

Press release: Heineken paying £160,000 over pollution incident

The Environment Agency has accepted an offer of £160,000 for an enforcement undertaking from brewer Heineken UK following a pollution incident at their cider factory in Hereford, which saw several thousand fish killed.

Heineken have also paid more than £12,000 to cover the Environment Agency's legal costs.

The incident, at their Bulmer's cider plant in August 2014, was caused when a container of ammonia-contaminated water was emptied to a surface water drain which connected to the Widemarsh Brook.

At the time it was estimated that between 2,000 and 3,000 fish were killed including bullhead, minnows, juvenile chub & dace.

Environment Agency spokesperson Dave Throup said:

It's very unfortunate that a significant pollution of one of Hereford's main watercourses happened as a result of Heineken's actions.

However, we are pleased that the company is planning to make a positive contribution to the county's environment by offering this enforcement undertaking.

As a result of the enforcement undertaking, £150,000 will go to the Wye & Usk foundation and £10,000 to Yazor Widemarsh & Eign Brook restoration project.

Press release: Launch of major new Selly Park North and Selly Oak flood scheme

Yesterday (Thursday 2 February), the Environment Agency and Calthorpe Estates carried out a sod cutting ceremony which marked the launch of the Selly Park North and Selly Oak Flood Risk Management Scheme.

The ceremony was performed by Chair of the Environment Agency Emma Howard

Boyd, Director of Development at Calthorpe Estates, Ralph Minott, and Senior Flood Risk Advisor for the Environment Agency, Mike Adams.

Working as part of the Rea Catchment Partnership, the £4 million partnership project will reduce the risk of flooding to over 150 local homes and businesses in the Selly Park North and Selly Oak area of Birmingham. It will also help keep key highway routes and infrastructure open during times of flood, maintaining vital transport and emergency routes in an area that was severely affected by flooding in 2008, and more recently in June 2016.

The Environment Agency and Calthorpe Estates will be holding public information drop-in sessions for local residents to find out more about the scheme. The sessions will be held on:

Monday 6 March, 2pm – 8pm at

St. Peter's Church

Old Church Road

Birmingham

B17 0BB

and

Tuesday 7 March, 2pm – 8pm at

Christ Church

953 Pershore Road

Selly Park

B29 7PS

The scheme, which will be delivered by the Environment Agency, involves deepening and widening an existing flood water storage area near the Bourn Brook Walkway on Harborne Lane. This will increase the capacity of the storage area and offer wildlife habitat and ecology improvements. Flow improvement works will also be carried out, raising land on two plots to ensure that future Pebble Mill development is safely above the flood level and creating an overland flow route to direct flows to a new bypass culvert running underneath the Pershore Road. This will reduce the risk of flood water getting onto the highway and being routed towards the community. Construction work on site will begin in the next few weeks.

Funding for the scheme has been raised through a mixture of Government Grant in Aid, Local Levy and approximately £2 million in partnership contribution

from Calthorpe Estates.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

This scheme is a great example of how, by working with local partners, we can not only better protect homes and businesses but also deliver other benefits to local people: such as helping to keep vital transport links open.

Ralph Minott, Director of Development at Calthorpe Estates said:

Over nearly four years now we have worked hard within the Rea Catchment Partnership and together we have been able to realise this partnership project, and the improvements that will make a difference to the community here. Part of the works include raising the ground level at the three-acre site of the former BBC Sports and Social Club at Pebble Mill, and using part of the land as a new overflow flood channel, which will create an opportunity to reuse the site that has been blighted by its flooding status. It is testament to the strong partnership between Birmingham City Council, Environment Agency, ourselves and other partners sharing the same ambitions that this project has come to fruition.

Across the West Midlands £65 million of government funding is being invested until 2021. That includes £2.4 million for Selly Park South and £28 million in Perry Barr and Witton in Birmingham.

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Press release: Kerry Ingredients UK Limited paying £127,000 over pollution incident

The Environment Agency has accepted an offer of more than £127,000 for an enforcement undertaking from Kerry Ingredients UK Limited following a pollution incident in the River Cam in Gloucestershire.

The incident, which took place in June 2014, resulted in the deaths of more than 200 fish.

As a result, a financial contribution of £127,975 is being shared between Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (£40,451), Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (£19,766), Severn Rivers Trust (£52,758) and Bristol Zoological Society (£15,000)

The Environment Agency's ability to accept Enforcement Undertakings was extended in 2015 to a far wider range of offences. The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for suitable cases to swiftly restore the environment, improve practices of the offending company and avoid

longer criminal court cases. However prosecutions will still be taken, particularly in the most serious cases.

The Kerry case is one of a number revealed today in which charities will receive more than £1.5 million for projects benefitting wildlife and the environment as a result of enforcement action by the Environment Agency.

Peter Kellett, Legal Director for the Environment Agency said:

We take pollution incidents very seriously and the payments of £1.5 million we're announcing today are the result of our firm but fair enforcement action and will benefit people and the environment across the country.

Enforcement Undertakings allow those who commit offences to restore the environment and to take steps to prevent a recurrence. When appropriate, they allow a quicker resolution than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right with their local communities.

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