

Press release: Nine anglers fined over £6,200 for illegal fishing in Staffordshire

Just a few months after penalising 17 Staffordshire anglers, North Staffordshire Justice Centre Magistrates' Court issued combined fines of £6,217 to a further 9 anglers for fishing offences. The court has now issued more than £17,000 fines this year for angling offences.

On 26 June 2017, North Staffordshire Justice Centre Magistrates' Court heard how 9 anglers were caught fishing illegally over the past 9 months. Most fined on 26 June were caught fishing illegally in February this year.

All 9 were caught fishing without a rod licence by Environment Agency officers out on regular patrols. Six anglers pleaded guilty and 3 failed to appear in court so were proved guilty in absence. The lowest total fine was £457 and the highest was £942; that's over 30 times more than an annual £30 licence!

The following were all found guilty under Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975:

- James Morrison of The Chartway in Walsall
- Connah Reynolds of Brierley Park in Buxworth
- Ben Brammer of Handley Street in Stoke on Trent
- Ben Gee of Villa Close in Biddulph,
- Julian May of Wolseley Street in Birmingham
- Ryan Scarisbrick of Richmond Street in Burton upon Trent
- Matthew Bains of Hillside Drive in Leek
- Leslie Keeley of Hawthorne Grove in Wallasey
- Craig Hall of Orchard Close in Willenhall

Craig Hall was also summoned to court for failing to state his name to a water bailiff when requested.

Magistrates heard that Environment Agency enforcement officers found these anglers fishing without a rod licence at pools near Stoke on Trent, Stafford, Burntwood, Leek and Wolverhampton; and on the River Trent at Burton.

Andrew Eardley of the Environment Agency said:

I can't understand why a minority of anglers continue to risk prosecution for fishing without a licence. A licence costs just £30 and now lasts for 12 months from the day you buy it. Fishing licence money is invested into England's fisheries and rivers; improving the sport of angling.

The minority of anglers 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.

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 and to encourage participation in the sport.

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 them directly to the Environment Agency hotline, 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Western half of Dawlish Warren beach recharge ends a month early

Around the clock dredging and recharge works at Dawlish Warren has paid off, with the completion of the recharge of the western end of the beach a month ahead of schedule.

The equivalent of 50 Olympic swimming pools full of sand have been pumped onto the beach since the beginning of June and, as a result, the beach now boasts increased sand levels of up to 3 metres in places.

As well as providing an improved beach for visitors to enjoy, the increased sand levels will reduce damage to the defences protecting the amenity infrastructure and help the internationally important sand dunes grow and roll back naturally. This is a legal requirement for the scheme to deliver.

Richard Cox, project manager for the Environment Agency, said:

The good news is we've completed the beach recharge at the western end of Dawlish Warren well ahead of our original schedule which

tied in with the start of the summer holidays at the end of July.

This innovative scheme continues to be a balance between enhancing the natural environment whilst performing a flood defence function to protect communities at Dawlish Warren and in the Exe Estuary.

Beach goers can now reap the benefit of an improved beach at the western end and once the scheme is complete we'll have reduced the risk of flooding to more than 2,900 properties around the Exe Estuary.

Beach replenishment works will continue through the summer, with another 50 Olympic swimming pools worth of sand being placed on the eastern half of the beach. This part of the scheme will be complete by the end of August. Dredging and beach recharge was specifically programmed between June and August to protect internationally important species of birds and to protect fish movements in the Exe Estuary.

The trailing suction hopper dredger, the Mahury, which has been collecting sand from Pole Sands, just off shore from Dawlish Warren, will stay in situ until beach replenishment is complete.

Councillor Humphrey Clemens, Teignbridge District Council's executive member for housing and planning which includes coastal services, said:

This is excellent news for residents, traders and visitors, and it is even better news that the recharge work for the main beach has been completed ahead of schedule.

Credit should go to the teams on the ground carrying out this work: BMM the contractor, alongside staff from Teignbridge and the Environment Agency. Importantly, thanks go to the many residents, traders and visitors for their patience and understanding so far.

The safety and interests of the public have always been our main consideration throughout the works and many have been very positive and genuinely interested in what's happening.

There's still work to do with recharge continuing on a section of the beach past groyne 6 but it's progressing well. Dawlish Warren beach is looking wonderful and the area will now benefit from a multi-million-pound investment in flood defences that provide a modern standard of protection but also help preserve the beauty of this special place.

Since work started in January, 1.2km of stone filled gabion baskets have been removed from the warren. The timber groynes have been refurbished, extended and replaced along the warren to help hold sand on the beach. Over 200 new 7 metre long kingposts have been installed to form the new groynes (groynes 10 to 14) and more than 1,500 new planks have been installed to raise the

groynes to suit the new beach levels. Construction of a new revetment between groynes 3 and 4 is ongoing but will be complete before the school summer holidays.

Work on the new 'sandbag' defence buried deep under the dunes at the narrowest point of the warren (the Neck) will be ongoing throughout the summer. Giant bags are being pumped full of sand and water which drain to create compacted sand bags up to 2.85 metres high. When finished, the bags will be buried in the back face of the dune. This structure is designed to reduce flood risk behind from the most severe of storms and prevent the warren breaching along this vulnerable section.

The main construction works are due to be finished by October.

The estimated economic benefit of the warren continuing to shelter communities and the main railway line from storms has been calculated at around £158 million.

News about Dawlish Beach Management Scheme will be shared via:

- www.facebook.com/DawlishWarrenBMS/

.DawlishWarrenBMS

[Press release: UK takes key step towards fair new fishing policy after Brexit](#)

The United Kingdom will take an historic step towards delivering a fairer deal for the UK fishing industry this week by triggering the withdrawal from an arrangement that allowed foreign countries access to UK waters, Environment Secretary Michael Gove confirmed today.

As part of moves to prepare the UK for the opportunities of leaving the European Union, the Government will officially begin withdrawal from the London Fisheries Convention.

The London Fisheries Convention, signed in 1964 before the UK joined the European Union, allows vessels from five European countries to fish within six and 12 nautical miles of the UK's coastline. It sits alongside the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which allows all European vessels access between 12 and 200 nautical miles of the UK and sets quotas for how much fish each nation can catch.

On Monday the UK will notify the other Member States signed up to the London Fisheries Convention, triggering a two-year withdrawal period – in a similar way to the Article 50 letter which began a two-year withdrawal from the EU.

Securing a fairer deal for the UK fishing industry is a Manifesto pledge and one of the Government's key objectives for Brexit.

When we leave the EU, we will no longer be bound by the Common Fisheries Policy but without action, restrictions under the historic London Fisheries Convention would still apply. By withdrawing from the London Fisheries Convention we will no longer be bound by the existing access agreements.

Instead we will regain control of fishing access to our waters and become fully responsible for the management of fisheries so we can ensure a fair, sustainable and profitable industry for all our fishermen.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Leaving the London Fisheries Convention is an important moment as we take back control of our fishing policy. It means for the first time in more than fifty years we will be able to decide who can access our waters.

This is an historic first step towards building a new domestic fishing policy as we leave the European Union – one which leads to a more competitive, profitable and sustainable industry for the whole of the UK.

As announced in the Queen's Speech, the Government will introduce a [Fisheries Bill](#) to control access to the UK's waters and set fishing quotas once we have left the EU. This is supplemented by our decision to leave the London Fisheries Convention.

Working closely with our neighbours, the Government will design a new fishing policy which allows the fishing industry and coastal communities to thrive, in line with our international obligations, as we build a deep and special partnership with the European Union after Brexit.

Barrie Deas, Chief Executive of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, said:

This is welcome news and an important part of establishing the UK as an independent coastal state with sovereignty over its own exclusive economic zone.

The fisheries sector contributes £1.3 billion to the economy, employing 34,600 people. There were over 6,000 UK fishing vessels in 2015, which landed 708,000 tonnes of fish – worth £775 million.

An estimated 10,000 tonnes of fish, including mackerel and herring, was caught by fishing vessels from the London Fisheries Convention countries France, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands in 2015 within 12 nautical miles of the British coast – worth an estimated £17 million.

In the coming months and years, the government will be working with the industry and marine scientists, as well as the devolved administrations, to preserve and increase fish stocks for their long-term sustainability, and secure prosperity for fishermen across the UK when we leave the European Union.

Starting this summer, there will be a period of engagement on the Fisheries Bill with the devolved administrations, fishermen, trade organisations, fish processors and the public to make sure we deliver a deal that works for the whole of the UK.

Press release: Deadline extended for Ipswich Flood Barrier artwork project

The project will see bespoke creations installed at 2 locations – across the 3 doors of the barrier's control building, and within a circular space on the West Bank of the New Cut.

The successful designs, which should have a maritime and/or Ipswich theme, must be able to withstand any potential vandalism and sufficiently durable to have a lifespan of 25 years.

The commissioned art work is expected to be installed by early next year.

The deadline for submissions is 28 July.

Work on the £58 million Ipswich Flood barrier scheme is already well under way and is due to be completed in 2018.

EA project manager Andrew Osborne said: "We want this art work to be a visual representation of Ipswich's maritime past and also to mark the creation of this new vital infrastructure for the town.

These 2 commissions will provide a lasting legacy for the town's most important flood defence scheme in recent history.

The next major phase of the project will be the arrival of the tidal gates from Holland in the summer.

The scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding to 1,608 homes and 422

businesses and support key infrastructure, has been partnership funded by: the Environment Agency, Ipswich Borough Council, Department for Communities and Local Government, the Haven Gateway Partnership, and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

Any artists interested in finding out more about the art project and how to make a submission should email enquiries_eastanglia@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Media enquiries: For more details about the specifications or for further details, contact the East Anglia press office (24 hours) on: 0800 917 9250

National Statistics: Farming facts and figures: 2017

Topics include livestock, labour and economic data.