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Dear Deb,

Welcome to this month's Green Achiever Technical Newsletter.

The good news has been announced that the Supreme Court has thrown out the DECC's appeal against the Court of Appeal's decision about plans to reduce the tariff for solar PV installations, which has resulted in solar projects installed between 12 December 2011 and 3 March 2012 getting the higher tariff rate.

Sainsbury's are also in the news for announcing that they have generated 7.0MWp of electricity with solar panels installed on 115 of their stores, which is enough to power 2,000 homes for a year. They have also committed to renewable energy by recently installing its 26th biomass boiler in the Ely store and five ground source heat pumps in a pilot scheme, hoping to triple this by next year.

Mandy

Mandy Stoker

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***Budget announcement that CRC may be scrapped***

During the budget speech last week, George Osborne made strong indications that the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency (CRC) Scheme may be scrapped.

The chancellor confirmed that despite the government hoping to simplify what he described as a 'cumbersome, bureaucratic scheme which imposes unnecessary costs on businesses', if administration costs could not be reduced, it would be replaced with another environmental tax in the autumn.

In the meantime, CRC participant organisations will need to purchase allowances under the scheme from April costing £12 per tonne of carbon dioxide. The cost of CRC after March 2013 has not been confirmed although the carbon floor price was confirmed as £9.55 per tonne of carbon dioxide for 2014 - 2015.

Other announcements in the budget include -

- A an 80% reduction in climate change levy rates for certain metal recycling processes from 1 April 2012
- A 12.5% increase in landfill tax from 1 April 2013 which will take the price of landfill waste up to £72 per tonne
- A rise in the environmental passenger tax on flights. The Air Passenger Duty (APD) will rise 8% this year

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## Single environmental body for Wales

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Environment Minister, John Griffiths, announced in November that the Forestry Commission Wales, Countryside Council for Wales and Environment Agency Wales are to be amalgamated to form a single environmental body to manage Wales' natural resources. The public consultation for this was launched in February and closes on 2 May 2012. If you wish to have your say, please visit - [http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside/singlebody/;jsessionid=Tf1jPQwJcFHbMIG9FnFSgy5x2RN1nRV7ZFfBTM1jNnYyQHGDTRMr%21-1163452955?lang=en&dm\\_i=2WX,Q39C,1GH1RC,23R0N,1](http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environmentandcountryside/singlebody/;jsessionid=Tf1jPQwJcFHbMIG9FnFSgy5x2RN1nRV7ZFfBTM1jNnYyQHGDTRMr%21-1163452955?lang=en&dm_i=2WX,Q39C,1GH1RC,23R0N,1)

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## Defra plans to scrap over 50 environmental regulations

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A shake up of environmental regulations was announced by Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman, which will see the scrapping of 53 obsolete regulations.

As part of the Government's 'Red Tape Challenge', the decision will lead to 'simpler and smarter' regulations rather than rolling back environmental safeguards. In consultation with green groups and businesses, the changes will see 132 regulations improved, 70 unchanged and 53 scrapped.

The Government hopes to save businesses up to £1bn over five years as well as protecting the environment by making regulations cheaper and easier to follow.

Mrs Spelman said, "We've always said that we were going to keep the vitally important protection of our environment needs. This was about getting better rules, not weaker ones.

"The results of the Red Tape Challenge will be good for the environment and good for business, because as well as upholding environmental protection we will remove unnecessary bureaucracy to allow businesses to free up resources to invest in growth."

[www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

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## Defra plans to improve UK resource use

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The government launched its first Resource Security Action Plan (RSAP) which proposes to fund research projects that focus on resource efficiency and to help organisations understand how to make better use of their resources.

RSAP, which has been funded jointly by Defra and the business department, aims to promote the financial and environmental benefits of improving the use of 'insecure' materials such as timber, palm oil, precious metals and minerals and will highlight the risks posed to business of not adopting more sustainable production processes.

The plan states that greater recycling of products (in particular waste electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE), more efficient use of materials during design and production, the development of sustainable alternatives and the adoption of new business models incorporating greater stewardships of products are vital to improving resource efficiency and other significant business opportunities.

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## PROSECUTIONS

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### **Trago Mills fined for river pollution**

An out of town shopping centre has been fined £11,550 for discharging effluent into a tributary of the River Fowey.

Trago Mills, which is run by Charles Robertson (Developments) Ltd, was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay £1,550 in costs after pleading guilty to discharging poisonous, noxious or polluting matter into an inland freshwater.

The company holds a permit to release biologically treated effluent from its treatment works into the tributary. The works treat waste from the site's café as well as sewage from customer and staff toilets. The waste must reach a certain standard before it can be discharged.

A sample of the effluent taken in July 2011 was of extremely poor quality and breached the terms of the permit. Sewage sludge was visible at the discharge point and levels of suspended solids were present at amounts 14 times higher than the permitted level. There were also high levels of Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD), which indicates the presence of pollution.

The recent hot weather was blamed by the company for causing the sludge blanket in the treatment works to rise without warning. A split in the pipe also caused excessive agitation of the effluent.

Steps are being taken at the Trago Mills site to improve the treatment facility.

### **Recycling company fined for illegal exports to Vietnam**

A Devon businessman has been ordered to pay costs of £2,590 and carry out 150 hours of unpaid work after illegally exporting waste tyres to Vietnam.

Avery Tyre Recycling is allowed to store and treat up to 40 tonnes of tyres per week. Environment Agency Officers noted that at the time of their visit there were approximately four times that amount present at the site.

Paul Avery, the owner of Avery Tyre Recycling, stated that he did not know where his shipments of waste went to or what they were used for. His paperwork showed container movements from the site to Vietnam. Avery was warned not to accept any further tyres at the site and to stop exporting.

A later visit by Environment Agency officers found approximately 225 tonnes of tyres at the site, rendering the site so full it was impossible to enter by vehicle. Avery admitted that his tyre baling machine had broken and that he was aware that the number of tyres on site had increased.

Avery exported an estimated 32,000 waste tyres to Vietnam, an operation that is prohibited under the Transfrontier Shipping Regulations. Vietnam has told the European Union that it does not want waste tyres from Europe.

Illegally exporting tyres allows companies to undercut legitimate waste operators and reduces the raw materials for the UK waste tyre industry. By exporting tyres, Avery has avoided paying £5,521 in fees.

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