

Action not Political correctness needed as new Welsh FGM figures revealed



Political correctness or plain incompetence to deal with the problem is leading to a shocking number of girls suffering genital mutilation in Wales, says one of the country's assembly members. The charge comes as new figures show a new case of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is discovered by maternity staff in Wales every week. The figures have been branded 'the tip of the iceberg' by the charity Welsh Women's Aid, who estimate that 2,000 women in Wales are living with FGM and many more are at risk of suffer the abuse. Although the practice of carrying out FGM has been illegal since 1985, to date there has not been a single prosecution for carrying out the procedure in Wales.

Michelle Brown, UKIP's Assembly member for North Wales, has previously spoken in the Senedd out about the need for a better strategy for eradicating FGM, she said: "Since my election a year ago, I have raised concerns about the lack of action against this disgusting crime on numerous occasions."

LABOUR WILL ALWAYS PROTECT FREE PERSONAL CARE

A new report from the charity Age Scotland has revealed that thousands of older people are missing out on free personal care payments because of delays in assessing and arranging care.

The charity also released figures which show that most Scots don't believe we invest enough in health and social care.

The SNP has cut £1.5billion from local services since 2011, including social

care. Scottish Labour would end SNP austerity and invest in our public services.

On May 4th, there are local elections across Scotland. A vote for Labour is a vote for a local champion; while a vote for the SNP is a vote for a councillor who will only fight for a divisive second independence referendum.

Scottish Labour deputy leader and local government campaign manager Alex Rowley said:

"Free personal care is one of Labour's proudest achievements, and we will always fight to protect it.

"These findings are alarming, and must act as an urgent wake-up call for the SNP government.

"It is simply unacceptable that older people are facing delays in care provision and are missing out on payments.

"The SNP has cut £1.5billion from local services since 2011, including cuts to social care. Labour's plans to invest in local services would end the SNP austerity that is harming so many communities.

"Every Labour councillor elected on May 4 will stand up for local communities and oppose further SNP cuts, while every SNP councillor elected will be obsessed about campaigning for a divisive second independence referendum."

Patrick O'Flynn returns as economic spokesman

UKIP Leader Paul Nuttall has appointed Patrick O'Flynn MEP as the party's economic spokesman.



Mr O'Flynn, who served in the same role at the last general election said: "I am delighted and honoured to take charge of UKIP's economic portfolio again.

"I am greatly looking forward to working with our manifesto team to produce the best economic policies for Britain and another robustly costed manifesto which bears down on public sector waste while finding more money for our priorities such as the NHS and defence.

"I shall also be speaking up against tax rises on working people. It is obvious that Philip Hammond is

planning to use the election to free himself from promises made in 2015 not to raise tax.

"I have little doubt that he is planning to bring back the national insurance increases for the self-employed t

hat he was previously forced to abandon."

Press release: Cornwall waste disposer prosecuted for illegally storing asbestos

The owner of a Cornish waste disposal business has been ordered to pay almost £80,000 in fines and costs for illegally storing and treating waste including asbestos at a site near Penzance.

The site manager was also prosecuted and ordered to pay a total of £6,000 in fines and costs. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

Leslie Allen ran a waste operation from a site in Perranuthnoe where waste from various commercial and domestic sources was illegally processed. The site was also used to store hazardous waste including asbestos. The storage and bulking of waste requires an Environment Agency permit.

Truro Crown Court heard how the defendant operated without a permit despite receiving advice and guidance from the Environment Agency and assuring officers he would apply for a permit. The business had traded for some 18 years.

An investigation was launched by the Environment Agency in 2014 after officers suspected Les Allen Waste Disposal Services was still operating illegally. The transfer of waste was often not recorded and when it was, the records were either inadequate or misleading.

Waste was recorded as being taken from a customer direct to an approved site when, in actual fact, it was transported to Perranuthnoe for sorting before being taken to various sites. The business benefitted financially from operating without an environmental permit.

During their investigation, Environment Agency officers recovered asbestos from a pile of waste at the site. It had not been bagged or stored in a secure container as is required by law.

Sentencing Allen and his site manager, Richard Shore, Judge Carr said the handling of asbestos was a 'great responsibility' and the defendants had exposed themselves and others to risk. He said poor record keeping meant we would never know what waste went through the site.

On 5 February 2016, the Environment Agency discovered Leslie Allen was continuing to run an illegal waste operation despite having been interviewed under caution and giving an assurance he would stop. The business was operating a crusher and swing shovel on land near Sunnyvale Farm, Rosudgeon, Penzance and treating mixed construction and demolition waste to raise a ground level without an Environment Agency authorisation.

Sophie Unsworth of the Environment Agency said:

Waste sites must operate within the law and always put human health and the environment above financial gain. This is especially important for sites receiving hazardous waste such as asbestos.

Despite being given repeated advice and guidance by the Environment Agency, the owner chose to continue to operate illegally, receiving, handling and storing waste, without a permit.

Leslie Allen was fined £40,000 for two offences under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 including, between 17 November 2014 and 6 November 2015 and 5 February 2016 operating a regulated facility, namely a waste operation at The Workshop, Perranuthnoe Lane, Perranuthnoe and on land adjacent to Sunnyvale Farm, Rosudgeon, Penzance without an environmental permit.

He was also ordered to pay £14,200 costs and £25,772 under the Proceeds of Crime Act. Allen was warned that failure to pay would result in a 9-month prison sentence.

The site manager, Richard Shore, was fined £4,000 for the same offences and ordered to pay £2,000 costs.

The sentencing hearing took place at Truro Crown Court on 10 April 2017.

The Environment Agency is currently running a [Right Waste Right Place campaign](#) aimed at small to medium sized businesses who need waste advice.

Notes to editor

- Waste crime can cause serious pollution to the environment, puts communities at risk and undermines local businesses. It's a serious issue, diverting as much as £1 billion a year from legitimate business and the Treasury.
- Waste crime is an issue that we and the government take very seriously. The Environment Agency has enhanced powers – introduced in 2015 – to tackle illegal activity at waste sites.
- The Environment Agency stopped nearly 1,000 illegal waste sites from

operating in 2015/16.

- 97% of waste management operators are well run and provide a much needed waste management service. But we take tough action against poor performing companies and those who commit waste crime.
- If you see waste crime report it by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Natural England Board members re-appointed

Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Andrea Leadsom, has reappointed Julia Aglionby, Andy Clements, Teresa Dent and Simon Lyster for second terms to the Board of Natural England.

Additionally, Nigel Reader's second term of appointment has been extended by 12 months from 1 June 2017.

The reappointments will take effect from 14 July 2017 for two years, with the exception of Andy Clements who has been reappointed for three years.

Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the executive through regular Board meetings, committees and groups. They also undertake individual lead roles on relevant issues and with local operational teams.

All appointments to the Natural England Board are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments comply with the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body, set up under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Its remit is to ensure the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. None of the appointees have declared any significant political activity during the past five years.

Natural England Board Members receive £11,808 per annum based on a time commitment of 36 days.

Dr Julia Aglionby

Julia Aglionby is a Chartered Surveyor and Agricultural Valuer who advises on uplands and common land matters and is the Executive Director of the Foundation for Common Land.

She is a consultant with H and H Land and Property and a member of the Newcastle University School of Agriculture's Industrial Advisory Board. Julia has previously been Director of the National Centre for the Uplands and a non-executive director of Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency. She has worked as an environmental economist for the Overseas Development Administration in Indonesia.

Julia lives in Cumbria on a farm run as a social enterprise focusing on local food and agricultural education.

Dr Andy Clements

Dr Andy Clements is a naturalist and ornithologist, and has a science background.

Since 2007 he has been the Chief Executive Officer of the British Trust for Ornithology and he is also a Trustee of National Biodiversity Network and he is the founder Chair, and now member, of the Council of the Cambridge Conservation Initiative.

Andy has previously worked for the government's nature conservation agencies, where he held various senior positions from 1982 until 2006 and helped to establish Natural England.

Teresa Dent CBE

Teresa Dent has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust since 2001, a charity whose remit is wildlife conservation with a special interest in game species. She is also Chairman of the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Partnership, a board member of the Langholm Moor Demonstration Project and a director of the Game and Wildlife Scottish Demonstration Farm.

Teresa is a fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, and previously was a partner with Strutt and Parker working as a farming and business management consultant.

Dr Simon Lyster

Simon Lyster is currently a non-executive Director of Northumbrian Water Group, Chairman of World Land Trust, and Trustee of Rural Community Council of Essex, Kilverstone Wildlife Charitable Trust and Conservation International (UK).

He was previously Chief Executive of Leadership for Environment and Development International and before that Director General of The Wildlife Trusts. Prior to that he was Head of Conservation Policy at the World Wide Fund for Nature UK.

Simon is qualified as a lawyer, a member of the International Council of Environmental Law and author of the book 'International Wildlife Law'. He runs a small farm business at his home in Essex, and is a Deputy Lieutenant

for the county of Essex.