

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust benefits £23,645 from waste packaging offence

This financial contribution (£23,645.59) is from an EU offered to the Environment Agency by Edmo Ltd, a company based in Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, who specialise in aluminium fabrication.

The company admitted between 1998 and 2016 it had not been registered as a producer of waste packaging regulations.

Company officials said they were unaware they had to register under the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations.

These regulations ensure packaging materials such as cardboard, plastics and glass are recycled and do not end up in landfill.

Companies with a turnover of £2 million or more and which handle more than 50 tonnes of packaging per year must ensure a certain percentage of waste packaging is recycled.

They do this by registering with a packaging producer compliance scheme or directly with the Environment Agency and funding the recovery and recycling of packaging waste.

Amy Currie, a regulatory officer for the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow businesses who fail to comply with legal requirements or pollute the environment to come into compliance or positively address and restore any harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

The Environment Agency is increasingly using this method of enforcement for suitable cases to restore and improve the environment, change behaviour and improve practices of the offender.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

A spokesperson for the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust said:

The donation has enabled us to make significant improvements to a number of our nature reserves across Herefordshire.

The donation has funded the following:

- At Tittley Pool nature reserve, £2,500 to fence around grassland area to allow livestock to graze and to protect the sensitive lakeside vegetation from sheep.
- At Clay Vallets, an ancient woodland in the north of the county, we have, again, been able to invest in fencing and gates to make the reserve's boundary stock proof, spending £398.
- The Sturts is a grassland reserve rich in diverse species of wildflower and grasses. Here, £1,500 had paid for a local farmer to bring their livestock to temporarily graze over the autumn and then cut the hay for us in the summer.
- The remaining £19,247 is planned to be spent on purchase of land at Common Hill, near Fownhope. This land is adjacent to another of our reserves which will extend the site and restore limestone grassland for wildlife.

Notes for editors

Enforcement Undertakings (EUs) enable firms and individuals who have damaged the environment or operated outside of legislative requirements to offer to complete actions which will address the cause and effect of their offending, including making a payment to an appropriate environmental project.

EUs can be offered for offences including polluting rivers, breaching permit conditions designed to protect communities, or failing to register and comply with recycling/recovery obligations. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the actions offered by the offender are acceptable.

Where the breach does not have a direct impact on the environment, such as Packaging Waste Regulations offences, EU offers must contain actions that will protect, restore or enhance the environment.

Environmental incidents should be reported to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[UK commits to support Sudan's future](#)

Press release

The UK Government today announced that it will help Sudan, one of the world's most fragile countries, rebuild its economy.



UK aid support to WFP will help provide better nutrition and improved livelihoods for families in Darfur.

The UK Government today announced that it will help Sudan, one of the world's most fragile countries, rebuild its economy and take the next step towards establishing peace and democracy.

Speaking at a multinational pledging conference on Sudan today, UK Minister for Africa James Duddridge repeated the UK's commitment to work with the Sudanese government for a successful transition to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous country.

Sudan's economy is in urgent need of reform and the secondary impacts of coronavirus are set to inflict further damage on the Sudanese people. The UK Minister for Africa also today announced the UK's investment of £150million which will help reform the country's economy, stabilise inflation and relieve poverty.

Today's commitments build on the UK's humanitarian support and backing to tackle the coronavirus pandemic in Sudan and will help bring economic stability, spending less on costly and inefficient subsidies and spending more on health and education. A stable economy will attract vital foreign investment and trade the country needs to become self-sufficient and transition to a peaceful and democratic society.

Today's multinational pledging conference saw other international partners and countries including the EU, Germany, Sweden and France pledge their support for Sudan.

UK Minister for Africa James Duddridge said:

"Today's announcement is an investment in Sudan's future, helping the Sudanese government to build back better from the coronavirus pandemic. It will help build a peaceful, prosperous, healthy future for the people of Sudan, which will also benefit the wider region."

- The new funding announced today will be paid over the next 12 months, with all activities carefully reviewed by the UK Government to ensure they deliver the benefits needed for the people of Sudan and deliver value for money.
- Today's announcement is the latest in a series of funding pledges by the

UK Government for Sudan. It has already given £5million to support Sudan's coronavirus response and £2million to help Sudan prevent locust plagues.

- The pledge was made at the Sudan Berlin Conference, hosted virtually by the German government

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[Response to article published in the FT on Wednesday 24 June on ventilators](#)

This Government continues to welcome constructive criticism and scrutiny, but believes that it is also important that it can set out its own case fairly. The newspaper article, which repeats misleading assertions to which the Government has previously responded, did not include the on the record Government spokesperson quote addressing the claims which was sent to the newspaper.

This is the third time the Government has chosen to respond to inaccurate and misleading articles on this topic in the Financial Times, and this response should be read in conjunction with the other two responses, [here](#) and [here](#).

Scientific modelling at the start of the coronavirus crisis suggested that the NHS was going to run out of ventilators. The Financial Times itself echoed these concerns, writing in its Leader of 13 March: "While the NHS insists it is fully prepared, moreover, some officials question whether enough is being done to provide the extra intensive-care facilities, ventilators and emergency staff needed. To allow for the possibility that a large part of the population will, over time, fall ill, preparations on a scale rarely seen in peacetime will be more vital than ever".

As a result of these concerns the Government took action, launching a [Ventilator Challenge](#) with a [call to arms to British manufacturers and medical device companies to step up production of existing designs and design new ventilators from scratch](#).

The Ventilator Challenge formed a vital part of our strategy to increase the number of ventilators available to the NHS. In just three months, over 9,700 new machines have been produced through the Ventilator Challenge and are available to the NHS frontline. This represents nearly double the number of ventilators that the NHS had outside operating theatres before the crisis arose. This is a significant success. Thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of the British people, and industry in joining the national effort, the progress of the disease has not placed the demands on NHS ventilators which scientists had predicted several weeks ago. The NHS has had sufficient

ventilators at every stage of the Covid-19 crisis.

As part of the Challenge, specifications for new models of ventilators were developed. These specifications for Rapidly Manufactured Ventilator Systems [RMVS] were written by expert clinicians and owned by the relevant regulator the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The specifications were clarified and updated throughout the pandemic to reflect the evolving scientific and clinical understanding of Covid-19.

Claim:

The government's drive to build thousands of basic ventilators risked wasting resources and delivering worse patient outcomes.

Response:

The Government's strategy to increase ventilator capacity was always focused on three pillars – [as set out previously](#) – first, procuring more devices from existing manufacturers overseas; second, scaling up production of existing ventilator suppliers, and third, working with industry to design and manufacture new devices. The Challenge has always been focused on the second two pillars of the strategy. This has so far produced and made available to the NHS; 8,291 Penlon ES0 2, 350 Breas Vivo 65, 575 Breas Nippy 4+ and 504 Smiths paraPAC. These are not 'basic' ventilators.

Every patient who has required a ventilator during the pandemic has had access to one. Although some may choose to criticise the Government's approach, the Government's entire motivation for the Challenge was the belief – informed by scientific modelling – that demand for ventilators was expected significantly to exceed supply. The Government's three pillar strategy means that the NHS now has access to over 22,000 mechanical ventilators.

Claim:

Concerns were raised about the dangers of "over-prioritising basic designs". British industry was asked to come up with simple designs for mass production.

Response:

The Government has never over-prioritised basic designs. The four devices in production are not basic designs and have gone beyond the minimum requirements set out by the RMVS specification. Three already have a CE-mark demonstrating conformity with industry-standard health and safety requirements.

Claim:

There was a risk that rudimentary ventilators might harm patients.

Response:

All medical devices must go through stringent testing and regulatory

clearance. The regulator, the MHRA, would never have given their approval if there was deemed to be a risk to patients.

Claim:

'In the memo from the Clinical & Technical Advisory team to the MHRA, dated April 5, the panel warned that pursuing basic designs "will result in the need for more ventilators, more oxygen, more drugs, more ventilator days, more staff and almost certainly worse patient outcomes".

Response:

The 'Clinical & Technical Advisory team' are not advisers to the MHRA. They had no role in advising on the specification for the design of ventilators. The group were working with Cambridge Consultants designing one of the Ventilator Challenge devices, the Veloci-vent.

Claim:

"The government ran a 'village hall' type competition to reinvent a complex medical device."

Response:

To suggest that it was a 'village hall' type competition undermines the extraordinary effort and achievements of everyone involved, including clinical experts and the medical regulator the MHRA. The Government is hugely grateful for the dedication, ingenuity and collaboration shown by industry in coming together as part of the national effort to protect the NHS and save lives.

As has been set out above, four Challenge devices are currently in production, while another four devices were deemed 'credible' by clinicians, including three of the novel designs.

Claim:

'If I was in government I would have gathered the people who could do this.'

Response:

This was precisely the approach that the Government sought to adopt. As part of the Ventilator Challenge the Government paired existing medical device manufacturers like Penlon, with large British manufacturers including Surface Technology International Ltd, McLaren, Airbus and Ford to scale up their production. 8291 Penlon ESO 2 devices have been produced and made available to the NHS through the Ventilator Challenge.

Claim:

"The April 5 note to the MHRA shows how clinical and technical experts voiced their misgivings about the "Challenge" concept. About £185m has been spent so far and the government has said the total cost could rise to £545m."

Response:

The Challenge concept has delivered over 9,700 ventilators to the NHS frontline in just three months. The Government has never said that the cost could rise to £545m. This overstates our estimate of the maximum cost by £91m.

Claim:

“While the teams showed incredible ingenuity, it was clear that we were going to end up with products that were not fit for purpose.”

Response:

The teams did indeed show incredible ingenuity and we have ended up with four Ventilator Challenge devices in production, with a total of over 9700 new machines available to the NHS frontline. Four further devices were deemed credible by clinicians but were ultimately not progressed due to reduced demand on the NHS.

Claim:

“Frontline healthcare professionals were not sufficiently involved in the design process.”

Response:

This is untrue as we have [set out previously](#). Frontline healthcare professionals were involved in every stage of the process, and MHRA specifications were drafted by clinical experts, with input from those specialising in intensive care treatment.

Claim:

“An initial MHRA design specification issued on March 18 called for ventilators that, at a minimum, would be capable of providing “short term stabilisation for a few hours”. In the memo, the independent advisers urged a shift towards more sophisticated devices that incorporate ‘spontaneous’ breathing modes.” As we set out previously, on the Prime Minister’s call to manufacturers on 16 March, Emily Lawson, Chief Commercial Officer of the NHS, emphasised the need for devices to operate 24/7, and the importance of spontaneous breathing modes. She said: “They need to be able to operate 24/7. They need to have a failsafe in case of fire. They need to provide oxygen and air at specified concentration, at set volume and to not exceed a set pressure. They need to be able to provide positive pressure at the end of exhaling, at a pressure set by the clinician. They need to have both mandatory and spontaneous breathing modes so that as people start to breathe for themselves the machine recognises and responds to that”

Most Ventilator Challenge devices had a spontaneous breathing mode or were developing them. These include: Vyair LTV2, Swagelok Piran Vent, Cambridge Consultants Veloci-vent, Sagentia Ventilator, TTP/Dyson CoVent, BAE Systems Aircare, Babcock Zephyr+, Breas Nippy 4+, Breas Vivo 65 and Penlon ES0 2.

The 'independent advisers' described by the FT actually worked with Cambridge Consultants who were designing the Veloci-vent device.

The letter from the group was written ten days after the MHRA updated their specification to further emphasise the importance of spontaneous breathing modes.

[The AAIB has sent a team to Warwickshire](#)

News story

The AAIB has sent a team to Warwickshire to investigate an accident which occurred on 24 June involving a Bell 407 helicopter.



The AAIB is investigating an accident involving a Bell 407 helicopter which was lost in Warwickshire on 24 June. AAIB inspectors have travelled to the scene to make an initial assessment and will begin [investigating](#).

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[Extra UK Government funding for service charities supporting people across Wales](#)

Nearly £6 million of new funding is being confirmed to military charities

across the UK including the Bluebirds Veterans Project and the Ceredigion Armed Forces Veterans Hub.

The UK Government is also confirming today that a consultation will be launched in July on tax relief for businesses which employ veterans.

Today the Office for Veterans Affairs (OVA) and the Ministry of Defence can confirm that 40 armed forces charities supporting serving personnel, veterans and their families across Wales will benefit from extra funding. This is part of a package of support announced by the Chancellor in April to ensure charities can continue their vital work during the pandemic.

A total of 100 charities in Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are benefitting from almost £6 million of UK Government funding, ranging from smaller local charities such as The VC Gallery based in Pembrokeshire to larger organisations such as Help for Heroes.

The charities provide support to veterans and serving personnel in a range of different areas, including employment, mental health and wellbeing, physical health and recovery, and support for service families.

The UK Government is also confirming that next month a consultation will be launched on employers paying no National Insurance contributions on the salary of any veteran they take on during their first year of civilian employment. This delivers on the UK Government's manifesto commitment to encourage businesses to further utilise the skills and experience that veterans can bring to businesses.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said:

Today we mark and give thanks to our veterans for the outstanding service which they have given to this country. To show our appreciation we're advancing veterans issues across government, through the Office for Veterans Affairs. I'm delighted as well to confirm extra funding for service charities to help them through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

Thousands of veterans across Wales have provided incredible service in our Armed Forces. Along with our current serving personnel and their families they deserve the best possible support.

Now more than ever, it is crucial that service charities have the right funding and resources to carry out their vital work with members of our Armed Forces past and present.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

If it wasn't for the brave servicemen and women who serve and protect our country, we would not have a Great Britain to call our home.

That's why we must continue to do everything we can to support our veterans through these challenging times.

General Sir John McColl, Chairman of the Confederation of Service Charities, said:

This emergency funding is a very welcome step towards sustaining life-saving support for those in need across the Armed Forces Community. The Service Charity Sector has once again demonstrated great imagination and determination in adapting its delivery methods during this crisis, and we look forward to continuing to work with the MOD and the OVA to sustain these vital services in the coming months as the true impact of the pandemic is fully felt by charities throughout the Sector.

Under the plans announced in this year's Budget, an employer taking on a veteran earning £25k will save around £2,000 in National Insurance Contributions as a result.

Employers currently pay Employers' National Insurance contributions of 13.8% of the employee's salary. Under this measure, they will be able to save this cost on an employee's salary up to the Upper Earnings Limit (£50,000).

Recently the OVA announced the launch of a study to look at whether COVID-19 has had any specific impact on the veteran community in the UK. This in turn will allow policy makers in government to understand potential issues affecting veterans and respond accordingly based on expert advice and evidence.

The Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA), which was created last year, is ensuring that the whole of government is delivering better outcomes for veterans, particularly in areas such as mental health, employment and housing. It is working in partnership with UK Government departments, the Devolved Administrations and charities to coordinate activity across the United Kingdom.

The role of the OVA includes:

- Pulling together all functions of government, and better coordinating charity sector provision, in order to ensure this nation's life-long duty to those who have served
- Ensuring that every single veteran and their family knows where to turn to access support when required

- Helping to generate a 'single view of the veteran' by making better use of data to understand veterans' needs and where gaps in provision exist
- Improving the perception of veterans

ENDS