to complete actions which will address the cause and effect of their offending, including making a payment to an appropriate environmental project.

EUs can be offered for offences including polluting rivers, breaching permit conditions designed to protect communities, or failing to register and comply with recycling/recovery obligations. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the actions offered by the offender are acceptable.

Where the breach does not have a direct impact on the environment, such as Packaging Waste Regulations offences, EU offers must contain actions that will protect, restore or enhance the environment.

Environmental incidents should be reported to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.