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[Agencies join forces to investigate environmental damage to the River Lugg](#)

Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission mount joint investigation into damage reported on SSSI area of the River Lugg in Herefordshire. Legal notices were served and officers have attended the site to gather evidence.

Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission have joined forces to investigate a series of unconsented works on the river Lugg at Kingsland in Herefordshire. The area has SSSI status due to its environmental importance.

With the support of West Mercia police, officers from Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission came together on the scene last week with officers from Herefordshire Council, to investigate and seek formal evidence for the alleged offences.

A legal notice requiring the works to stop immediately was served on the landowner by Natural England last week, while the Forestry Commission issued a stop letter requiring an end to any further felling work. The Environment Agency also requested no further works to be carried out on the river last week.

Emma Johnson, Natural England area manager, said:

I'm shocked by the destruction I've seen to this very special

river.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest represent our finest places for wildlife and geology and Natural England is responsible for ensuring their protection, working with landowners and managers to achieve this. We have regulatory powers to prevent damage taking place to SSSIs but when this does occur we can take appropriate enforcement action, including prosecuting offenders.

The river Lugg is a very special place due to the ecology of the river and surrounding area. Natural England and our partners are working together to take strong action to ensure a wide-ranging and thorough investigation is carried out.

The three agencies came together to jointly investigate last week following reports of activities including dredging, illegal felling of trees and profiling of the river banks. The works have the potential to cause significant, long term ecological harm to nearly 1.5km of the river.

Keith Jones, area director for the Forestry Commission said:

I'm appalled at what has happened. Trees are a precious natural resource, which is why anyone wishing to fell them must ensure they comply with the Forestry Commission's felling licence requirements.

Dave Throup, area environment manager for the Environment Agency, added:

This is a beautiful part of the world. To see the changes from last week to this is terrible. We're working closely with our partners to ensure this is thoroughly investigated.

Further information:

- Natural England is responsible for ensuring the protection of SSSI areas, the Forestry Commission is responsible for issuing and regulating tree felling permits and the Environment Agency is responsible for flood risk management, fish and spawning and the way rivers function.
- Natural England has regulatory powers to prevent damage taking place to SSSIs and to take appropriate enforcement action, including prosecuting offenders where damage occurs.
- Felling trees without the authority of a felling licence issued by the Forestry Commission, where one is required, currently carries a penalty upon conviction in a magistrates' court of £2,500 or twice the value of the timber felled.
- In certain circumstances, the Forestry Commission is empowered to serve

a Restocking Notice upon anyone committing an illegal felling offence, either with or without having secured a conviction, which compels the individual served to restock the land with trees. Failure to comply with the notice may result in a separate offence being committed, which already carries a penalty of an unlimited fine.

NDA helps schools with remote learning

In a bid to support the educational needs of local students, the NDA has donated 45 laptops in a first for the organisation.

Solway Community School, at Silloth, and Beacon Hill School, Aspatria, were given the equipment so pupils who, would otherwise struggle to access technology, could continue with their learning both at school and at home.

The initiative is also designed to help make a difference to disadvantaged pupils in the community or those who wouldn't otherwise have access to appropriate IT equipment.

Frank Rainford, Group Director of Security and Corporate Services at the NDA, said:

We are delighted to see so many young people benefit from our IT equipment. The laptops will offer additional support to students during these challenging times and will ensure they can continue with their learning remotely.

Our commitment to supporting the communities in which we operate is hugely important to us and we hope this initiative will continue to inspire pupils in their education, ensuring no pupil misses out on an opportunity to learn.

Around 100 laptops in total have been earmarked for donation to local students, as the scheme develops.

The equipment, which has had all the data erased by specialist IT recycling contractors, had been used by NDA employees in their work towards achieving the mission of cleaning up 17 of the UK's oldest nuclear sites.

Judith Schafer, Executive Headteacher for the two schools, added:

It has become vitally important that our students can continue learning remotely. This has been a steep learning curve for teachers and students, made more complex for some of our students who face extra educational barriers because of limited access to

appropriate ICT equipment.

The laptops provided by the NDA will give these students the quality equipment and support they need to ensure they are able to continue their education remotely where necessary.

The donated equipment has also allowed some of the pupils to access additional remote learning support, provided through the NDA's nucleargraduates programme.

An eight-strong team of graduates have been offering online tutoring sessions to support year 11 pupils, who could go on to become the next generation of nuclear professionals.

The scheme has been so well received that a full year group from Beacon Hill School took up the graduates' offer of extra learning support, in subjects including science, technology, engineering and maths.

The scheme will run until September 2021.

Hear from the pupils themselves about why the laptops have made a difference [Cumbria Futures Federation and NDA](#)

[DVLA opening hours: Christmas and New Year 2020](#)

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Paper processing delays at Companies House Cardiff office

News story

We have limited the number of colleagues at our Cardiff office due to an issue with the water supply.



There's currently an issue with our water supply at our Cardiff office. As a result, we have limited the number of colleagues on site even further.

Our digital services are continuing as normal, but it's taking longer than usual to process paper documents, forms and letters. This includes orders for certified copies and certificates.

If you can, [file online](#) to make sure your documents are processed quickly.

We'll keep you updated.

Published 7 December 2020