

Press release: Fines over £7,000 handed to 11 anglers for fishing illegally

On the 21 December, Northampton Magistrates' Court heard how the anglers were caught fishing illegally at pools in Bulkington, Worcester, Market Bosworth and Earlswood. The court issued combined fines of £7,113.

Overall, the anglers were given higher than average fines with the highest total fine of £853 given to an angler from Redditch for fishing illegally at Weston Lawns in Bulkington. This is over 28 times more expensive than an annual £30 licence.

All the anglers were caught fishing without a rod licence by Environment Agency officers out on regular patrol. None of the accused appeared in court, so all were found guilty in their absence.

Scott Dalton of Redstone Lane in Stourport on Severn, Christopher Beasley of Princes Avenue in Nuneaton, Christopher Kennedy of Middleton Hall Road in Birmingham, Jason Glover of King Charles Avenue in Walsall, Daniel Soar of Leicester Street in Bedworth, Shane Mctigue of The Laurels in Bedworth, Louis Kane of Cartmel Close in Liverpool, David Webb of Langley Close in Redditch, Daniel Wells of Mile Tree Lane in Coventry, Paul Lawless of Parbrook Road in Liverpool and Darryl Plimbley of Gospel Oak Road in Coventry were all found guilty for fishing without a licence under Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

Andrew Eardley of the Environment Agency said:

We're continuing to see anglers receive significant fines for fishing illegally which is why I can't understand the reasons some anglers continue to flout the law and risk prosecution for fishing without a licence. A licence costs just £30 and now lasts for 12 months from the day you buy it.

Most anglers fish legally and are happy to have their licence checked, the minority that fail to buy a fishing licence are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport. Fishing licence cheats risk a criminal conviction, a significant fine and could lose their fishing equipment.

With most anglers fishing legally it seems ridiculous the minority still risk a significant fine like these we've seen here.

Money from fishing licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease,

restoring fish stocks through re-stocking, eradicating invasive species, and fish habitat improvements. Fishing licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing, to encourage participation in the sport and to manage a voluntary bailiff scheme.

Children under 12 fish for free. Anyone aged 12 to 16 also fish for free, but do need to have a valid Environment Agency fishing licence. Anyone over 16 must pay for an [Environment Agency fishing licence](#) to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Tivvy Skips Ltd prosecuted for burning waste in Devon

A Devon skip company has been ordered to pay £5,500 in fines and costs for illegally burning waste. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

Tivvy Skips Ltd runs a small waste transfer station near Tiverton and operates under an environmental permit. On 6 January 2017 the site was inspected and waste was seen being placed in a dumper truck, before being transferred into a skip and burned.

The condition of the skip and debris found around it indicated the burning of waste was a 'routine occurrence'. Alan Hutchings, the site manager at Tivvy Skips, blamed the illegal burning on a member of staff who he claimed was doing it without his knowledge.

A court heard the Environment Agency had previously warned the company about burning waste, but it had ignored the warnings.

Richard Tugwell, of the Environment Agency, said:

Burning waste is illegal and poses a serious risk to the environment and human health. The motive is nearly always financial as it reduces the amount of waste a company has to legally dispose of.

Courts take these offences seriously and where we have evidence, we won't hesitate to prosecute.

Appearing before Exeter magistrates, Tivvy Skips Ltd was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay £2,500 costs after being found guilty of breaching Regulation 38 of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016.

Since the offence, the company has introduced new management procedures and was found to be compliant during a recent inspection.

Press release: River pollution costs Devon farmer £9,500 for leaky silage clamp

A farmer has been ordered to pay £9,500 in fines and costs for polluting a tributary of the River Exe in Devon. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

On 16 July 2015, Environment Agency officers visited Cleave Farm, Templeton near Tiverton following a report of pollution. They found a tributary heavily contaminated with sewage fungus for 100 metres before it entered a larger stream that was also contaminated with sewage fungus.

The pollution was traced to a silage clamp at Cleave Farm. The farmer, Winston Reed, told officers the silage effluent should have been directed to a slurry store, but was leaking into a watercourse from a surface water ditch. Officers were told a drain in the farm yard had been blocked off, but cracked concrete around the drain had allowed effluent to escape into the surface water system.

Silage effluent is an acidic liquid produced by the silage making process which is a serious pollutant if it enters a watercourse.

Exeter Crown Court heard that Winston Reed either by himself or his company, Reed Farms Ltd, which is currently in administration, is a persistent polluter. In 2006 Winston Reed was cautioned for allowing slurry to enter a stream. Then Reed Farms Ltd caused significant pollution incidents in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, which resulted in the company being either prosecuted or cautioned.

Since 2012, Officers had tried to work with Mr Reed to bring about changes at the farm to improve infrastructure, including visits from the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme.

Mischka Hewins of the Environment Agency said:

We always prefer to work in partnership with farmers to achieve

compliance through advice and guidance. It's disappointing when this fails and our only option to change behaviour and prevent pollution is to prosecute.

Anyone concerned about pollution to water or land can call the Environment Agency's free 24-hour incident line on 0800 807060.

Notes to editors

On 15 December 2017, Winston Kenneth Reed pleaded guilty to causing a water discharge activity without an environmental permit, namely the discharge of silage effluent, which is polluting matter, from Cleave Farm, Templeton, Tiverton, Devon into inland freshwaters contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. Fined £2,000 plus £120 victim surcharge. Ordered to pay Environment Agency costs of £7,500

The term 'sewage fungus' describes a group of micro-organisms, which contain filamentous bacteria, fungi and/or stalked protozoa. Their presence is an indication of organic/nutrient pollution in a watercourse.

[News story: New Northern Forest gets Government backing](#)

Ambitious plans to create a new 'Northern Forest' along the M62 corridor have been kick-started today following an announcement by the Prime Minister Theresa May.

Following backing from the Environment Secretary Michael Gove, over the next 25 years the Woodland Trust and Community Forest Trust are aiming to plant more than 50 million trees from Liverpool to Hull, with the government today providing almost £6 million to launch the first project of its kind for more than a quarter of a century.

Spanning more than 120 miles between the cities of Bradford, Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, the proposed Northern Forest will help boost habitats for woodland birds and bats and protect iconic species such as the red squirrel – alongside providing a tranquil space to be enjoyed by millions of people living in the area.

The announcement forms part of the government's upcoming 25 Year Environment Plan, which will set out how we can be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we inherited it.

Further details on the Government's strategy to build an environment fit for

the future will be set out this week.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

It is vital that we leave our planet in a better state than we found it, with cleaner air, stronger protections for animal welfare and greener spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Progress is being made. We're investing over £3 billion in improving air quality, tackling marine pollution by banning harmful microbeads and increasing sentences for animal cruelty to five years.

But to create an environment fit for the future we can't stop there, and that is why we are supporting the creation of this new Northern Forest and will shortly be setting out our ambitious vision to further support the environment and protect its good health for generations to come.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Trees are some of our most cherished natural assets and living evidence of our investment for future generations. Not only are they a source of beauty and wonder, but a way to manage flood risk, protect precious species, and create healthier places for us to work and live.

This new Northern Forest is an ambitious and exciting project that will create a vast ribbon of woodland cover in northern England stretching from coast to coast, providing a rich habitat for wildlife to thrive, and a natural environment for millions of people to enjoy. This new forest will help us deliver a Green Brexit and help to deliver on our pledge to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

Austin Brady, Director of Conservation at the Woodland Trust, said:

The Northern Forest will accelerate the creation of new woodland and support sustainable management of existing woods right across the area. Planting many more trees, woods and forests will deliver a better environment for all – locking up carbon on a large scale, boosting wildlife habitat and greening our towns and cities.

The Woodland Trust and Community Forests will use new and innovative mechanisms to engage communities and a wide range of partners in delivering the forest.

With the Government backing growth, investment and jobs across the Northern Powerhouse as part of efforts to create an economy that works for everyone, the Woodland Trust and Community Forest Trust estimate this new forest will generate more than £2 billion for the country's economy. The area's breathtaking scenery and landscape is famous across the world, and this scheme will help bolster it for future generations.

The first planting will begin in March this year, supported by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, at the Woodland Trust's 680-hectare Northern Forest flagship site at Smithills, Bolton. The Woodland Trust is already committed to investing over £10 million in this project and several others over the wider forest area.

The Northern Forest will connect the five Community Forests in the north of England – the Mersey Forest, Manchester City of Trees, South Yorkshire Community Forest, the Leeds White Rose Forest and the HEYwoods Project – with green infrastructure and woodland created in and around major urban centres such as Chester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Manchester.

It will follow on from the successful National Forest, which transformed 200 square miles of industrial site in the heart of England. The forest now attracts over eight million visitors a year and has seen wildlife like otters, water voles and dragonflies flourish.

Research and analysis: Floods of winter 2015 to 2016: estimating the costs

The report describes the approaches and methods used, the total estimated cost and the impact on different areas, including residential properties, businesses, utilities and transport.

The findings will be used to inform investment decisions and future research needs.