

PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo until Friday 24th November 2023

NEW CHAIRMAN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Michael Topham, Chief Executive Officer of Biffa, has today (Friday 24th November) taken over chairmanship of the Environmental Services Association (ESA), succeeding Gavin Graveson, who steps down at the end of a three-year term.

The handover of chairmanship was recorded at the association's Annual General Meeting today ahead of the Annual Lunch in Mayfair, London.

The ESA is the trade association for the recycling and waste management industry in the United Kingdom. It represents nearly 70 of the country's largest waste management companies, who collectively employ a 50,000-strong workforce - providing essential frontline services to more than 17 million people every day.

Gavin Graveson, Senior Vice President, Northern Europe, for Veolia Group became ESA Chairman in December 2020 and has led the association through an eventful and busy three years for the sector and wider country.

In particular, Gavin's tenure saw the development and publication of the ESA's ambitious sectoral Net-Zero strategy; reports and guidance documents to support Biodiversity and Social Value; substantial work and pressure on policy-makers (including an independent report by Eunomia) to tackle waste crime, and ongoing policy development work around the *Government's Resources and Waste Strategy* – the main details of which have all now been announced.

Executive Director of the ESA, Jacob Hayler, said: *"Gavin took over as Chairman in the midst of the global pandemic, which was followed by ongoing economic and political volatility both at home and abroad. However, despite this challenging backdrop, the ESA has successfully delivered a comprehensive work programme on key issues for the sector during Gavin's tenure – particularly on setting an ambitious Net-Zero roadmap for the sector, tackling waste crime and ensuring the Resources and Waste Strategy will deliver on its intended outcomes. I would like to thank Gavin for his leadership and input over the last three turbulent years.*

The ESA team and I look forward to working with Michael and welcome him to his new additional role as ESA Chairman, as the sector moves into a "delivery phase" of rolling out the changes required by Defra's resources and waste reforms."

Biffa CEO and incoming ESA Chairman, Michael Topham, said: *"After a challenging period, the implementation of the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy is about to happen. These changes to how we recycle, together with the impending inclusion of EfW in the Emissions Trading Scheme, mark the biggest changes for the recycling and waste sector in a generation. ESA members stand ready to deliver this*

£10 billion investment in the circular economy, but it will only happen if long-term, stable, investible policies are established.

The ESA looks forward to working with Government and other stakeholders to achieve this, enabling ESA members to mobilise and deliver this enormous transition.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

A. The Environmental Services Association (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK’s resource and waste management industry. Our members are directly delivering the UK’s transformation to a more circular economy and are leading the sector’s efforts to decarbonise recycling and waste management operations.

The ESA works with government, regulators and the public to deliver sustainable and high-performing waste and resource management solutions for the UK. Our strategic priorities are to set high operational standards for the sector; to deliver more recycling and focus on up-stream interventions to eliminate waste; and to decarbonise our sector by 2040. You can find out more about the ESA and our members’ work in our **Annual report for 2022**.

B. Michael Topham is Chief Executive Officer of Biffa. A brief biography for Michael can be found **here** and a recent image is appended to this press release.

C. For further details please visit www.esauk.org

Media contact

ESA Press Office: 020 7591 3214

Email: b-johnson@esauk.org