

# **Press release: Ministers for the UK Government in Wales to mark Remembrance Day**

Ministers for the UK Government in Wales will each take the opportunity to reflect upon the sacrifices and dedication of our service men and women, past and present, at Remembrance Day events in Wales this morning (12 November).

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will attend a service in Barry having attended the opening of the Field of Remembrance in Cardiff earlier this week. Guto Bebb will attend a service at St Grwst's Church in Llanrwst in his constituency.

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

At this time of remembrance, we pay tribute to the generations of service men and women who lost their lives serving our country, and defending our freedom. The people of Wales will always honour, with respect and appreciation, the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf.

Earlier this year, I had the honour of travelling to Belgium to join thousands of descendants of First World War soldiers for the centenary commemorations for the Battle of Passchendaele. I was struck by the enormous loss of the Welsh soldiers who played a pivotal role in the bloodiest of battlefields.

Today, as we bow our heads in silence, we will remember those that paid the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom that we all enjoy today and those members of the Armed Forces who are currently away from loved ones, defending our values, our democracy and our nation.

## **UK Government Minister Guto Bebb said:**

Today, thousands of people across Wales will wear their poppies with pride, and gather at war memorials to mark the sacrifices made by our service men and women around the world.

The debt of gratitude that we owe to those serving today, and to those who never came home, is immeasurable and today we say thank you. We will remember them.

Later this month, the Secretary of State will deliver a speech at the Armed Forces in Wales awards on 30 November, an event which celebrates high achievers who have provided the most outstanding contributions to defence in

2017.

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## News story: Communities to decide how to spend shale cash windfall

Local communities across the country will choose how they spend up to £1 billion of additional funding on local projects, under proposals [unveiled today](#) (11 November 2017).

The Treasury's Exchequer Secretary, Andrew Jones has announced that people living near sites, approved for the safe and clean extraction of shale gas, will benefit from a share of the proceeds through a new 'Shale Wealth Fund'.

Those living in the North and the Midlands – where there are significant shale gas reserves – are set to benefit first.

The fund, which will provide up to £10 million for each local community, will empower local decision making. Communities will be able to decide how to spend the money locally, but projects could include:

- new play parks, community sports facilities and libraries
- improvements to transport links
- restoration of local heritage sites

The development of a British shale gas industry is set to bring substantial and far-reaching benefits. Not only will safe and sustainable exploration of shale boost the UK economy, create close to 65,000 new jobs and attract up to £33 billion in investment\*, but it could also generate greater energy security.

The UK currently imports nearly half of its gas from abroad, and by 2030 this is set to rise to three quarters. Using UK supplies of shale gas will reduce the need for this, making Britain more self-sufficient.

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Jones, MP, said:

Shale production could play an important part in the UK's future energy security, creating jobs and boosting our economy.

The economic benefits must be shared with those living alongside these sites and this funding will ensure local people reap the rewards too.

## Further information

Following consultation, the government has developed a clear set of principles that will be at the heart of the development of the Shale Wealth Fund.

These are:

- a commitment to real local decision-making, by allowing local communities to determine how the Shale Wealth Fund is spent in their area. This includes the potential for household level payments
- prioritising the needs of local people first and foremost. Where local communities decide that they wish to spend some funding on regional projects, this should benefit communities hosting shale sites in those regions, and be subject to a clear instruction from communities
- providing additional benefits to local communities, in addition to existing local government funding, and not as a replacement for existing local spending
- ensuring that decision-making is locally representative and those who make these decisions are held accountable to local communities. The process will be fully transparent

The government has confirmed that it will be up to communities to decide where the money should go. This could include being paid directly to local residents in host areas.

The fund will initially consist of up to 10% of tax revenues arising from shale gas production, to be used for the benefit of communities which host shale sites.

The government's [response to its consultation](#) on the development of a Shale Wealth Fund was published today (11 November).

More details on how communities will receive the money will be published in due course.

\*EY, Getting Ready for UK Shale Gas, April 2014

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## [Press release: PM calls with leaders of the DUP and Sinn Fein parties: 10 November 2017](#)

The Prime Minister has spoken on the phone to the leadership of the DUP and Sinn Fein parties about the political situation in Northern Ireland.

In separate phone calls, she expressed her concern that despite recent progress agreement had not yet been reached and she urged both parties to bridge the gaps on the outstanding issues that remained.

On Northern Ireland's finances, the Prime Minister explained how the UK Government will reluctantly be taking forward legislation for a Budget Bill on Monday, to ensure that in the absence of an Executive, public services in Northern Ireland have the resources they need to operate.

The Prime Minister made clear this was absolutely not an indication of direct rule but it was necessary to enable the Northern Ireland Civil Service to allocate funds for key public services while talks between the parties continued.

There was agreement on the importance of devolved Government being returned to Northern Ireland for the benefit of all communities and the Prime Minister said that the UK Government would continue to work, alongside the Irish Government, with the parties in reaching a successful outcome.

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## **News story: Culture Secretary Karen Bradley on India mission to attract more tourists to Britain**

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley met key representatives from the Indian travel market today to bang the drum for British tourism.

India is a key priority for the government's tourism arm. VisitBritain expects the number of visits from Indian tourists to grow from 415,000 in 2016 to 531,000 by 2020.

Last year the Indian tourism market was worth £433 million to the UK economy, with the average Indian visitor spending more than £1,000.

The Culture Secretary met senior representatives including British Airways, Cox and Kings, Thomas Cook India Ltd, Mercury Travel Ltd, MakeMyTrip.com and Ezeego1.com to highlight the range of unique attractions Britain has to offer and discuss how the UK government and VisitBritain can best support tourism growth from India.

England and Wales are hosting the Cricket World Cup in 2019 and this has been earmarked as a key event that can be used to encourage cricket-loving Indian visitors to come and see the best of Britain.

Karen Bradley, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said:

India is forecast to be the world's fastest growing major economy over the next five years, sparking a huge rise in outbound travel.

It is vital that we capitalise on our strong relationship with India to make Britain the number one European destination for Indian holiday and business visitors in the coming years.

The cultural ties between the UK and India span centuries and our countries both benefit from shared ideas, institutions and technologies. As we prepare to leave the EU, it is a fantastic opportunity to further strengthen this special relationship and boost travel between India and the UK.

VisitBritain Chief Executive Sally Balcombe said:

We know that visitors from India are coming in increasing numbers and rate Britain for its interesting and exciting contemporary culture and its outstanding natural beauty. By continuing to showcase the incredible experiences on offer and working with regional partners such as Cox and Kings to extend our reach, we will inspire more visitors from India to discover for themselves, all there is to see in our nations and regions.

In February the UK and India agreed to ease restrictions on the number of scheduled flights between the two countries, removing limits from key Indian cities including Chennai and Kolkata.

There is capacity for 1.6 million passengers to fly directly from India to the UK every year, with 88 scheduled services per week in each direction between the two countries, and India-UK direct flights are higher than any other European country.

It is one of VisitBritain's seven GREAT inbound tourism markets, meaning there is long-term potential for growth and the national tourism market is investing additional funds in the market.

The Culture Secretary is visiting India to mark the UK-India Year of Culture, announced in 2015. She has opened a joint exhibition between the British Museum and the CSMVS Museum in Mumbai. Other key events include the 1928 Anglo-India film Shiraz, which was remastered by the BFI and set to a modern score by musician Anoushka Shankar and has just completed its tour of India. Acclaimed contemporary dance piece FAR by Company Wayne McGregor, scored by Brian Eno, will also undertake a four-city tour of India in November.

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# News story: Chair of Residential Care Leadership Board appointed

The Department for Education today announced Alan Wood as Chair of the new Residential Care Leadership Board.

The Residential Care Leadership Board (RCLB) was set up following Sir Martin Narey's 2015 review of children's residential care in England. It will drive forward improvements to the children's residential care system and support vulnerable children across the country.

The Board will take forward the recommendations in Sir Martin Narey's report. They include making improvements to the commissioning of places, engaging with the wider sector to support the development of new approaches, and ensuring learning and best practice is shared and implemented.

The Board will also support the roll out of Staying Close pilots, which will allow young people leaving care to keep in touch with their support network. This is a key part of the Department's work to make sure every child, regardless of their circumstances, receives the best possible support.

Robert Goodwill, Minister for Children and Families, said:

Children living in care have often experienced traumatic situations. These children can be some of the most vulnerable in the country and we are committed to doing all that we can to give them the best possible care and support.

I am pleased that Alan has been appointed to this role, and I look forward to working closely with him to make our residential care system the best it can be.

Alan Wood, Chair of the Residential Care Leadership Board, said:

We have some excellent residential care for our children but nationally our system needs to be able to provide flexibly for a wider range of need. All local authorities and providers have a vital role to play in ensuring provision matches needs and resources are used most effectively.

The RCLB will work to build a strong partnership across the sector focusing on developing its range, promoting improvement where it is needed and celebrating its successes.

Alan Wood is a former President of the Association for Directors of Children's Services, and has also worked as a children's services

commissioner in Doncaster and Tower Hamlets. In 2016 he conducted a review of multi-agency arrangements for child protection.

He was selected for the role following an open and transparent recruitment process, overseen by the office of [The Commissioner for Public Appointments](#).