

# PBANews



## A New Vision

*Following the move to New Croft, we decided this would be a great time to define PBA's vision and values. The team have decided that:*

*"PBA aims to be the leading UK-incorporated business enabling our people to provide evidence-based ecological solutions, which make positive contributions to conservation, our clients' business, and the communities in which we work."*

*Over the last year, the PBA team has developed a set of core values that define who we are:-*

- we care about people, their potential and their personal development;*
- we are client-focused, enabling our people to provide well-conceived services, which add to our clients' business;*
- we build quality and capability within our teams and resilient networks;*
- we use science and professional experience to deliver best results through innovation, creativity and practicality;*
- we welcome feedback and continuously strive to improve in all that we do;*
- we take great pride in our own and the company's work, and we receive and enjoy recognition for the high quality of our work;*
- we value our professional reputation equally across all sectors including conservation, regulation, industry and knowledge;*
- we work safely, responsibly, sustainably and respectfully.*

### **PBA Applied Ecology Ltd.**

New Croft, Stackhouse Lane, Giggleswick, Settle, North Yorks., BD24 0DL

T: 01729-822063

E: [enquiries@pba-ecology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pba-ecology.co.uk)

Twitter: [@pba\\_ecology](https://twitter.com/pba_ecology)

**To subscribe to future newsletters by e-mail, please sign up [here](#).**

## New PBA HQ – one year on



**This newsletter marks one year since we moved to our new base in Giggleswick.** The Practice has grown and developed so much since then; it is helpful to remind ourselves that we only moved in Spring 2017.

As the Practice grows, so does the range of ecological and environmental solutions that we provide. From our in-house team, we draw upon an ever wider range of knowledge, experience and capabilities. We are also continually investing in the business and our resources. Almost uniquely in this sector, PBA operates seamlessly across terrestrial and aquatic environments.

So what kind of ecological solutions have we provided over the last year? Most frequently these take the form of works that have helped to maintain the smooth-running of engineering, development or conservation projects, and have helped to maintain the confidence of stakeholders representing differing interests (e.g. industry, regulators, conservation bodies) throughout the delivery of each project. The result of this is more efficient project delivery and lower risk of time delays and cost over-runs.

How do we do this? We take a thoughtful, evidence-based and essentially practical approach to every project that we are tasked with. We work hard to maintain the trust and mutual respect of those who we engage with and, most importantly, we are passionate about conceiving and successfully delivering the best practical ecological solution to every problem.

Now that we have settled into New Croft, we would very much like to welcome as many of our clients, colleagues and community as possible - please call in. We also host half-day social events in June and December – we hope you might join us. Do get in touch!

## New Staff



**Alex Gould** joined PBA after an internship at RSPB's Forsinard Flows Nature Reserve, in the Scottish Highlands. Previously, he was a trainee warden at Flat Holm Island in the Bristol Channel.

A Cambridge graduate in Natural Science, Alex is a keen sportsman. He played for several Homerton College teams, as well as representing Somerset County Cricket Club at youth level. He is now making his mark with Settle Cricket Club.

Alex was born and raised on a 400 acre farm in Somerset; from a young age he has lived an outdoor life and been interested in wildlife and the role agriculture has to play in its conservation. He has a particular interest in birds and takes part in local surveys.

**Neil Handy** has joined PBA following 32 years as a fisheries officer with the Environment Agency. Neil brings significant professional experience in this sector, and his farming heritage brings valuable capabilities in practical problem solving for our clients.

Neil is also employed by Manchester Anglers Association as River Keeper for much of the Upper Ribble catchment. He is a very well-respected and active member of the local community.

Neil and Paul have together contributed a number of prime time TV appearances over recent years.

**Tom Renwick** is with us on a professional internship year. Tom is extremely well-organised, motivated and innovative, and he excels in thoughtfully preparing and organising PBA field work.

Born and educated in the Dales, Tom is a high-achieving alumni of Giggleswick School who will be returning to academia this autumn. Tom is a keen cyclist; competing in both cross country and cyclocross races across the region.

## Record fines for water pollution offences

**The potential consequences of water pollution offences have been brought into sharp focus over the last year.** Courts have continued to take a harder line with UK companies, imposing record fines in a series of high profile incidents.

Following a prosecution brought by the Environment Agency, Thames Water was ordered to pay £19.75 million plus costs. This is by far the largest penalty imposed on a water company for an environmental breach. Judge Francis Sheridan, who delivered the sentence, said, *"One has to get the message across to the shareholders that the environment is to be treasured and protected, and not poisoned"*.

In November 2017, Harron Homes was fined £120,000 plus £9,000 costs by Leeds magistrates for polluting a watercourse with silt runoff from a Huddersfield construction site. Mark West, EA Environment Management team leader, said *"Construction companies should consider the potential environmental impact of developments they undertake at the initial planning stage and must adhere to environmental permitting rules and invest in appropriate management systems to prevent their activities from affecting the local environment"*.

On 19 April 2018, Derby Crown Court fined Severn Trent Water Ltd. £350,000, plus £68,000 costs following a river pollution incident, which resulted in an estimated 30,000 dead fish. Speaking after the case, an EA officer involved with the investigation said, *"This is a significant fine imposed for causing pollution to the River Amber. I hope it sends a strong message that it is far more cost effective to avoid these incidents, because we will continue to take companies and individuals to task where they ignore their responsibilities."*



**The largest costs a company suffers come as a consequence of staff at all levels being involved in such cases, and potential reputational damage, particularly for any contractors that are implicated in actionable offences.** PBA is proud that none of our clients has ever faced enforcement action when we are deployed to provide Aquatic Clerk of Works (ACoW) support.



## Working Sustainably

**We are always looking for new ways to improve our sustainability performance**

To help further reduce PBA's CO<sub>2</sub> footprint, over the last year we have invested in more fuel-efficient vehicles. We continue to do our very best to reduce PBA's use of energy and resources when making purchasing decisions and almost everything that we do use we try to reuse or recycle.

We have an especially community-minded solution for PBA's paper and card – this goes to a collection point at Settle Swimming Pool. Over the last year, this local waste collection initiative, which is run by volunteers, has collected a total of 385 tonnes of paper/cardboard, and has raised just over £24,000 towards the running costs of Settle Swimming Pool.



This year has also seen global attention to the issue of microplastics in the aquatic environment, and the need to control plastic waste. In recent months, PBA has reduced its plastic waste by over 50%. This has been largely achieved by switching away from milk in plastic cartons to fresh milk in traditional glass bottles, thanks to doorstep deliveries by our milkman from Dales Dairies.

## Quarry Life Awards

**PBA Director Paul Bradley has been selected to the UK Judging Panel of the international series of "Quarry Life Awards".** The award targets innovative approaches to study and boost biodiversity at quarry sites and aims to raise awareness about mining ecology. New this year is the separate assessment of Scientific and Community project ideas. The "Quarry Life Award" has become a platform to develop and share expertise as well as best practices amongst different stakeholders. The UK winners of these awards will be announced in October 2018.

## Tougher enforcement rules for invasive species

**In February 2018, the Government signalled its intention to introduce a broader range of new penalties for offences involving invasive non-native animal and plant species in England and Wales.** "Tackling Invasive Non-native Species, A New Enforcement Regime" issued by the DEFRA, envisaged the

introduction of new measures, and the strengthening of existing ones, to manage, prevent, detect and eradicate a number of invasive plants and animals.

This new consultation proposes a new range of civil and criminal penalties for offences including keeping, transporting or permitting to grow or reproduce any listed species. The wide range of civil sanctions proposed means an equally broad range of potential costs for those falling foul of the new regime, both in terms of any punitive fines which may be applied and also any required restoration costs.

In the context of commercial transactions and operations, adequate due diligence should be carried out to ascertain the presence of any invasive species which may require treatment, management or eradication if civil or criminal penalties are to be avoided. This should include making relevant enquires and, where necessary, instructing appropriate environmental surveys.

## Japanese Knotweed

**Scientists working at Swansea University investigated methods for treating the invasive non-native species Japanese knotweed.**

In recently published research, extensive experiments found that whilst glyphosate-based treatment over a number of years provided best control, no treatment option



can completely eradicate Japanese knotweed. To maximise the success of control, timing of treatment is best incorporated to work with the plant's phenology (annual growth and flowering patterns) and appropriate effort longer-term is usually better than a 'quick-fix' method.

**PBA uses evidence, such as this new research, when preparing management plans specific to sites and projects for controlling invasive species.**

## Staff News



**Daniel**, Neil & Helen Wilkinson's son, now 8 months old, is devouring all food in sight and currently waking mum and dad up at 4.30am ready to play. He recently attended his first cricket match in Settle which PBA sponsored.

**Ian Fleming** will be retiring at some point over this coming year. A much-loved member of the team, Ian has been with PBA since the Practice moved to Settle in 2010. With significant previous professional experience in personnel and contract management, Ian has helped to embody within this Practice such important qualities as fairness, equality, respect and humility. Ian has been fundamental in helping the Practice attain an impressive portfolio of business accreditations. Perhaps most importantly of all, Ian has been a true friend and trusted confidant of everyone who has shared these last eight years of collective endeavour. We wish Ian & Sheila our very best wishes for a long and happy retirement together.

## New Technology

We have continued to invest in PBA's technological resources and know-how. Thanks to a grant from the European Regional Development Fund Digital Enterprise Scheme, we replaced PBA's ageing server this year, with a much more powerful & energy efficient model.

**PBA's surveys are increasingly employing digital technology to enhance our capabilities.** Geo-referencing, mapping tools and 'on-the-go' data input are further improving the accuracy and efficiency of our field-based surveys. Our bat surveys now use a range of high-tech survey gear, and continuing investments in our aquatic services mean that **PBA is now equipped with perhaps the UK's most advanced range of electrofishing equipment.**

## Investors in People

**We are proud to be an Investors in People (IIP) accredited Practice.**

The IIP accreditation recognises PBA's exceptional performance in leading, supporting and managing our employees. We also aim to facilitate a range of potential pathways to rewarding careers, either within this Practice, or associated with the wider PBA network. Over the last year, we have hosted week-long work experience students from three local schools and three leading universities. Every summer, we also co-host a small number of academic research students.



## Quality and Safety

**ISO 9001 accreditation helps PBA**

demonstrate to our clients that we can offer services of consistently good quality. In March 2018, we completed transition to the new ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System standard, which places more emphasis on leadership and management commitment, has a greater emphasis on risk-based thinking.



Our accreditation with Contractors Health & Safety Assessment Scheme was reassessed in January. CHAS was a key developer of the core criteria which supported the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM). PBA's CHAS accreditation helps reduce duplication in procurement for many of our clients - as CHAS accreditation is accepted as meeting the requirements of stage one health & safety assessment. PBA is also in the process of upgrading to Gold-level membership of Constructionline, and we are scheduled to be assessed for SSIP certification.

PBA is frequently deployed to tasks with particular safety considerations. For working on/near water, we now routinely put our staff through water safety/rescue training & qualifications.

