

# Press release: Appointment of Peter Schofield as Permanent Secretary at the Department for Work and Pensions

The Cabinet Secretary, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, has today announced that Peter Schofield, currently Director General of Finance at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), has been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary on Sir Robert Devereux's retirement later this month.

Welcoming Peter Schofield's appointment Sir Jeremy Heywood said:

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Peter Schofield as the new Permanent Secretary for the Department for Work and Pensions. Peter has done an excellent job as Finance Director General at the department and will bring to his new role a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience. I look forward to working with him as he starts his work delivering DWP's important mission.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sir Robert Devereux for his excellent leadership of the department during his time as Permanent Secretary.

The Rt Hon Esther McVey, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, said:

I look forward to welcoming Peter Schofield as DWP's new Permanent Secretary and to working with him on ensuring we continue to deliver a welfare system that supports people when they need it, and helps them fulfil their potential – no matter who they are or where they come from.

Peter Schofield said:

DWP is a remarkable organisation – in scale, reach, ability to deliver change, and the motivation and pride of my 80,000 colleagues providing high quality support to over 22 million citizens. It is a huge honour to be given the opportunity to lead DWP and support the new Secretary of State and her ministerial team, and to build on Robert's outstanding leadership over the last 7 years. I can't wait to start.

This appointment has been agreed by the Prime Minister, and follows an external recruitment competition.

Peter Schofield has held the role of Finance Director General in DWP since July 2016.

Arrangements for appointing a successor to fill his previous role will be announced in due course.

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## **[Press release: Boaters to benefit from £4.4m Nene-regeneration scheme](#)**

The [Nenescape](#) programme, which was launched in November with a £2.6m grant from the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), will see 16 projects carried out by 11 organisations.

The scheme will invest more than £4.4m in the Nene Valley over the next 5 years, delivering projects that will improve access to the water, restore wetland and wildlife habitat, uncover and celebrate the area's history, and develop tourism.

### **Renowned destination**

Among the initiatives is one aimed at boosting the river's reputation as a nationally-renowned destination for boaters.

Led by the [Environment Agency](#), this part of Nenescape will improve access to and from the navigable part of the river, provide better facilities for those cruising it, and make the most of nearby transport links, communities and attractions. A total of £500,000 has been allocated to this part of the scheme.

Proposals include additional moorings, better routes and access for canoeing, improved links with nearby footpaths and cycleways, and more information for visitors about the area's sights, heritage and wildlife.

### **Boost for local economy**

It is hoped this part of the Nenescape programme will attract more boaters and other visitors to the area, boosting the local economy.

Candy Reed, partnership officer for the Environment Agency, said:

The River Nene is one of the nation's greatest rivers – we're delighted to be playing a part in its future. Our work – and that of the wider Nenescape programme – will help everyone get the most

out of this stunning location, which really is a national treasure.

## **Vision for the future**

The Environment Agency's proposals are the result of an extensive study into the River Nene, its surrounding communities, and its economic potential.

In consultation with people who use the river and representatives of the local area, the agency's [Waterspace Study](#) identified opportunities that would improve, protect and promote the Nene, creating a vision for the future that underpins the Nenescape programme and supported the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Amanda Johnson, Nenescape project manager, said:

It is so important to create an inviting environment for boaters to enjoy the spectacular views and heritage offered along the Nene Valley and, equally, to maintain a healthy environment for wildlife to thrive in. We are so pleased to be working with the Environment Agency to deliver these complementary projects and look forward to seeing the benefits for years to come.

At 91 miles, the Nene is the tenth longest river in the UK. It flows through Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, borders Norfolk and ends at The Wash. Around 65 miles of it is navigable.

## **Environmental improvements**

Away from the navigable stretch, the [River Nene Regional Park](#) is taking the lead on a project to improve the ecology of backwaters, with the Environment Agency's help. This [Resilient River](#) element of Nenescape will restore natural features, boost biodiversity, improve water quality and provide safe and supportive habitats for a greater range of wildlife.

Other Nenescape partners include the [River Nene Regional Park](#), the [Wildlife Trust](#) for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, [Natural England](#), [East Northamptonshire Council](#), [Angling Trust](#), [University of Northampton](#), [Nene Park Trust](#), [Rockingham Forest Trust](#), [Destination Nene Valley](#), [University of Nottingham](#), [Screen Northants](#) and [Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust](#).

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## **[Press release: Environment Agency](#)**

# announces £750,000 to tackle single use plastics

The EA's new Plastics and Sustainability team will work with businesses, councils and community action groups to reduce plastic pollution

The announcement follows a pledge to eliminate avoidable waste and crack down on plastics as part of the government's [25-year environment plan](#) launched yesterday.

The pioneer project will see the creation of a new Plastics and Sustainability team across Devon and Cornwall working with businesses, local councils, charities and community action groups, such as the [Bude Cleaner Seas Project](#).

The team will aim to reduce the amount of plastic pollution across land, rivers and the coastline. It will promote better environmental practices across industry, including a reduction in plastic waste from manufacturing, along with community campaigns to clean up pollution locally.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, made the announcement from Bude, Cornwall today where she met with groups and charities who strive to clean up the coastline and keep it free of pollution.

Emma Howard Boyd said:

The government's ambitious plan for the environment is a significant step forward and the Environment Agency's commitment to reduce plastic pollution shows how we are already working to put the plan into action.

Plastic pollution is a threat to our natural environment and our new team promises to tackle it head on. By working together, we can reduce the amount which enters our land, rivers and the sea and protect wildlife for future generations.

The Environment Agency's work with partners to improve [bathing waters](#) has led to a [dramatic improvement](#) in water quality in recent years which has benefited coastal communities, visitors and tourism. A similar partnership approach will be taken by the new Plastics and Sustainability team. The ambitions for the project include:

- A reduction of plastics reaching land, waterways and shorelines.
- Promotion of better environmental practices in business and a reduction in plastic waste from the start of the manufacturing process.
- Increased local engagement to change public behaviour and encourage more community action to tackle pollution.

- Monitoring and research into ways plastics enter and affect the environment, supporting leading academics in the South West.

During Emma Howard Boyd's visit to Cornwall, she also spent time at Bude Haven school speaking to children about their passion for protecting their coastline and met local business owner Tom Dawe to find out how he had made his beachside restaurant more sustainable.

Emma will return to Bude in June to mark [World Oceans Day](#) and to see the project's progress.

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## [News story: UK satellite maker acquired in multi-million deal](#)

Glasgow-based miniature satellite manufacturer [Clyde Space](#) will join [AAC Microtec](#) to combine and strengthen the 2 companies' position in the small and nanosatellite market.

The deal – worth £26 million – is a share and sale purchase agreement. AAC Microtec will own 100 percent of Clyde Space, with Clyde Space's owners holding 49 percent of the Swedish space technology company.

Around 80 people are currently employed by Clyde Space in Glasgow. It is expected that the deal will create new jobs in both Scotland and Sweden, as well as other growth markets.

Completion of the deal is expected by the end of January 2018.

[Gamechangers: Clyde Space](#)

### **Combined companies**

In joining, the 2 organisations have emphasised the complementary elements of each business, the opportunities for research and development (R&D) and cross-selling of products.

Since its launch in 2005, Clyde Space has built up an impressive customer base. It has worked with [Nasa](#), the [US Air Force](#), the [European Space Agency](#) (ESA) and the [UK Space Agency](#) to supply over 2,000 subsystems to small spacecraft.

Clyde Space founder and CEO, Craig Clark said:

AAC's complementing operations, advanced technology know-how, well-developed corporate structure and direct access to capital markets

provide a great platform for the further development and growth of Clyde Space as well as the AAC group's business as a whole.

AAC Microtec CEO Alfonso Barreiro said:

Our joint R&D capacity will be unique in our segment, enhancing our capability to offer state-of-the-art technology and supporting our strategy to develop robust products based on open architecture platforms to increase flexibility, scalability, and efficiency.

## **Small satellites**

Clyde Space is now a significant presence in the CubeSat sector. CubeSats typically weigh just 4 kg and are about the size of a shoe box. They can take images of the Earth, collect data about weather and ocean behaviour and help connect ground-based communications.

The company led the launch of UKube-1 – Scotland's first satellite in space. This was part of a contract with the UK Space Agency with support from Innovate UK.

Its work with the ESA, and a presence on the Innovate UK-supported TechDemoSat mission, also helped Clyde Space to innovate and grow.

Its expertise in small-scale satellites will now enable access to further markets with ACC, offering satellites that range from these small CubeSats to 500 kg satellites.

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## **[Press release: Waste offender prosecuted in Blackburn](#)**

David Holt, former owner of V10 Polymers Ltd, received an eight month suspended sentence, ordered to complete 120 hours of unpaid work and contribute £10K in costs.

A Director of a former Lancashire waste plastics recycling business has been sentenced to 8 months in prison, suspended for two years, and ordered to complete 120 hours of unpaid work after his company breached its environmental permit, failed to comply with enforcement notices and continued to deposit waste despite suspension and subsequent revocation of its permit.

David Holt, 50, of Brockhall Village, Blackburn, was sentenced on Thursday,

04 January 2018 at Preston Crown Court after admitting three environmental offences relating to the operation of the former V10 Polymers Ltd waste plastics recycling business at Rockcliffe Works, Paterson Street, Blackburn.

The Environment Agency became aware of problems at the site in 2012 after complaints from members of the public. At that time, V10 Polymers Ltd was operating a waste plastics recycling business from the Rockcliffe Works site.

Due to concerns about the way the site was being operated, the Environment Agency served a formal notice requiring the company to remove all controlled waste from the site. It also advised the company to apply for an environmental permit if it wished to continue waste operations at Rockwell Works.

The Environment Agency made clear that any permit issued would require storage of combustible waste at the site to be improved and meet minimum fire prevention standards.

David Holt made an application for a permit for the site and included detailed proposals as to how the waste would be stored in the future to meet the requirements of the permit. The Environment Agency issued an environmental permit to V10 Polymers Ltd in response to this application.

However, the first inspection of the facility following the issue of the permit in April 2014 revealed excessive quantities of plastic waste stored in a manner that presented a fire risk and in breach of the company's environmental permit.

Due to the Environment Agency's concerns about the fire risk, a number of joint inspections were undertaken with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services.

The Environment Agency sought to work with Mr Holt, who was in day to day charge of the company's operations, to bring about improvements in the storage arrangements and implement a mandatory fire prevention plan at the site. However, Mr Holt failed to adequately respond to those interventions.

This led the Environment Agency to revoke the site's environmental permit from February 2016, further requiring the company to take steps to remove all remaining waste from the site by 21 March 2016.

The Environment Agency decided to prosecute after the company continued to illegally operate, despite the revocation of its permit, and failed to tackle the fire risk posed by excessive stockpiles of waste.

Environment Agency Officer, Karl Hunter said:

The operators of waste recycling facilities have a legal duty to comply with the requirements of their environmental permit to prevent the risk of harm to people and the environment.

In this case, David Holt deliberately stored an excessive quantity of combustible waste for a number of years without taking the

necessary fire prevention measures. He failed to implement a fire prevention plan and repeatedly failed to act on notices served by the Environment Agency to do so. Even when the Environment Agency revoked the company's permit, he continued to accept waste into the site, illegally.

The fire at the site on 21 August 2017, and three subsequent fires have had a significant impact on local residents and businesses and demonstrated that our concerns were well-founded. In September 2017 we used our emergency powers to create fire breaks within the waste, which significantly reduced the size and duration of subsequent fires. Had David Holt produced and complied with an adequate fire prevention plan, installing fire breaks within the waste, it would have greatly reduced the consequences of fires at the site.

We hope the court's sentencing decision demonstrates the importance of companies adhering to their environmental permits.

On hearing mitigation on David Holt's behalf, the court accepted that David Holt had not been a fly by night operator and had been working hard to try and maintain the business and those employed by it. The court also acknowledged his good character and contribution to his local community.

V10 Polymers Ltd and the previous site owner, Holt Developments Ltd, are now both in liquidation and the site has been sold to Driftdale Limited, an Isle of Man based property development company.

The new owner is responsible for ensuring that waste is removed from the site and correctly disposed of. The Environment Agency is working with Driftdale Ltd and our partner organisations to ensure this is completed as soon as possible. The new owners must also take all necessary steps to prevent fire until waste is removed from the site and the company has constant manned security to minimise the risk of further fires.

If you witness suspicious activity or a fire at the site, please call the emergency services. Environmental incidents should be reported to our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Mr Holt was also ordered to pay £10,000 towards the Environment Agency's costs.