

# Press release: Heineken paying £160,000 over pollution incident

From:

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3 February 2017

The Environment Agency has accepted an enforcement undertaking from a major brewer following a pollution incident on a Herefordshire Brook.

The Environment Agency has accepted an offer of £160,000 for an enforcement undertaking from brewer Heineken UK following a pollution incident at their cider factory in Hereford, which saw several thousand fish killed.

Heineken have also paid more than £12,000 to cover the Environment Agency's legal costs.

The incident, at their Bulmer's cider plant in August 2014, was caused when a container of ammonia-contaminated water was emptied to a surface water drain which connected to the Widemarsh Brook.

At the time it was estimated that between 2,000 and 3,000 fish were killed including bullhead, minnows, juvenile chub & dace.

Environment Agency spokesperson Dave Throup said:

It's very unfortunate that a significant pollution of one of Hereford's main watercourses happened as a result of Heineken's actions.

However, we are pleased that the company is planning to make a positive contribution to the county's environment by offering this enforcement undertaking.

As a result of the enforcement undertaking, £150,000 will go the Wye & Usk foundation and £10,000 to Yazor Widemarsh & Eign Brook restoration project.

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# Press release: Launch of major new Selly Park North and Selly Oak flood scheme

Yesterday (Thursday 2 February), the Environment Agency and Calthorpe Estates carried out a sod cutting ceremony which marked the launch of the Selly Park North and Selly Oak Flood Risk Management Scheme.

The ceremony was performed by Chair of the Environment Agency Emma Howard Boyd, Director of Development at Calthorpe Estates, Ralph Minott, and Senior Flood Risk Advisor for the Environment Agency, Mike Adams.

Working as part of the Rea Catchment Partnership, the £4 million partnership project will reduce the risk of flooding to over 150 local homes and businesses in the Selly Park North and Selly Oak area of Birmingham. It will also help keep key highway routes and infrastructure open during times of flood, maintaining vital transport and emergency routes in an area that was severely affected by flooding in 2008, and more recently in June 2016.

The Environment Agency and Calthorpe Estates will be holding public information drop-in sessions for local residents to find out more about the scheme. The sessions will be held on:

Monday 6 March, 2pm – 8pm at

St. Peter's Church

Old Church Road

Birmingham

B17 0BB

and

Tuesday 7 March, 2pm – 8pm at

Christ Church

953 Pershore Road

Selly Park

B29 7PS

The scheme, which will be delivered by the Environment Agency, involves deepening and widening an existing flood water storage area near the Bourn Brook Walkway on Harborne Lane. This will increase the capacity of the storage area and offer wildlife habitat and ecology improvements. Flow improvement works will also be carried out, raising land on two plots to ensure that future Pebble Mill development is safely above the flood level and creating an overland flow route to direct flows to a new bypass culvert running underneath the Pershore Road. This will reduce the risk of flood water getting onto the highway and being routed towards the community. Construction work on site will begin in the next few weeks.

Funding for the scheme has been raised through a mixture of Government Grant in Aid, Local Levy and approximately £2 million in partnership contribution from Calthorpe Estates.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

This scheme is a great example of how, by working with local partners, we can not only better protect homes and businesses but also deliver other benefits to local people: such as helping to keep vital transport links open.

Ralph Minott, Director of Development at Calthorpe Estates said:

Over nearly four years now we have worked hard within the Rea Catchment Partnership and together we have been able to realise this partnership project, and the improvements that will make a difference to the community here. Part of the works include raising the ground level at the three- acre site of the former BBC Sports and Social Club at Pebble Mill, and using part of the land as a new overflow flood channel, which will create an opportunity to reuse the site that has been blighted by its flooding status. It is testament to the strong partnership between Birmingham City Council, Environment Agency, ourselves and other partners sharing the same ambitions that this project has come to fruition.

Across the West Midlands £65 million of government funding is being invested until 2021. That includes £2.4 million for Selly Park South and £28 million in Perry Barr and Witton in Birmingham.

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**[Press release: New charity](#)**

# investigation: The Suyuti Institute

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Part of:

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into The Suyuti Institute (registered charity number 1151600).

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into [The Suyuti Institute \(registered charity number 1151600\)](#). The inquiry was opened on 16 January 2017.

The charity has objects to advance the Islamic Faith through education and distributing literature.

Concerns were raised with the Commission about a lecture given by a trustee of the charity and whether the content of that speech was appropriate and furthered the charity's purposes. As a result of these concerns the regulator met with the trustees and conducted a visit and books and records inspection at the charity on 1 November 2016.

At the visit, the Commission learnt that the charity had taken over a private trust linked to one of the trustee's late mother, which included all of its assets and liabilities. The Commission has specific concerns relating to the management of conflicts of interest and whether the trustees have acted in the best interests of the charity to accept the assets and liabilities of the private trust. The Commission is also concerned that this decision has exposed the charity to significant financial risk.

As a result of these serious concerns the Commission has issued an order restricting transactions from the charity's bank account and directed the trustees to provide information and documents to the Commission – [see notes to editors](#).

The inquiry will examine the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees, in particular:

- whether the trustees have properly exercised their legal duties and responsibilities under charity law in the administration of the charity
- the financial management of the charity, in particular with regard to the decision to accept the assets and liabilities of the private trust
- whether there has been any private benefit to the trustees of the charity
- whether the trustees have operated the charity in furtherance of its charitable objects for the public benefit
- whether there has been misconduct and/ or mismanagement by the trustees

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on its website.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 09/17

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### Notes to editors

1. The order to freeze the bank accounts of the charity was made on 18 January 2017 under section 76 (3) (d) of the Charities Act 2011. The Direction to the trustees to provide information to the Commission was made on 19 January 2017 under section 47 of the Charities Act 2011.
  2. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
  3. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
  4. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
  5. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.
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## [News story: Government announces efficiency savings for 2015/16](#)

The Government saved £3.3 billion for the taxpayer during the last financial year through greater efficiency in the procurement of common goods, services and information technology; more efficient management of office space and the disposal of surplus government property; and through tackling fraud, error and uncollected debt in welfare spending.

These savings were delivered across government and the Cabinet Office is continuing to improve capability and performance in key areas, helping departments collaborate to save money on everything from web servers to office buildings.

Savings in 2015/16 consist of:

- £1.2 billion of operational savings from reforming government's commercial activities through improving government's ways of purchasing, improving the provision of specialist expertise in complex commercial procurements, negotiations and disputes, and reducing the cost of the government's property estate
- £339 million through setting standards and providing assurances through the Government Digital Service
- around £805 million in savings from a number of cross-government reform packages aimed at tackling fraud, error and debt
- £973 million through the sale of surplus government property.

After the progress made in the last Parliament, where the Government announced total savings of £52.2 billion\*, many of the more straightforward savings have already been achieved.

Some of the larger savings that the Government is targeting will only be achieved by total service transformation, much of it enabled by digital. That means making some early investments at the beginning of this Parliament to achieve considerable gains at the end.

This is the first time the Government has measured efficiency including savings delivered in the current Parliament and represents a significant step toward enabling greater efficiency in the way government works for years ahead.

Minister for the Cabinet Office Ben Gummer said:

Ensuring that our public finances are on a sustainable path is vital to securing a strong and stable economy that works for everyone. We have made significant steps forward in tackling fraud, selling off redundant government property such as the former Civil Service College in Sunningdale and making better use of modern digital technology to drive savings.

The Government is committed to delivering value for money for taxpayers and the Cabinet Office will continue to drive savings right across departments as set out in the Spending Review in 2015.

The Government is maintaining relentless focus on efficiency. It is committed and is on-track to deliver the manifesto commitment of £15 billion to £20 billion of annual efficiency by the end of the Parliament.

Ongoing improvement in efficiency should be part of business-as-usual activity across the public sector.

As announced at Budget 2016, the Government intends to identify an additional £3.5 billion of savings in 2019/20. This will be done through the Efficiency Review, which will report in autumn 2017. The Efficiency Review will look to embed a culture where incremental improvements in the efficiency of public

services are made year on year.

## **Savings examples**

### **Commercial**

We saved £1.06 billion in 2015/16 from reforming government's commercial activities. This includes £182 million from improving the way departments across government purchase common goods and services, encouraging collaboration to achieve better value for money, and £879 million from improving the provision of specialist expertise in complex commercial procurements, negotiations and disputes.

For example in the Department of Health the Complex Transactions team has worked on the negotiation of extension to current NHS Supply Chain contract with significantly improved terms that deliver value to the NHS customers through savings in product costs. This work realised savings in 2015/16 of £76.7 million.

### **Digital**

The Government Digital Service (GDS) helps government departments work together to transform government, meet user needs and deliver value for money in the purchase of technology goods and services. Through setting standards and providing assurance, GDS realised £339 million in 2015/16 from controlling costs and the implementation of their ICT strategy by Departments.

For example, GDS Spend Controls, in line with the Government's Technology Code of Practice, have collaborated and helped the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to save Her Majesty's Government over £875,000 in 2015/16. This was achieved across several of their digital services where GDS helped to either deliver the outcome in a more efficient way or reduce spend on part of a whole project because the user need had changed.

### **Fraud, error and debt**

The Fraud, Error, Debt and Grants (FEDG) function works with Government departments to identify initiatives that will reduce financial loss and waste in this area. It also agrees cross-government standards for fraud, error, grant and debt activities. Across Government, several specialist programmes, mainly focused in DWP and HMRC, realised benefits worth £803m in 2015/16. Some of these have been led by programmes within departments, others by programmes, such as the Debt Market Integrator and National Fraud Initiative, that are led by the Cabinet Office.

### **Property**

The Government Property Unit (GPU) has central oversight over all government land and property. GPU work across the Civil Service to create a more effective, efficient, and better value government estate. In 2015/16 GPU

facilitated the selling of surplus property worth £973 million and fully realised annual savings of £95 million from exiting (in 2014/15 and 2015/16) property leases and negating running costs such as rent, rates and facilities management.

For example, the sale of the famous Admiralty Arch building that straddles the entrance to the Mall and Trafalgar Square generated capital receipts worth £66 million in 2015/16.

## **Information about the savings data**

The Cabinet Office ensures departments work together to address waste and improve accountability across a range of areas, including IT, procurement and property.

In the last year of the previous Parliament the Cabinet Office helped departments across Whitehall save £18.6 billion against a baseline year of 2009/10. For this savings data, as much as possible we updated the baseline year against which we measure savings to 2014/15. This is to reflect the efficiency and reforms made in the previous Parliament which have been embedded into how government works.

These savings figures are not national or official statistics: they are based on management information evidence in department reports and other supporting evidence.

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## **[News story: GC represented at international event on food fraud and food allergy](#)**

Close to 100 participants from Europe, Canada, north and south America, Australia and Hong Kong attended an exciting and informative conference on food fraud and food allergy in Bari, Italy, on 26th and 27th January 2017. The conference was organised by Prof. Roland Poms of [MoniQA](#) (International Association for Monitoring and Quality Assurance in the Total Food Supply Chain) and Dr Linda Monaci of [ISPA](#) (Istituto di Scienze delle Produzioni Alimentari).

Michael Walker, of the Government Chemist Programme in [LGC](#), delivered a keynote talk 'Food detectives: what it takes to trace food fraud' in the Food Fraud section of the conference. Michael also discussed allergen analysis with a talk entitled 'What do we need to measure? How should it be reported? And how low can we go?' in the Food Allergen Management section.

Food fraud and food allergen management are topics that rarely share one



event, but have a lot in common. Appropriate food labeling and consumer trust are very important issues which need to be managed by the food industry. Both may have strong impact on the health and socio-economic status of a society. They both need adequate communication and demand the use of comprehensive databases and sophisticated analytical methods. Both require a collaborative effort from science, industry and the regulatory environment.

The conference brought together participants from the food industry, ingredient suppliers, agricultural producers, retail and trade, consumer organizations, private and public analytical laboratories, representatives from R&D, marketing, quality control, legal departments, as well as food scientists, technologists, analytical method providers, regulatory bodies, authorities and the media. There were productive discussions and sharing of ideas that, it is hoped, will assist stakeholders to address the problems in these interrelated areas.

Notes from the event are collected in the attached document.