



Coalition Agreement - The Environmental Implications

[Green Achiever Workshop, 1st July 2010](#)
[THE COALITION AGREEMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS](#)
[IMPROVEMENTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT](#)
[POSSIBLE PLANNING SIMPLIFICATIONS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY](#)
[EQUIPMENT IN WALES](#)
[PROSECUTIONS](#)

Dear Deb,

The election is concluded and the new coalition arrangements are being worked out as we write this newsletter. So we have included the outline of the Coalition Agreement as it relates to the environment but it's still a 'watch-this-space' for how the new arrangements will translate into practice. There are new Environmental Permitting Regulations that have come into force from 6th April and some prosecutions relating to waste which are worthy of noting. Also, if you're into renewable energy sourcing, and especially if you're based in Wales there is a consultation to make the planning process simpler. For those who may not be thinking about renewable energy sourcing but may be simply trying to reduce their consumption we have our workshop running on 1st July in London.

Mandy Stoker



Green Achiever Workshop, 1st July 2010



Green Achiever Workshop, 1st July 2010 We alert you to another date for our Environmental workshops - Thursday 1st July, 2010, at Holborn Studios, London <http://www.greenachiever.co.uk/workshops/workshop-010710.pdf> We are holding two on one day - the morning session is an introduction to Greening your Business, the legislation and ways and means of dealing with the issues; the afternoon is about Saving Cash and Reducing Energy where we will have experts on-hand to help businesses discuss the real options for improving their energy efficiency. If you are interested in both or either session please contact Kelly Jones at kj@e4environment.co.uk or telephone on 01743 343403.



THE COALITION AGREEMENT - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS



As the new Cabinet appointments are settling into their new offices [Chris Huhne (Lib Dem) appointed Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and Caroline Spelman (Conservative) appointed Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs] the government published The Coalition: our programme for government on 20th May. Two key sections (out of 31 Sections) from the Green Achiever perspective are Section 10, Energy and Climate

Change and Section 11, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The full programme can be viewed at http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_187876.pdf

Below are some key points from each of the two sections:-

10. Energy and Climate Change

The Government believes that climate change is one of the gravest threats we face, and that urgent action at home and abroad is required. We need to use a wide range of levers to cut carbon emissions, decarbonise the economy and support the creation of new green jobs and technologies. We will implement a full programme of measures to fulfil our joint ambitions for a low carbon and eco-friendly economy.

- We will push for the EU to demonstrate leadership in tackling international climate change, including by supporting an increase in the EU emission reduction target to 30% by 2020.
- We will establish a full system of feed-in tariffs in electricity - as well as the maintenance of banded Renewables Obligation Certificates.
- We will introduce measures to promote a huge increase in energy from waste through anaerobic digestion.
- We will cancel the third runway at Heathrow.
- Through our 'Green Deal', we will encourage home energy efficiency improvements paid for by savings from energy bills. We will also take measures to improve energy efficiency in businesses and public sector buildings. We will reduce central government carbon emissions by 10% within 12 months.
- We will encourage community-owned renewable energy schemes where local people benefit from the power produced. We will also allow communities that host renewable energy projects to keep the additional business rates they generate.
- As part of the creation of a green investment bank, we will create green financial products to provide individuals with opportunities to invest in the infrastructure needed to support the new green economy.

11. Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The Government believes that we need to protect the environment for future generations, make our economy more environmentally sustainable, and improve our quality of life and well-being. We also believe that much more needs to be done to support the farming industry, protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable food production.

- We will introduce measures to protect wildlife and promote green spaces and wildlife corridors in order to halt the loss of habitats and restore biodiversity.
- We will launch a national tree planting campaign.
- We will work towards full compliance with European Air Quality standards.
- We will work towards a 'zero waste' economy, encourage councils to pay people to recycle, and work to reduce littering.
- We will reduce the regulatory burden on farmers by moving to a risk-based system of regulation, and will develop a system of extra support for hill farmers.
- We will investigate measures to help with fuel costs in remote rural areas, starting with pilot

schemes.

- We will create a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the planning system. David Cameron visited DECC on Friday 14th May and pledged to make this "the greenest government ever. It's a very simple ambition and one I'm absolutely committed to achieving." Other than the government sign-up to 10:10 (E4environment Ltd are also signatories - more about the 10:10 campaign in the next Green Achiever newsletter) we are waiting to see what this agreement means in practice and specifically of the implications for businesses. As it becomes clear we will let you know.

IMPROVEMENTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

The Environmental Civil Sanctions (England) Order 2010 came into force on 6 April 2010 allows the environmental regulator to impose civil sanctions on a business committing certain environmental offences, as an alternative to prosecution and criminal penalties of fines and imprisonment. The government believes civil sanctions will make environmental law enforcement more flexible and effective for both regulators and businesses. It is designed to be more proportionate and reflect the fact that most offences committed by businesses are unintentional.

At present, the new system applies to England only. Similar regulations for Wales are expected. The new civil sanctions the environmental regulator can use against a business committing certain environmental offences include:

- **Compliance notice** - written notice to take steps to ensure that an offence does not continue or recur.
- **Restoration notice** - written notice to restore harm caused by non-compliance.
- **Enforcement undertaking** - voluntary agreement by business to take corrective action to make up for non-compliance.
- **Fixed monetary penalty** - a low level penalty for minor offences fixed at £100 for an individual and £300 for a company.
- **Variable monetary penalty** - a monetary penalty for more serious offences with a maximum of £250,000.
- **Stop notice** - written notice to stop an activity which is causing harm.

At present, civil sanctions will be used for offences involving harm to water or wildlife, or poor drainage and waste management. Other offences will be added by future legislation.

For more information go to: http://www.netreg.s.gov.uk/netregs/legislation/current/118478.aspx?dm_i=2WX,4LNV,1GH1RC,EBXQ,1

POSSIBLE PLANNING SIMPLIFICATIONS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY EQUIPMENT IN WALES

Welsh government Environment Minister has launched a consultation on proposals to reduce planning requirements for small-scale energy generation equipment, which means it could soon be much simpler for people to install renewable energy equipment such as solar panels and small-scale wind turbines. The consultation is now open and closes on 3rd July. The consultation document can be found at <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/environme ntandcountryside/lasellelectricity/?lang=en>

PROSECUTIONS



Fly-tipping offences costly for offenders

A fly-tipper has been given a four-month suspended prison sentence and ordered to do 120 hours community service and a woman has been fined £480 after waste was found dumped at a fly-tipping hotspot in Spalding, Lincolnshire. The illegal deposits of waste were captured by surveillance equipment installed at the site. Jeffrey Townsend-Sawyer pleaded guilty to fly-tipping

waste. The waste consisted of corrugated sheeting, analysis of which showed it contained asbestos. He was ordered to pay a contribution of £1,500 towards costs and his prison sentence was suspended for a year. Lisa Bryan pleaded guilty to being the owner of a vehicle used to illegally deposit soil. She was also ordered to pay full Environment Agency costs of £1,686. When interviewed she said she had been paying a local worker to dispose of the waste using her vehicle, at an authorised site believed to be near Wisbech. The Environment Agency said: 'The offence could have been avoided had Bryan taken steps to determine where the waste was being taken and whether it was an authorised facility.'

Devon businessman fined for illegal burning of waste

Sand and gravel merchant Joseph McLaughlin has been ordered to pay £4,398 in fines and costs for illegally burning waste plastic and wood at his aggregate depot near Tavistock. The Environment Agency visited McLaughlin's business premises to investigate a report of a bonfire that contained mainly manufactured timber including plastic covered worktops and cupboard doors. McLaughlin was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay £1,398 costs after being convicted of illegally disposing of controlled waste, namely wood and plastic, by burning on land where there was no environmental permit in force.

'This prosecution serves as a warning to businesses. The burning of plastic contaminated waste is unacceptable and can have serious consequences. Potentially harmful chemicals including dioxins can be released into the atmosphere from this type of burning. Waste containing plastic must be sent to a properly licensed site for safe disposal,' said Sarah Taylor for the Environment Agency.

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