

Press release: More than 44,000 responses to future farming consultation

In the last week alone, nearly 20,000 responses were submitted to the [‘Health & Harmony’](#) consultation which closed on Tuesday 8 May, with farmers, food producers and environmentalists sharing their views on everything from the support we give to farmers and food producers to the broader direction of policy post-Brexit when it comes to the natural world.

Throughout the 10 week consultation, Defra hosted 17 events across the country alongside groups including the National Trust, NFU and the Eden Project, to hear first-hand from more than 1,250 representatives of the UK’s food and farming sectors.

The Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

It’s great news that so many people have responded so enthusiastically to our consultation. Leaving the European Union gives us the opportunity to improve the support we give to Britain’s farmers. We can make farming more productive, improve the quality of the food we eat and enhance our natural environment. We’ll reflect on the many thoughtful ideas put forward in response to our consultation and bring forward our plans for legislation later this year.

The consultation included proposals to redirect payments under the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) which are based on the amount of land farmed, to a new system of paying farmers public money for public goods, principally their work to enhance the environment. It highlighted a number of public goods which could be supported such as biodiversity, high animal welfare standards and improved soil health.

A recent WWF poll, undertaken by Populus, found that [91 per cent of the UK public want to see farmers paid to protect nature](#).

Responses to the consultation will now be analysed carefully and the Government will publish a response shortly.

Press release: Arrest as Environment Agency cracks down on waste crime

Environment Agency and Yorkshire & Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit carried out enforcement action at a residential address this morning (Tuesday 9 May 2018) following an in-depth investigation into illegal dumping of waste. One 46 year old male was arrested and evidence was seized.

This arrest follows successful enforcement action taken in April 2017 as part of an ongoing investigation into the illegal dumping of 20,000 to 25,000 tonnes of waste at 17 sites across the Midlands, North West and North East.

The investigation known as Operation Cesium is looking into illegally dumped baled waste at 17 sites. The investigation will continue with the evidence seized today and is expected to continue for many more months.

Michael Brown, lead investigator, part of the Environment Agency's National Investigation Team said:

We are determined to tackle waste crime and bring those responsible to account; in this case we are thoroughly following and interrogating the evidence so that we have a robust case to take to court.

This investigation is complex, with waste being illegally dumped across many parts of the country, blighting those communities. Some of the sites have already caught fire causing a significant impact on communities, the environment and our emergency service partners.

Illegal waste and the criminals behind waste crimes divert as much as £1 billion every year from legitimate businesses and the treasury, which is why we take tough action against serious offenders. In 2016 our prosecutions resulted in fines totalling £8 million.

It's our job to do everything we can investigate these crimes and prosecute those we believe responsible.

Convictions for waste crime can include large fines and a custodial sentence.

DC John Davies, of the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Organised Crime Unit, said:

We're committed to working with our partner agencies to effectively investigate and relentlessly disrupt criminal activity.

By working together, we can utilise our collective knowledge,

experience and powers to bring offenders to justice.

This investigation has been ongoing since 2016 and we will continue to examine the evidence to determine the full extent of the suspected offences in efforts to bring those responsible to account.

Waste crime is taken extremely seriously. If anyone has information connected to this investigation or suspects other waste crime contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

Notice: UB9 6LX, West London Composting Limited, EPR/UP3893EC/V007: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)

Notice: E1 6QL, Interxion Carrier Hotel Limited: 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: Interxion Carrier Hotel Limited
- Installation name: Brick Lane Data Centre
- Permit number: EPR/QP3434DR/A001

Press release: UK launches new research and innovation hub to tackle scourge of plastic in our seas and oceans

- UK's world-leading researchers to collaborate with peers from Canada, India and other Commonwealth countries to tackle this global challenge
- new global hub will bring together scientific and technical expertise to share the latest thinking on creating sustainable alternatives to plastic and stopping plastic entering oceans
- high-profile names Unilever and Waitrose are backing the hub financially
- British Plastics Federation and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation are among the top names that have given their support

The UK, working with other Commonwealth countries, will launch a research and innovation hub for experts to develop solutions to stop plastic waste from entering our oceans and find environmentally-friendly alternatives to plastic.

India, Canada and other Commonwealth nations have already signed up to be part of the new Marine Plastics Research and Innovation Framework – a hub where researchers will be able to connect and collaborate on the latest research and innovations to tackle marine plastics.

The UK will play a leading role in designing and running the Framework, encouraging the world to move towards clean growth through the government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#). An international steering board will oversee the work.

The Prime Minister announced that the [UK would contribute £25 million to the Framework](#) during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London.

So far Unilever has committed £5 million in research and development, while Waitrose has pledged £0.5 million of research.

The British Plastics Federation, which represents more than 500 UK companies, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), RPC Group Plc and engineering giant Mott MacDonald are among those who have given their support, including access to their facilities, networks and expertise.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry said:

Plastics are not only polluting our waters, they are contributing to climate change and killing sea life.

This Framework will help develop options for alternative uses to prevent plastics from ending up in our seas. It also ensures that the UK is at the forefront of encouraging the world to move towards clean growth, tackling the threat from marine plastic and protecting our oceans for future generations.

Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Sam Gyimah said:

Plastics are clogging our oceans and threatening our sea life to devastating effect.

This hub will bring together the brightest minds in UK science and innovation to solve this problem.

Chief Executive Officer of Unilever Paul Polman said:

It is critical that governments, businesses and others from across the Commonwealth work in partnership to step away from our take-make-dispose model of consumption.

We are delighted to be contributing £5 million worth of research and development to the Framework.

Managing Director of Waitrose Rob Collins said:

With plastic waste one of the great challenges of our time, we strongly support the Commonwealth Summit's plans and targets to tackle this issue.

Notes to editors

1. This Framework will bring together experts, governments and businesses from across the Commonwealth to support knowledge sharing and new research in a broad range of issues – from stopping plastic waste entering the oceans in the first place and fostering a more circular economy, to exploring sustainable ways to clean up our seas and developing environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic.
2. [The Prime Minister speaks at the Commonwealth Joint Forum Plenary: 17 April 2018](#)
3. Our [Clean Growth Strategy](#), published October 2017, commits government to work towards an ambition for zero avoidable waste by 2050.