

# **Press release: Camera footage helps secure fisheries conviction**

Body worn camera footage captured by Environment Agency officers on patrol has been used to support a conviction for the first time.

Callum Bell, 26, of Lyndsey Street in Houghton-Le-Spring, was fined for obstructing Fisheries Enforcement officers during an incident at Ouston near Chester-le-Street in June last year.

The footage shows Bell using insulting and threatening behaviour towards the two officers as they investigated an illegal fishing offence.

He appeared at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, 31 January, where he pleaded guilty to two offences of wilfully obstructing the officers in the execution of their duty, and two offences of using threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour towards the two officers. He was fined £534 and ordered to pay costs of £530.

In a separate offence from the same incident, David Daniel Bilverstone, 23, of Northlands in Chester-le-Street was charged with fishing without a licence. He failed to appear and the case was proved in his absence. He was fined £110 and ordered to pay costs of £180.

## **Threatening towards officers**

Acting on behalf of the Environment Agency, Chris Bunting told the court that on 18 June last year, the enforcement officers were carrying out a patrol of the freshwater lake Ouston Springs. They saw Bilverstone fishing with a rod and Bell seemingly asleep on the bankside.

One of the enforcement officers took Bilverstone aside to fill in an offence report form. He said he goes sea fishing and claimed he didn't know he needed a licence.

At this point Bell awoke and walked towards where the officers were standing by the lake side. It was apparent he was affected by alcohol. He quickly became aggressive and threatening towards the two officers.

He tried to grab the offence report book, threatened to push them in the lake and twice lunged towards one of the officers, trying to grab the officer's baton from its holster. Over the course of several minutes he continued to be verbally abusive, repeatedly swearing and making threats.

Even after the officers had finished dealing with the illegal fishing offence, he continued to shout abuse towards them from across the lake.

When interviewed, Bell said he was drunk and hadn't meant to obstruct the officers. In court, he offered an unreserved apology for his actions.

## **'Safety of staff is paramount'**

Rachael Caldwell, Environment Agency Enforcement Team Leader for the north east, said:

Bell was told on more than one occasion that he was being recorded by the cameras but he continued to be threatening and abusive.

Our officers are doing an important job to ensure people are fishing legally and taking action against those that aren't. The safety of our staff is paramount and they shouldn't have to put up with any kind of abusive or threatening behaviour.

This is the first time cameras worn by our officers have been used to support a conviction. Our preference is to prevent hostility in the first place and I hope this serves as a warning to others that their actions are being recorded and will be used in future court proceedings. Hopefully people will think twice before acting in such a way.

Environment Agency enforcement officers in the north east first trialled the use of body worn cameras last year to help reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour, assaults and threats against staff. It's expected they will be rolled out to teams elsewhere in the country in the coming months.

The cameras – which are the norm among many enforcement agencies – can be used in a variety of ways, including at visits to poor performing waste sites, illegal waste sites, during fisheries and navigation patrols and even during incident response.

Officers must follow clear guidelines on use of the cameras, including telling people they are being filmed, and deleting any footage after a month unless it is used for evidential purposes.

Fishing is free for children under 16, although those aged between 12 and 16 still need a junior licence. For anyone over 16, a full annual licence costs from just £30, with some short term and concessionary licences also available. [You can buy your rod licence online](#)

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**[Press release: 50th Promising  
Innovative Medicine \(PIM\) designation](#)**

## granted

The scheme, which launched in 2014, helps to give patients with life threatening or seriously debilitating conditions earlier access to new and innovative treatments.

Medicines developers, including research organisations, can apply for a PIM designation if they have evidence to support that a medicinal product is likely to offer major advantage for patients. Upon designation, the application can then proceed to a scientific opinion assessment which leads to patient access in the NHS.

EAMS is a key part of our commitment to accelerating patient access to innovative treatments and supporting the UK life sciences environment. Between April 2014 and December 2017, 18 positive scientific opinions have been awarded in a number of different clinical areas with unmet medical need.

Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive Officer at MHRA said:

Reaching this milestone means 50 new indications from promising medicinal products have emerged in the last four years alone. As a result, current and future patients will be able to access potentially life-saving drugs that they may not have otherwise had the chance to have.

We are delighted with the success of the scheme, to date, which is part of our priority to ensure, new, good quality, safe and efficacious innovative treatments are available to patients at the earliest opportunity.

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## Press release: National Citizen Service Trust Chair Campaign

After carefully considering the field of candidates who applied through an open recruitment exercise that was launched in July 2017, the Prime Minister has taken the decision to re-run the competition to appoint the Chair of the National Citizen Service (NCS), under paragraph 3.2 of the Governance Code for Public Appointments.

A new campaign will launch in due course, and will be focused towards identifying a candidate with appropriate commercial experience, or experience of setting direction and supporting an organisation to develop.

Government is committed to the continued development of the NCS programme. The new Chair will lead NCS through a period of organisational change, so it is vital that we find the right candidate for the job.

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## News story: South West has the potential to become the UK's start-up hub

Technology firms developing driverless car technology and 5G mobile networks are among the companies helping to make the South West one of Britain's start up hubs, according to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury Elizabeth Truss.

Latest figures show the economy in the South West is now worth more than £127 billion and is the second fastest growing economy of UK nations and regions with year-on-year growth of more than 4%.

Meeting fast growing, high tech firms including Ultrahaptics in Bristol the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Elizabeth Truss, will say:

Technology firms, like the ones I am meeting today in Bristol, help power Britain's future.

The government is giving enterprise the freedom it needs to succeed. From Cornwall to Christchurch, The South West is buzzing with ambition and attracting interest and investment from around the world.

The Chief Secretary is visiting Ultrahaptics and tour its facilities. The firm develops virtual reality technology and has raised more than £30 million in investment.

Among the businesses meeting the Chief Secretary are Bristol-based BluWireless which has attracted investment to help them develop and distribute 5G mobile networks through Britain.

The government is investing more than £2 billion in the Strategic Road Network in the South West which will transform the A303/A30/A358 corridor, fund construction of a new junction on the M49 and improve sections of the A30 in Cornwall into a dual carriageway.

More than £80 million is also being invested to ease congestion around key cities such as Bristol and improve roads.

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## Press release: HS2 reveals world-leading design firms for biggest station building programme since Victorian era

Station designs will showcase world-class architecture, ease of use and value for money that passengers and communities expect and deserve.

The following designers will be awarded contracts to help develop and refine the detailed plans for the four stations, due to open in 2026:

- Birmingham Curzon Street – WSP UK Limited (working with Grimshaw Architects LLP)
- Birmingham Interchange – Ove Arup & Partners International Limited (working with Arup Associates and Wilkinson Eyre Architects Limited)
- Old Oak Common – WSP UK Limited (working with Wilkinson Eyre Architects Limited)
- London Euston – Ove Arup & Partners International Limited (working with Grimshaw Architects LLP)

The winning teams have a track record of delivering cutting edge design and have worked on some of the largest and most complex international infrastructure projects, including Gateshead Millennium Bridge, The Eden Project in Cornwall, Biljmer Arena station in the Netherlands, and the new concourse at London's King's Cross station.

London and Birmingham are already planning for the arrival of HS2 which is expected to unlock opportunities for 30,000 new homes and 130,000 jobs as part of wider developments around the four stations.

Welcoming the news, HS2 Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

HS2 is a modern railway fit for Britain's future, improving vital links between some of our country's biggest cities, driving forward growth and significantly improving services for passengers with thousands more seats on faster trains.

Appointing these leading creative firms ensures that passengers on our world-class railway will experience modern and accessible stations. I am confident that these firms will deliver these projects at value for money, with designs that are both innovative and in keeping with their surroundings.

HS2 Ltd Chief Executive, Mark Thurston said:

Our new stations in London and Birmingham will be at the heart of the first phase of the project, increasing capacity, improving journeys and helping to unlock opportunities for tens of thousands of new jobs and homes around what will be four new landmark buildings.

That's why I'm delighted to welcome these talented designers to the team, and we look forward to working with them to create station designs which showcase world-class architecture, ease of use and value for money that our passengers and communities expect and deserve.

The new HS2 stations will be designed with input from local communities, using best practice principles from stations around the world, and guidelines and specifications endorsed by an independent panel of leading architects and designers.

Working with HS2 Ltd, the winners will be tasked with delivering:

- People-centred design, which offers high-quality customer experience including shopping, business facilities, and opportunities for art and leisure
- Architecture which enables accessibility for all, including step-free access from street-to-seat which is simple and easy to navigate
- 'Timeless design' for future-proofing and flexibility so stations accommodate changes in technology and in the population
- Respecting and contributing to the physical and cultural legacy of the location – responding to the local built and natural environment, using local materials and ensuring local people identify with their station and have pride in it

An independent HS2 Design Panel has scrutinised HS2's guidelines and specifications for the stations, and will continue to play a key role in reviewing the detailed designs as they develop through 2018.

Chair of the HS2 Design Panel, Sadie Morgan from DrMM architects, said:

We welcome the appointment of these world class designers and look forward to working with them and HS2 to help deliver iconic stations which set new standards in design and ease of use, and provide a legacy of great architecture of which Britain can be truly proud.

HS2 services from London and Birmingham will travel beyond the new high speed network via existing tracks to a wide range of destinations including Liverpool, The North West, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

**Press and media enquiries**