

## News story: £10 million to develop vaccines against global infectious diseases

The UK government will give £10 million of funding to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) to help develop vaccines against emerging infectious diseases.

The £10 million is UK-aid funding that prioritises helping low- and middle-income countries.

CEPI is a global coalition that was formed in response to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. The epidemic killed more than 11,000 people.

The importance of CEPI's work is highlighted by outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases seen across the world in the past year, including the ongoing outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo and outbreaks of Lassa fever in Nigeria and Nipah in India.

Since its launch in 2017, CEPI has received more than \$740 million of funding from governments and charitable organisations around the world.

The £10 million funding is in addition to the UK's investment of £120 million for the [UK Vaccine Network](#) (UKVN). The UKVN helps to develop vaccines and vaccine technology for epidemic diseases.

The UKVN funds 78 research projects that are developing vaccines against diseases that can cause epidemics. The UKVN is prioritising vaccine development for 12 pathogens, 5 of which are also prioritised by CEPI.

The 2 initiatives working together is further shown by the development of a promising new vaccine platform by Imperial College with UKVN support. The platform recently received further [funding from CEPI to progress towards clinical use](#).

This funding from the UK government comes as CEPI celebrates its second anniversary at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

---

## News story: Lessons start at new £30m education campus

Campus Whitehaven, a £30m education complex, welcomed its first students in

January.

The site is home to state-of-the-art new buildings for St Benedict's secondary school and Mayfield special educational needs school.

Sellafield Ltd invested an original £10m to get the project off the ground, That attracted an additional £20m in funding from other sources.

Jamie Reed, Sellafield Ltd head of corporate affairs, said:

The opening of Campus Whitehaven is a huge moment for our community.

This is the biggest single investment in education in Whitehaven since the 1960s.

Funding for the project came from a range of partners including the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Copeland Community Fund, and Cumbria County Council.

The site includes new community sports provision, as well as a range of facilities for children with special educational needs including a hydrotherapy pool, a life skills flat, sensory rooms, and an immersive room.

Jamie added:

Sellafield Ltd is tasked with getting the maximum possible value out of our £2bn a year budget.

That means getting the best value for the mission, the nuclear industry, the taxpayer, and our local community.

In my view, a £10m original investment, which unlocks a further £20m to deliver a state-of-the-art educational facility is tremendous value.

Campus Whitehaven will directly help to progress the Sellafield mission and strengthen the local economy.

It will also ensure more of our young people benefit from the opportunities created in the local economy in years to come.

The campus was officially 'handed over' to the 2 schools at a VIP event on 18 January.

An opening event is planned for July.

---

## **Press release: Thames Water to pay £80,000 after sewer blunder**

Lack of maintenance blamed for pollution 'seen over several miles'.

---

## **Press release: Thames Water to pay £80,000 after sewer blunder**

A pollution incident in south-east London has left Thames Water handing over 10s of thousands of pounds to an environmental charity.

After the company allowed sewage to escape from a blocked sewer in 2013, Thames Water will give £80,000 to the South East Rivers Trust to make improvements to a local river. It will also pay the Environment Agency's full costs for the investigation of almost £20,000.

In October 2013, an underground sewer pipe in Chislehurst became lodged with tree roots, fat, oil, grease and other debris. The build-up forced sewage above ground, flooding a field and two streams, before entering the River Shuttle.

Officers from the Environment Agency believe the sewage, which killed as many as 20 stickleback fish and hundreds of invertebrates, could have been flowing for several days. The effect of the pollution on water quality and river habitats was seen over several miles.

Jamie Lloyd, a land and water officer for the Environment Agency in south-east London, said:

A lack of maintenance by Thames Water over an extended period of time was to blame for this incident.

Tree roots were allowed to grow into the sewer unchecked, resulting in fat and sewage solids causing a complete blockage. Sewage backed-up and was sent with some force through two manholes, triggering significant pollution. Thames Water compounded the pollution by failing to clear the sewer quickly after the Environment Agency reported the incident to them.

Following the Environment Agency's investigation, Thames Water installed equipment to monitor sewage levels in its sewer network, near to where the blockage occurred. This will tell them about any developing problems, and allow obstructions to be cleared as soon as possible. The company has also relined the sewer to help prevent roots entering the pipes again.

Thames Water will make the £80,000 payment as a civil sanction, also known as an enforcement undertaking. Companies and individuals can make good some of the environmental damage they cause, including through a financial contribution to a local project. The Environment Agency must also be satisfied the polluter will make changes to its operations to prevent similar damage in the future.

The South East Rivers Trust, which helps communities look after rivers, will use the money to install a fish pass on the River Cray at Bexley, allowing various types of fish to swim upstream, beyond an historic weir at Hall Place, to the upper reaches of the river.

While agreeing to enforcement undertakings, the Environment Agency continues to prosecute organisations and individuals where evidence shows high levels of culpability and serious environmental harm.

Thames Water has paid the Environment Agency's costs of £18,814.51 for the case.

The Environment Agency urges anyone who spots what they think is pollution to call its free, 24-hour incident hotline: 0800 80 70 60. Officers respond to limit damage to the environment, protecting people and wildlife.

---

## **Press release: Solicitor General refers Croydon 'zombie knife' attacker's case to Court of Appeal**

Joshua Gardner's original sentence has been referred to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence Scheme.