

# **Press release: More than half a billion for Wales in Chancellor's Budget**

Wales will benefit from over half a billion pounds in additional funding for the Welsh Government, as well as £120 million for a North Wales Growth Deal, the Chancellor has announced in the Budget today.

This year's Budget is a result of the UK government's balanced approach to the country's finances, meaning the Welsh Government will have more spending power, while keeping taxes low and debt falling.

## **Today's announcements for Wales include:**

- More than £550 million of extra money for the Welsh Government, meaning its budget will have grown to over £16.1 billion by 2020.
- £120 million for a North Wales Growth Deal, generating investment, jobs and prosperity in the region.
- Continuing to support a Mid Wales Growth Deal, working with the Welsh Government, businesses and local councillors to agree a deal.
- Supporting the delivery of the M4 relief road by reviewing the Welsh Government's borrowing powers.
- Giving Welsh councils the freedom to build more council homes by removing the borrowing cap on housing.
- Appointing a dedicated manager from the British Business Bank in Wales, for the first time, to help to reduce geographical imbalances in small businesses' access to finance.

## **The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:**

My Budget sends a clear message to the people of Wales – your hard work is paying off.

Thanks to the UK government's careful stewardship of the economy, the public finances are in a much stronger position and national debt is falling.

This means we have more money to invest in Wales's future – including £550m of extra funding for the Welsh Government and £120m for a North Wales Growth Deal.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

Today's budget shows the scale of ambition the UK Government has for Wales.

From the clear support for a North Wales Growth Deal, reviewing borrowing capacity to deliver critical infrastructure projects, and the additional half a billion of spending power, this is a Budget that clearly backs Wales's future prosperity.

The wider package of announcements made today show that we are getting the important things right – backing hardworking people and unlocking key infrastructure. Taken together, these measures are proof positive of a UK Government that is building on a strong foundation for Wales's economic prospects as part of a stronger United Kingdom.

The Chancellor set out his Budget against a backdrop of positive economic news across Wales. Since 2010, 151,000 more people in Wales are in employment and in 2016 it had one of the highest productivity growth rates across the UK.

The people of Wales will also benefit from measures to tackle the cost of living:

- Fuel duty has been frozen for a ninth successive year. As a result of these nine years of freezes, by April 2020, the average car driver will have saved a cumulative £1,000 compared with the pre-2010 escalator.
- The National Living Wage will also rise next year to £8.21 per hour, with the current rate benefitting around 81,000 workers in Wales. An additional 20,000 people will also benefit from changes to the Minimum Wage, which will also increase to £7.70 per hour.
- The Personal Allowance will increase to £12,500 and the Higher Rate Threshold will also go up to £50,000, meaning people will keep more of what they earn.