

Convicted waste crime offender ordered to pay £2.1 million

- Defendant given 3 months to pay under Proceeds of Crime Act
- Judge says Bruce is a career criminal
- One of the biggest orders gained by Environment Agency

A convicted waste crime offender has been ordered to pay £2,101,708 following a confiscation case brought by the Environment Agency at Worcester Crown Court which concluded on Tuesday 22 December 2020.

Judge Nicholas Cole ordered that John Bruce, aged 48 of Tilesford Park, Pershore, should pay the amount following a case brought by the Environment Agency under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Judge Cole imposed the order on Bruce, who had received a 26-month custodial sentence in May 2018 for operating an illegal waste site at Ridgeway Park Farm, Throckmorton Airfield near Pershore in Worcestershire between 2011 and 2014.

Bruce has been given 3 months to pay or he faces 7 years in jail if he fails to do so.

He was initially prosecuted for 6 offences where waste totalling about 25,000 cubic metres was either dumped, buried or burned at the farm.

The court heard that the defendant had grown his business and had invested in various properties, land and cars. He also owned a large selection of expensive items of heavy plant hire which he hired, bought and resold.

Judge Cole ruled that a Trust set up by the defendant was a sham and that money held in a bank account operated by the Trust, along with a property, formed part of his criminal benefit.

Judge Cole also determined that Bruce had used a bank account operated by a proxy company to hide his ongoing unlawful activity and used it as he would his own business accounts.

James Puzey, the prosecuting counsel for the Environment Agency, said:

The defendant is a dedicated career criminal who has ignored planning and environmental law to run a waste haulage and processing business.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

This is one of the biggest orders the Environment Agency has gained.

The case shows that we're not just content to prosecute those who run illegal waste sites, we'll also come after them to get back the profits they made from their illegal activities and to recoup taxpayers' money spent on pursuing them.

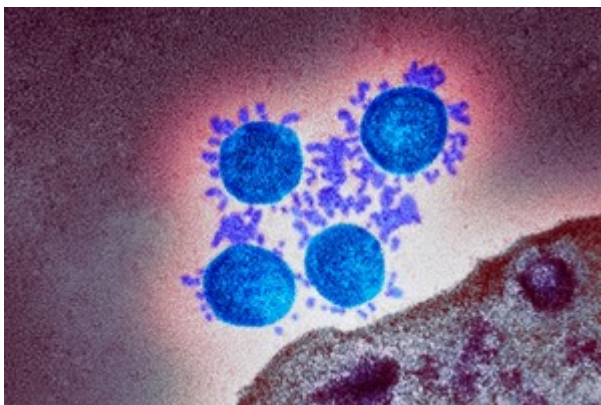
Waste crime can have a serious environmental impact which puts communities at risk and undermines legitimate business and the investment and economic growth that go with it.

We support legitimate businesses and we are proactively supporting them by disrupting and stopping the criminal element backed up by the threat of tough enforcement as in this case.

We continue to use intelligence-led approaches to target the most serious crimes and evaluate which interventions are most effective.

If you see or suspect waste crime is being committed we urge you to report it immediately to CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111.

[Rapid evaluation confirms lateral flow devices effective in detecting new COVID-19 variant](#)



Scientists at PHE's Porton Down laboratory have carried out a [rapid evaluation](#) using clinical and laboratory grown samples containing the VUI 202012/01 variant to test whether it can be detected by lateral flow devices (LFDs) currently in use across the country.

Five LFDs were tested. Each device is either in use as part of mass testing or going through the final stages of validation at PHE. Each device successfully detected samples containing the new variant.

LFDs are one of the new tools being used to help detect COVID-19 and results can be delivered rapidly in under 30 minutes.

The devices can identify people who have high levels of virus but who do not have symptoms and would not otherwise be coming forward for a test. This is important as up to 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus never show any symptoms but may still be infectious.

Whereas the new variant affects the spike protein on the surface of the virus, the lateral flow devices tested work by detecting the nucleocapsid protein that is located inside the virus, which is less likely to be affected.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Senior Medical Advisor to PHE and NHS Test and Trace, said:

This rapid evaluation confirms that lateral flow devices can detect the new variant. This is good news as it means they can continue to be used to find people who have COVID-19 without symptoms who might be unknowingly passing it on.

Lateral flow devices alone aren't a silver bullet for stopping the spread of the virus but we know they can help detect large numbers of positive cases quickly.

When used in combination with other infection prevention control measures, they are another vital tool to help us combat the spread of the virus.

Labs have been issued with guidance to ensure that PCR tests can detect this variant.

DHSC has not identified any issues with detection of the variant in its network of laboratories.

Published 23 December 2020

Last updated 23 December 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 23 December 2020

First published.

[Highways England's A30 Cornwall upgrade to step up a gear in new year](#)

The multi-million pound improvement scheme, given the green light by the Secretary of State for Transport earlier this year, will dual an 8.7-mile section of single carriageway and help to promote economic growth, improve

journey times and increase safety by unlocking one of the last major bottlenecks in the county.

Since March, contractor Costain has been busy with the diversion of utilities, vegetation clearance and ground investigation work to inform the detailed design of the new route ahead of main earthworks and construction of new structures starting in early 2021.

A virtual public information event was held in August, to update local communities on the latest plans and timescales, and work is now set to move into its main works phase next month.

A number of unclassified roads will be closed in areas alongside the existing A30 carriageway, to allow for clearance and construction work, and all residents and businesses directly affected have been informed.

These include roads at Silverwell, closed between 11 January and 6 August, Marazan Farm, closed from 18 January to 28 January 2022, and Trevalso, closed between 19 January and 19 January, with signed local diversion routes in place.

Josh Hodder, Highways England's Senior Project Manager for the A30 upgrade, said:

Improving the A30 between Chiverton and Carland Cross is incredibly important for Cornwall's future, and we're really excited to be stepping up our construction activities in the new year – 2021 is going to be a big year for the A30 project.

It's the only remaining stretch of single carriageway on the A30 between Camborne and the M5 at Exeter, journeys are regularly delayed, congestion often brings traffic to a standstill, local communities are impacted, and as a result the Cornish economy is being held back.

Despite the Covid limitations Costain have progressed the early works well and we're now looking to move the scheme forward in the new year. Our work will become more visible from next month, and although this will have an impact on communities and road users, we are committed to minimising any disruption, and we'll continue to engage with and inform local residents and businesses.

The 8.7-mile road scheme includes:

- a 70mph high-quality dual carriageway
- a two-level junction at Chiverton Cross and a new roundabout to ensure the free flow of traffic on the A30
- a new partial junction at Chybucca built on two levels with west-facing slip roads to provide access onto the dual carriageway from local routes
- new bridges at Tolgroggan Farm, Pennycomequick Lane and over the Allet to Tresawsen road to provide local access

- a two-level junction at Carland Cross with a new roundabout north of the dual carriageway and re-using the existing roundabout to the south
- keeping the existing A30 as a local route with new sections where necessary to provide continuity and connectivity for local communities

With main construction work anticipated to start in the new year, Cherilyn Mackrory, MP for Truro and Falmouth, recently undertook a site visit to learn of the latest plans, timescales and the environmental mitigation in place. She said:

This is such an exciting and much-needed improvement, something that has been needed for a long time and it's brilliant to see shovels in the ground.

Included in the project are nearly nine miles of high quality dual carriageway, provision for pedestrian, cyclists and horse riders, over 12 miles of wildlife proof fencing, eight miles of new Cornish hedgerow, 29 new culverts and wildlife crossings and 10 new underpasses/underbridges.

All in all, a major upgrade for our major road that will not only will improve safety, reduce congestion and improve efficiency, but will also unlock economic growth in this part of Cornwall.

The existing A30 will remain open while the scheme is being built alongside, although traffic management and speed restrictions will be introduced through next year to ensure the safety of both the travelling public and the workforce.

Local communities and road users will be kept informed as the scheme progresses and in the meantime, further information and updates will be available at the [scheme web page](#)

Local residents and businesses can also [sign up for email notifications](#) and there is also a dedicated community relations team available to answer any questions. The team can be contacted by email at a30chivertontocarlandcross@highwaysengland.co.uk.

If you'd prefer to speak to someone, then you can phone the project helpline on 0845 600 2664 or Highways England on 0300 123 5000 and one of the team based on the A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross scheme will call you back as soon as possible.

The cost of developing the scheme is being partly funded by an £8 million contribution from the European Regional Development Fund, with an additional £12 million for the construction phase. The remainder of the cost of developing and delivering the scheme is being funded by central Government.

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Gradings under review for Brent Community Housing

Press release

The GUR lists registered providers whose compliance with the regulator's economic standards is being investigated.



The Regulator of Social Housing reports that Brent Community Housing has been placed on its gradings under review list today (23 December 2020).

The regulator is currently investigating matters which may impact on Brent Community Housing Limited's compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

As a provider with fewer than 1,000 units, Brent Community Housing does not have a regulatory grading.

The regulator's [gradings under review list](#) is available on the website.

Further information

For press office contact details, see our [Media enquiries page](#). For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

Note to editors

1. The GUR lists providers where we are investigating a matter that might result in them being assessed as non-compliant in relation to the regulator's Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

2. The [regulatory standards](#) can be found on the website.
3. RSH promotes a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

Published 23 December 2020

COVID-19 testing for HGV drivers using the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel

COVID-19 test requirements in different countries update, 18 January 2021

Several countries have introduced COVID-19 testing requirements for hauliers. The rules are different in each country. Check the rules before you travel and take the necessary action.

You can get a free COVID-19 test at a [haulier advice site](#) offering testing if you're:

- an HGV driver or crew
- a van or other light goods vehicle (LGV) driver

Kent travel update: 6 January 2021, COVID testing

More COVID-19 testing facilities open for HGV drivers and crew.

HGVs leaving England for France can only cross the Channel with evidence of an authorised negative COVID test, that has been conducted within the 72-hour period before their departure.

Drivers and crew of HGVs, and drivers of LGVs and vans can get a free COVID test at [many haulier advice sites](#).

We strongly advise drivers and crew to get a negative test before they travel

to Kent or other Channel crossing points.

HGV drivers using Dover and Eurotunnel will get fast-tracked past queues if they get tested, and have a valid [Kent Access Permit](#), before arriving in Kent.

Testing is available at Manston Airport and Ashford Sevington in Kent, but there is a chance of severe delays.

To avoid delays, get tested at an advice site before you enter Kent.

COVID testing facilities are available at Manston Airport (Postcode CT12 5FF) for HGV drivers heading to Port of Dover.

Eurotunnel traffic must continue to go via the M20, where HGV drivers without a negative test result or a valid Kent Access Permit will be directed to:

COVID testing is not available at any medical facility in the Kent area. If you visit a medical facility you will be turned away.

You must not leave your vehicle to try and be tested at another site.

Once tested, it will take 40 minutes to get a result.

If your result is negative, you will be directed to your departure point.

If your result is positive, further information will be provided on site and support will be available.

We are doing everything we can as quickly as possible to help you continue on your journey. Thank you for your patience.

Drivers should check [@KentHighways](#) and [Highways England](#) for the latest traffic updates before travelling to Kent.

Kent Access Permits

HGV drivers must have correct documentation, including [Kent Access Permits](#), before arriving in Kent to ensure they can cross the Channel.

HGVs carrying dangerous goods

Drivers of HGVs carrying certain types of dangerous goods must get tested for COVID-19 before arriving in Kent.

The terms of use at Manston Airport and Ashford Sevington prohibit the following loads:

- explosives
- polymerizing substances

- infectious substances
- radioactive substances
- goods that are [high consequence](#) from a terrorism point of view

Drivers of HGVs carrying any of these goods will be refused access to these sites and must get tested for COVID-19 at alternative sites before arriving in Kent.

If you are not sure whether your load falls into one of these categories of dangerous goods, confirm with your company or consignor before departing from the depot.

[Testing is available at various information and advice sites across the UK.](#)

Check whether the motorway service station or truck stop you plan to visit has any restrictions for certain dangerous goods before you travel.

Some companies are also providing private testing for their drivers. Check with your company if this is being offered.