

Press release: Illegal boaters sunk with fines

Five boaters who did not register their vessels have been landed with penalties totalling more than £5,000.

River inspectors found the boats moored on the Great Ouse, Little Ouse, Old West and Nene – all part of the Anglian Waterways network managed by the Environment Agency.

It is a legal requirement for boaters to register any vessel they keep, use or let for hire on Environment Agency waterways, and to clearly display a valid registration plate. Vessel owners must also have the appropriate Boat Safety Scheme certificates and insurance, as part of the registration process.

Glen Wheatley of Farcet in Peterborough, Geoffrey Turner of Holbeach in Lincolnshire, Stuart Baker of Hockwold in Norfolk, Phillip Sunman of Eynesbury in Cambridgeshire, and Anthony Hague of Soham in Cambridgeshire all failed to register their vessels, as required by law.

Their cases were heard at Peterborough Magistrates' Court on Wednesday 8 March, and resulted in fines and costs totalling £5,166.10. Mr Wheatley was ordered to pay a total of £827.99, Mr Turner £856.98, Mr Baker £898.71, Mr Sunman £1,208.71, and Mr Hague £1,371.71.

Nathan Arnold, partnerships and development team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

Our historic and precious waterways are an important part of our nation's heritage and are enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people every year," says Nathan Arnold, Partnerships and Development team leader at the Environment Agency.

A significant part of caring for them, protecting them, and ensuring people continue to enjoy them is funded by boaters paying their way. Those who don't contribute as they should are threatening the future of our waterways – and we won't hesitate to take action against them.

As well as not contributing to the upkeep of waterways, unregistered boats can be unsafe, hazardous to other river users, and a pollution risk to the local environment and wildlife.

The Environment Agency looks after 353 miles of navigable waterways in the Anglian network, which includes the Ancholme, Black Sluice, Glen, Welland, Nene, Great Ouse and Stour, as well as associated locks and navigation facilities like moorings, showers and toilets.

More information about boating and waterways, including registering vessels, is available at <http://www.gov.uk/ea>. If you suspect a boat is illegal, please contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or by emailing our [Waterways team](#).

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Notes to editors:

- Glen Wheatley of Peterborough Road, Farcet, Peterborough, pleaded guilty by post and was given a fine of £103, and ordered to pay costs of £250, compensation of £444.99 and a victim surcharge of £30. The total penalty was £827.99. His vessel is Lady Angela.
- Geoffrey Turner of Fleet Road, Holbeach, Lincolnshire, was found guilty in absence. He was fined £220, and ordered to pay costs of £250, £343.98 compensation, and a victim surcharge of £43. The total penalty was £856.98. His vessel is Bianco.
- Stuart Baker of Pearces Close, Hockwold, Norfolk, pleaded guilty in court and was given a 12-month conditional discharge. He was also ordered to pay compensation of £878.71 and a £20 victim surcharge (£898.71 total). His vessel is unnamed.
- Philip Sunman of Washbank Road, Eynesbury, Cambridgeshire, pleaded guilty and was fined £200. He was also ordered to pay costs of £100, compensation of £878.71 and a £30 victim surcharge. The total penalty was £1,208.71. His vessel is unnamed.
- Anthony Hague of Bushell Lane, Soham, Cambridgeshire, was found guilty in absence and given a fine of £220. He was also ordered to pay £250 in costs, £873.71 compensation and a victim surcharge of £30. The total penalty was £1,373.71. His vessel is Quest II.
- Powered-vessel owners will require valid insurance to register their vessels and most will also require a Boat Safety Scheme Certificate.
- Registration must be renewed each year for the waterway on which a person is keeping or using their boat. People can also buy a visitor registration for shorter periods.

Consultation outcome: Bathing waters: removing Instow from the list of designated bathing waters

Updated: Summary of responses added and decision made to remove Instow from the list of bathing waters.

We want to know what you think about removing Instow from the list of bathing waters designated under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013 (S.I. 2013/1675).

The bathing water was classified as poor in 2015 and 2016. It is unlikely that the water quality of this bathing water can be improved.

We welcome comments, based on evidence, about the technical feasibility of improving bathing water quality at the beach to meet at least the minimum standards.

This consultation will be of interest to the recreation sector, leisure and tourism industries, farmers, environmental campaigners and beach users.

Press release: Whitby man handed community order for illegal salmon and sea trout fishing

A Whitby man has been handed a 12-month community order for illegally fishing for salmon and sea trout.

William Arthur Elwick, 53, of Abbot's Road, Whitby, must now carry out 240 hours of unpaid work after he was sentenced on Friday 24 March at Scarborough Magistrates' Court.

He had admitted two charges of gill net fishing without a licence after being caught red-handed on 4 July 2016.

Chris Bunting, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court that enforcement officers caught Elwick while they were carrying out night-time patrols along the lower River Esk and tideway.

At around 12.30am near Chainbridge Riverside Retreats, Ruswarp, officers discovered a gill net that was stretched across the full width of the river. They heard splashing at several points of the net where fish had become entangled.

Another gill net was found upstream near Briggswath, again stretching across the full width of the river.

The investigating officers carried out covert surveillance of the nets and called in the police to help search for the culprit. Elwick was found hiding in a bush.

He had in his possession 23 sea trout and two salmon. These were seized, along with his nets and other equipment.

Gill nets are illegal to use within inland waters. An examination of the seized fish revealed clear signs of physical harm including lacerations along fins, with bloodied wounds and scale loss. This damage is consistent with the

fish having been captured in an entanglement net, such as a gill net.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said after the hearing:

Illegal fishing of this kind is a crime, and we will investigate and prosecute anyone who is caught breaking the law.

The River Esk has a relatively small catchment and any significant illegal fishing activity will inevitably have a major impact on fish populations. The illegal netting of salmon and sea trout poses a threat to the wider ecology of the River Esk, including the fresh water pearl mussel which relies on salmon and sea trout for their life cycle. The Yorkshire Esk is one of the few rivers in the United Kingdom that still has a population of pearl mussels.

We are grateful to North Yorkshire Police for their support in apprehending the defendant. Anyone who believes that illegal fishing is taking place should report the matter to our incident hotline on 0800 807060 so we can investigate.

A representative from the Yorkshire Esk Rivers Trust said after the hearing:

Elwick's actions were illegal and damaging to the local ecology of the River Esk. This type of crime also has a detrimental impact on the local economy. By taking these fish illegally with the intent of selling them off for personal profit, Elwick is depriving his neighbours up the Esk valley the chance to make legitimate income from these fish which studies have shown are worth about ten times as much to local businesses than the value Elwick will have gained.

Our message to local people is to be aware of where you buy your fish. Only buy from a reputable seller, and if you believe someone is trading in illegally-caught fish, report the matter to the Environment Agency.

In mitigation, the defendant told the court that he had committed the offences during a period of unemployment and that he would have sold the fish had he not been apprehended. At that point he hadn't been entitled to benefits and had no income. Elwick is now back in full-time employment.

He was also ordered to pay £2,985 in legal costs.

Press release: Committee members sought to help shape future flood plans in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire

New members are being sought for the Anglian Northern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) – helping shape and approve local flood defence plans, raise local levy funding and influence the future of the environment.

The Anglian Northern RFCC works with the Environment Agency on key schemes to reduce flood risk across Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire – for example the Humber Strategy, Louth & Horncastle flood reservoirs and Boston Barrier scheme.

The RFCC funds innovation and partner-led projects and plays an important role during flood incidents, supporting staff, colleagues and communities before, during and after an event.

Committee members have a critical role in supporting the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities. We are looking for individuals with skills or knowledge in one or more of the following backgrounds:

- Community engagement and/or flood incident management
- Partnership funding & contributions, infrastructure and the economy
- Media, public relations & communications
- General flood & coastal risk management expertise

Applicants do not need to be technical experts in flood and coastal risk management, though some understanding of the processes and impacts of flooding are desirable. We need people who can think strategically, know how to engage and influence individuals, communities and networks, and understand the need for innovation and efficiency.

The Committee meets 4 times a year, though candidates may be asked to attend additional meetings. RFCC members are all appointed as impartial individuals in their own right and not as representatives of any particular organisation. It is important that the committee members represent the communities they serve. These are unpaid roles but reasonable expenses, including travel, can be claimed.

The Environment Agency is keen to hear from anyone who may be interested. More information and details about how to apply can be found on our [Anglian Northern RFCC page](#).

The closing date for applications is Wednesday, 10 May 2017.

If you have further questions, contact the RFCC Secretariat by [email](#) or on 0203 025 5877.

Corporate report: Nuclear Decommissioning Authority: University Research and Development Strategy

In order to successfully deliver our mission, NDA needs to ensure that it is technically underpinned by sufficient and appropriate R&D and that our estate has access to the skills and capability to carry out the mission efficiently and effectively on the required timescales.

University R&D plays an important role in this delivery through:

- maintenance and/or development of key technical skills required to deliver the decommissioning plans
- early-stage development of decommissioning technologies (e.g. technology at low technology readiness levels)
- application/adaption of existing technologies to radioactive environments
- informing the development of strategy and policy
- advancement and transfer of knowledge with regard to decommissioning
- providing fundamental understanding of underpinning science and engineering of key processes or technologies deployed on our sites
- identification of R&D opportunities arising from current and future projects