

Manufacturer banned after abusing loan agreements

Daniel Jon Knowles (36), from Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, was a director of HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd. Incorporated in November 2016, the company provided metal products for the construction trade.

When HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd provided products to customers, they would also submit the invoices to an external financing company to secure funds in advance.

The finance company would then recoup the invoice amount they had loaned to HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd from the manufacturer's customers in a process known as 'factoring'.

HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd entered into a Corporate voluntary arrangement in April 2019 before going into administration in January 2020, owing the finance company £510,000 and other creditors a further £1.3 million.

The manufacturer's administration triggered an investigation by the Insolvency Service and enquiries uncovered that from January 2018 to December 2019, Daniel Knowles claimed £510,000 from the finance company.

But instead of providing customers with banking details for the finance company, Daniel Knowles sent invoices to customers with HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd's bank details.

When the finance company tried to collect the outstanding funds from the manufacturer's clients, customers said they had already paid HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd directly.

On 5 January 2021, the Secretary of State accepted an undertaking from Daniel Knowles, disqualifying him from being a company director for 8 years after he did not dispute that he had misused factoring facilities by diverting customer funds away from its invoice finance provider.

The director's ban started on 26 January 2021.

Martin Gitner, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations at the Insolvency Service, said:

Daniel Knowles knew the terms of the agreement with the finance providers and that any customer invoices should contain the payment details of the finance company. Instead, he deliberately inserted his own company's bank details, knowing it would result in HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd receiving payments that should have been paid to the factoring company.

This lengthy ban shows we take these matters very seriously and

will seek to disqualify those who choose to act unscrupulously.

Daniel Jon Knowles is of Bromsgrove and his date of birth is April 1984

HE Knowles (Manufacturing) Ltd (Company Reg no. 10473767)

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[UK government statement – state of emergency in Myanmar](#)

News story

The UK government has issued a statement condemning the state of emergency imposed by the Myanmar military on 1 February.



A spokesperson for the UK government said:

The UK condemns the state of emergency imposed by the Myanmar military on 1 February, and the detention of members of the civilian Government and civil society, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint. The UK calls on the military to respect the rule of law and human rights, and release those unlawfully detained.

We need to see the peaceful reconvening of the National Assembly, respecting the results of the November 2020 general election and the expressed wishes of the people of Myanmar.

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New Chief Executive of Cefas Neil Hornby takes up position

Press release

Marine science agency's new Chief Executive takes the helm.



Neil Hornby, Cefas Chief Executive

Neil Hornby has today (1st February 2021) taken up his new position as Chief Executive of Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science).

Neil joins Cefas with over 20 years of experience across Defra, and the wider civil service. Immediately prior to joining Cefas, Neil was the Marine and Fisheries Director at Defra, a position he held since 2016.

Neil's immediate focus will be on ensuring Cefas continues to provide Defra and UK government with the world class science and evidence needed to support delivery of the government's marine environment, fisheries and animal health objectives.

Internationally, 2021 marks a "super year" for ocean science and global action to protect the ocean. Cefas has a huge opportunity to contribute to the government's efforts to secure greater international ambition for protecting our ocean, including through the UK's G7 presidency and at the

Convention on Biological Diversity in China and COP26 in Glasgow.

Speaking on taking up the post, Neil Hornby said:

I know the quality of the work that Cefas does and believe passionately in the power of science for good, to drive real change based on evidence and expertise.

Cefas science and analysis is highly valued in the UK government and around the world. As the UK takes on responsibility for managing our own fisheries and seeks to lead the world in protecting and enhancing the marine environment, I want Cefas to be at the centre of this, providing advice and evidence to meet the challenges our seas and aquatic environments face.

Prior to Neil's appointment Tom Karsten was CEO from September 2015 to June 2020, and Tim Green held the Interim Chief Executive position between July 2020 and January 2021.

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UK government secures additional 40 million doses of Valneva vaccine

- Deal means the UK has now secured early access to over 400 million total doses of vaccines for 2021 and 2022
- 100 million doses of Valneva vaccine have now been secured
- UK Government boosts Scotland vaccine production powerhouse at Valneva's site in West Lothian, supporting 100 highly-skilled jobs

The UK Government has today (Monday 1 February) signed a deal for a further 40 million doses of Valneva's promising vaccine candidate.

The latest deal will bolster long-term vaccine production in Scotland and brings the total UK vaccine portfolio to 407 million doses over the next two years.

The decision to purchase 40 million extra doses is based on the UK's strategy to take a wide approach, using different technologies and viral targets to ensure the UK has the best chance of securing access to successful vaccines as quickly as possible. It will also give the UK future flexibility should we need to revaccinate any of the population.

The UK Government has invested a multi-million sum in Valneva's manufacturing

facility in West Lothian, which [began manufacturing](#) vaccine doses last week and is already raising Scotland's profile in the international fight against Covid-19.

The site is already supporting 100 new highly-skilled local jobs for scientists and technicians.

Valneva's coronavirus vaccine candidate is currently in phase I/II trials and will still need to meet the necessary safety and effectiveness standards and receive regulatory approval from the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) before it is rolled out at the end of the year.

However, if it is approved, manufacturing at risk now will mean that the UK can roll the vaccine out across the country quicker.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

This latest deal is yet another weapon in our national arsenal against this terrible disease, and will ensure we have sufficient supplies to protect the British public in 2021 and beyond.

Backed with major investment from the UK Government, Valneva's site in Scotland will be a vaccine production powerhouse, working flat out to ensure we can quickly deploy jabs across the UK if their candidate is approved, while supporting top quality, local jobs.

Thanks to our incredible UK Vaccine Taskforce, we have now secured a bumper portfolio of over 400 million vaccines, putting our country in an exceptionally strong position to defeat this virus once and for all.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

This deal provides a further boost to the UK's already-strong vaccine portfolio, and I am enormously proud of all the work which has gone in to securing a vaccine for the UK as soon as possible.

If approved, Valneva's vaccine will not only help tackle Covid-19 here in the UK, but aid our mission to ensure there is a fair supply of vaccines across the globe.

No one is safe till the whole world is safe.

The Secretary of State for Scotland Alister Jack said:

This deal is an endorsement of the UK Government's strategy of investing in vaccine development and in the skills of the Scottish life sciences sector.

I pay tribute to the team in Valneva's new Livingston manufacturing plant. If the vaccine is authorised by the health regulator, their expertise will play an important role in making the world safer from this virus.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

The UK has developed and invested in some of the world's most promising vaccines – supporting global efforts to fight this virus.

The Valneva vaccine showcases the best of Scottish expertise right at the heart of our UK vaccine endeavour, demonstrating the strength of our union and what the UK can achieve when it works together. If the vaccine is authorised by the health regulator, it will be rolled out across the four nations as quickly as possible.

Interim Chair of the UK government's Vaccines Taskforce Clive Dix said:

Valneva's manufacturing site in Scotland is already up and running, ready to supply their promising vaccine as soon as it has proven to be safe, and effective and is approved by the MHRA.

To best ensure we have enough successful candidates to ensure maximum coverage of the UK population, the Vaccines Taskforce has invested in seven of the most promising vaccines. The further 40 million doses secured through today's deal significantly bolsters our portfolio and gives us future flexibility should we need to revaccinate any of the UK population.

I want to thank everyone involved in the development of this vaccine for the hard work that has helped us reach this point and also to pay tribute to those UK citizens who have volunteered to take part in the important clinical trials of this vaccine.

If it is approved, 60 million doses could start to be delivered to the UK by the second half of 2021, with the remaining 40 million being delivered in 2022.

Valneva's Livingston site will have the capacity to produce up to 250 million doses annually for shipment across the UK and around the world.

The UK Government is committed to supporting equitable access to vaccines worldwide. The UK is the largest donor to the COVAX facility, the global mechanism to help developing countries access a coronavirus vaccine, and has committed £548 million in UK aid to help distribute 1.3 billion doses of coronavirus vaccines to 92 developing countries this year.

To date, the UK government has invested over £300 million into manufacturing

a successful vaccine.

Public asked to take action ahead of United Nations Climate Change Conference

World news story

On 29 January, the British Ambassador to China, Dame Caroline Wilson, officially launched the Together for Our Planet campaign in Beijing.



- The UK and China will lead global action to protect the planet this year as hosts of the UN Conferences on climate change (COP 26) and biodiversity (COP 15);
- The UK's inclusive Presidency of COP 26 will harness the commitment of the public as well as Governments and businesses around the world;
- An international campaign launched today in Beijing will promote 10 steps everyone can take to play their part.

The international campaign is supported by the United Nations and WWF and will promote ten steps members of the public can take to tackle climate change.

British Ambassador to China, Dame Caroline Wilson said:

Climate change poses an existential threat to humanity and the world we live in. To combat it we must all come together for our planet.

UK and China climate experts will lead global action this year but we also need to engage our people in how they can make a

difference.

From tackling food waste to driving electric this campaign will raise awareness of the simple steps we can all take to cut emissions. Join us in acting now.

The 10 steps have been selected with experts from the UN Environment Programme based on three criteria: impact on personal carbon pollution, power to influence society, and capacity to involve as many people as possible. The 10 steps to COP26, include:

- January – Reducing Food Waste. Reduce the amount of food that is wasted or thrown away at home.
- February – Repair and Reuse. Repair belongings rather than always buying new.
- March – 5-Minute Shower. Save water by taking shorter showers, turning off the tap when brushing teeth, installing a low-flow toilet, and many other ways.
- April – Speak up at Work; Talk to Friends. Come together with colleagues, friends and families to make change at a bigger scale.
- May – Eat Seasonal. Eat food produced at its natural time of the year to reduce the need to transport food products long distances.
- June – Walk and Cycle More. Travel by bike or foot wherever the circumstance allows.
- July – Dial it now. Turn down the heating at home by a degree or more, or turn up air conditioner by a degree or more.
- August – Green your Money. Consider choosing investments, funds, and using financial services that operate finances responsibly.
- September – Wear Clothes to Last. Buy fewer new clothes and wear them for longer.
- October – Drive Electric. Consider making your next car purchase an electric vehicle.

At the launch event, Dame Caroline Wilson joined a panel discussion with British chemist Dr David Evans, Chinese key opinion leader Meng Chang, and Chief Program Officer of WWF China Zhou Fei, to discuss how individuals can apply the ten climate actions from the campaign.

Chief Program Officer of WWF, China Zhou Fei said:

We are pleased to be part of this campaign where a joint climate change vision is celebrated. WWF shares COP26's goals, as we have been calling for the world to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, and any stakeholder's commitment to align climate and biodiversity targets is encouraged.

Public events will be hosted online and offline throughout 2021 to engage people in our planet's future and to provide more information on how they can

get involved. These will include screenings of David Attenborough documentaries, green finance investment training and social media challenges.

As an organisation, British Embassy and Consulates in China will start to apply the 10 steps internally to further reduce the organisational carbon footprint and encourage its staff to live a greener lifestyle. Since 2018, UK Government in China has banned all single use plastic across all office areas and has a popular recycling programme in place.

Notes to editors:

- The UK will host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1 – 12 November 2021. The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UK is committed to working with all countries and joining forces with civil society, companies and people on the frontline of climate change to inspire climate action ahead of COP26. More info about Together for Our Planet Campaign, please visit the official website: <https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/>
- WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) is one of the world's largest and most respected independent organizations dedicated to the conservation of nature, founded in Switzerland in 1961. WWF has been active in China since 1980, when it was invited by the Chinese government as the first international NGO to work on nature conservation. To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, WWF's mission is conserving the world's biological diversity; ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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