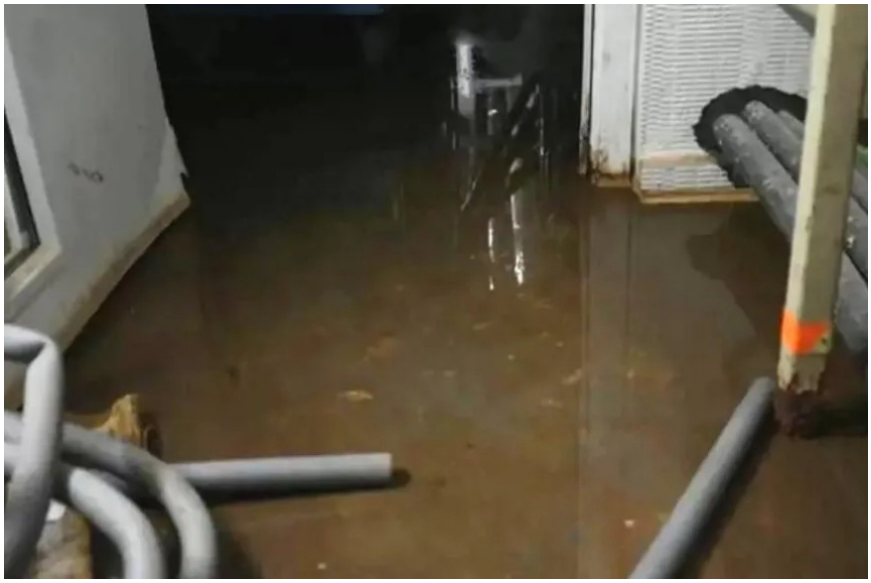
The Princess Alexandra Hospital in problems .



Hospital poc file

officer Stephanie Lawton told the BBC "It took us several weeks to get those theatres repaired. The infrastructure is quite old now - it's very difficult to maintain."

The Princess Alexandra Hospital in Essex has been plagued by problems with its ageing buildings and equipment in recent years.has regular difficulties with floods and sewage leaks across its site, which dates back to the 1960s.

There have been reports of patients slipping on flooded floors, foul smells of faeces filling A&E and leaks on wards and in the operating theatre areas, posing a risk to patients and staff alike.

Along with broken equipment and other building-related problems, it leads to so-called "infrastructure" incidents occurring three times a week on average, according to official NHS data analysed by the Liberal Democrats.

Over the summer, two of the main operating theatres were out of action, disrupting care for patients needing hip and knee surgery.

"We were unable to get the ventilation parts. We were unable to get the light fittings," hospital chief operating officer Stephanie Lawton told the BBC.

"It took us several weeks to get those theatres repaired. The infrastructure is quite old now - it's very difficult to From delight to disappointment

It should not have been like this. Back in September 2019, there was delight at the hospital when it was announced at the Conservative party conference that a new hospital would replace the existing one.

Hospital bosses were soon predicting the doors at the new site would open in 2024 as Boris Johnson promised England 40 new hospitals, including upgrades of existing sites, in his 2019 election manifesto.

But by 2023 the planned finish date for Princess Alexandra had slipped to 2030 - and this week it became one of 18 hospitals to be told there rebuilds would be delayed even further in an announcement on Monday, which largely slipped under the radar as attention was focused on the inauguration of Donald Trump as US president.

Construction work on Princess Alexandra will now not start until 2032 at the earliest. In the meantime, the hospital has no option but to limp on.maintain."

about £9m a year just maintaining and repairing the current estate.

"Staff come to work to deliver outstanding care to our patients every single day and working within a hospital that is very old and breaks down is very frustrating for them," she adds.

Torbay Hospital, one of the oldest in the NHS dating back to the 1920s, and Leeds General Infirmary have both reported problems with sewage leaks and flooding too and are in the same position.

Others have been put back even further, with a number told it could be the late 2030s before work begins.

Bosses at St Mary's Hospital in London, which has been given a prospective start

Health Secretary Wes Streeting has firmly laid the blame at the Tories door, accusing them of leaving an "unfunded and undeliverable" hospital building programme for him to pick up.

This has been disputed by the Tories, who accused Labour of breaking promises and simply deciding not to prioritise the schemes.

The Liberal Democrats believe both parties have a case to answer. Health and care spokeswoman Helen Morgan says the public had been "led up the garden path" by the Tories, while accusing Labour of "dither and delay" and treating those affected with "complete disrespect" for trying to bury the news on the day of Trump's inauguration

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