

NEW CLAMPDOWN AGAINST FLY-TIPPERS



The government has unveiled new powers to tackle fly-tipping and plans to combat the dumping of illegal waste. New powers will be granted for the Environment Agency to tackle waste crime, said Defra on Monday (15 January). Meanwhile, a consultation will ask for views on proposals to crack-down on the fly-tipping of household waste. Defra minister Therese Coffey made the

announcement following the launch of the government's 25-year plan for the environment. Waste crime costs the English economy more than £600m in 2015, including lost landfill tax revenues and clean-up costs, said Defra.

It creates severe problems for people who encounter it – and undercuts genuine businesses who dispose of waste responsibly. The Environment Agency will be empowered to lock the gates or block access to problem waste sites to prevent the build-up thousands of tonnes of illegal waste. Operators will be forced to clear all the waste at a problem waste site – not just the illegal waste. In addition, proposals in the consultation include raising the bar required to hold Environment Agency waste permits.

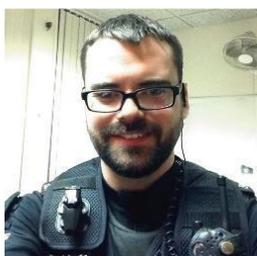
Illegal activities

They also aim to stop criminals hiding illegal activities by requiring them to register low-risk waste operations which are currently exempt from permit requirements. People will be able to check the agency website to see if the recipient of their waste is licensed to take their waste.

To read the full article please [click here](#)

SPECIAL CONSTABLE PROTECTS RURAL COMMUNITIES

NEW to the bulletin! Essex Police reports direct about the valuable work their special constables do for our county.



SC Liam Collins has volunteered his time with us for almost six years. He finds the time for duties alongside a career with Essex Highways and his personal life. He joined our Special Constabulary to gain some experience before applying as a regular officer but decided to remain in his day job and spend his free time volunteering his time to policing.

He started his career with us in Harlow and is now based in Epping Forest and his role involves engaging with and protecting the rural communities of the district. He says: "A lot of my role involves performing some of the same tasks as officers in a town but on a much wider and greener scale with a few unique issues such as hare coursing, theft from farms and the occasional fishing licence check."

Along with the standard training all Specials receive, Liam has been trained to drive vans and 4x4 vehicles to assist him in his role. He is also qualified to use speed detection devices and to seize vehicles. During his career, he recalls a particular moment where he feels he made a difference to the community. He says, "I was the point of contact for a community in my district that had a problem with deer poaching occurring on the common near their homes.



"I was able to patrol the area weekly and to liaise with the local council regarding the damaged access to the area to make the community safer."

Recruitment for Special Constables is currently open, Liam advises to take the opportunity to attend an open day and speak to serving Specials to get a feel for what the role entails. More information about the role can be found on the [Essex Police website](#) and follow us on Twitter @EssexSpecials.

RURAL FAMILIES SPEND £3K MORE ON ESSENTIALS

Rural households spend about £3000 more per year than their urban counterparts on essentials, suggests a study. Inflation when it comes to goods and services in rural areas is also rising twice the average national rate, according to the survey. Heating firm BoilerJuice, which commissioned the research, said the rural cost of petrol and other liquid fuels were among those which had increased most in 2017. They were followed by the cost of pet food, vehicle repairs and electricity, said researchers. BoilerJuice managing director Lee Cowles said inflation was hitting rural areas hard.

Rural households are spending an **extra £80 a year** on landline telephone bills – often because poor mobile phone coverage is poor outside towns and cities.

Mr Cowles said: "This year has been tough for country households, seeing severe inflation rates for petrol and liquid fuels."

He added: "It is so severe that inflation is now hitting rural households up to **73% harder** than urban ones because of their reliance on essentials such as petrol, electricity, heating oil and groceries.

In the past year, some 43% of rural households had struggled to afford their heating oil, said Mr Cowles. Many areas are already working to alleviate fuel poverty. In south-west England, for example, a partnership between the Community Council for Somerset and AF Affinity offers savings every time people fill up their oil tanks. Nine other counties offer a similar service – including Oxford, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Buckinghamshire, Durham, Devon and Northumberland.

AG Affinity general manager Louis Claburn "Fuel syndicates allow homeowners to make significant savings on their heating oil as we are able to bulk buy oil at better prices."

Community Council chief executive Keeley Rudd said: "We are delighted to be able to offer existing and new members a more flexible way of paying for their oil."

For the full article [click here](#)



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

If you are affected by increased fuel prices or know someone that is and would like to know more about the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) oil buying scheme please [click here](#)

THE GOVERNMENT IS FACING RENEWED CALLS FOR FAIRER FUNDING FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES.



It follows the announcement of its provisional local finance settlement, which is due to be finalised over the coming weeks. Announced on 19 December, the provisional settlement included a £15m increase in the Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG). Although the increase irons out the anomaly of a reduction in 2018-19, the Rural Services Network said it was more symbolic than making a huge difference.

RSN chief executive Graham Biggs said it was important to note that only "super sparsely populated" local authorities would receive the RSDG grant. Other rural authorities, which wouldn't receive the grant, also faced higher costs associated with providing public services to sparsely populated areas, he said.

To read the view point of some county council's please [click here](#)

25-YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN: UK UNVEILS LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR 'GREENER FUTURE'



Theresa May outlined earlier this month a vision for a "cleaner, greener Britain", unveiling the long-awaited 25-year Environment Plan which pledges to eliminate all "avoidable" plastic waste by the end of 2042. The document focuses on how the Government aims to improve the UK's resource efficiency, biodiversity, air and water quality, and deliver ecological restoration.

The plan includes confirmation of a consultation on a new environmental watchdog to hold government to account for environmental standards post-Brexit, and set out a new approach to agriculture and fisheries management. The Government has vowed to use a natural capital approach to help the UK see the economic benefits of maintaining healthy environment. It will also create 500,000 hectares of new habitat for endangered species, and provide £5.7m to develop a new Northern Forest. Other key measures include a pledge to investigate the feasibility of an anti-poaching taskforce to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, and extending the UK's network of marine protected areas.

Please [click here](#) to read the full article.

To access the [Government's 25 year plan](#) .

'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment', sets out what we will do to improve the environment, within a generation.

PRINCE'S FUND PLANS RURAL RESEARCH

The Prince's Countryside Fund has announced a major project examining the sustainability of rural communities.

It has appointed Professor Sarah Skerratt of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) to conduct research into the sustainability of rural communities across the UK. Called Recharging Rural, the final report from the project will make recommendations for rural communities in sparsely populated areas. They will seek to enhance their self-sufficiency, viability, and resilience, into 2030 and beyond.

Professor Skerratt will look at the challenges currently faced by rural communities, as well as those which could arise in the future. She will focus on communities that are currently not engaged in 'empowerment frameworks'. The research will seek views from stakeholders via workshops in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England. It will cast the net as wide as possible through a Call for Evidence in February or March 2018.

For the full article please [click here](#)

FREE SUPPORT EVENT IN MID ESSEX FOR PEOPLE WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES

Diabetes UK and Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are holding a free educational event this month for people living with Type 2 diabetes in mid Essex.

The 'Living with Diabetes Day' will be held on Tuesday 30 January at Hamptons Sports and Leisure Meeting Room, Great Baddow. The day aims to help people from mid Essex who have been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in the last few years, or those who have lived with the condition for longer and are looking for extra support and updated guidance.

The event will provide essential information needed to live well with Type 2 diabetes, a serious, lifelong condition which can be treated with diet, exercise, medication and/or insulin.

For further information please [click here](#)

HOW TO BE MINDFUL IN NATURE



A lovely reminder highlighting the wonders of nature, and how it could help encourage being kind to ourselves through mindfulness.

Countryfile explain the various ways that nature and the countryside could be used to help improve physical and mental wellbeing. This January, they look at exploring the benefits of awareness ...

Most of us enjoy being out and about in the countryside but, in the drama of our everyday lives, we often find it difficult to switch off, the humdrum of our inner monologue ever present.

A is for Awareness – to find out more please [click here](#) and enjoy!



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