

Further £650 million funding boost for Covid-19 response in Wales

Press release

Latest Treasury announcement brings the extra funding provided since March 2020 to the devolved administration in Wales to £5.85 billion.



- UK Government provides devolved administration in Wales with additional £650 million to help tackle coronavirus
- Funding can be spent now or carried over to spend in 2021/22 financial year, providing vital and unprecedented flexibility
- Money is in addition to the £5.2 billion already provided for this year through the upfront Barnett guarantee, bringing the total to £5.85 billion

The UK Government has provided the Welsh Government with an additional £650 million to support people, businesses and public services affected by coronavirus.

This funding brings the total allocated through the Barnett formula to the Welsh Government since the start of the pandemic to £5.85 billion.

In recognition of the exceptional circumstances and in response to calls for flexibility, the Welsh Government will be able to carry over any of the £650 million not spent this year into the 2021/22 financial year on top of their existing tools to transfer funding between years.

Welsh Secretary Simon Hart said:

We in UK Government have been relentless in our determination to get the necessary support to all parts of the UK, and today's announcement will top-up that support for Wales to £5.85 billion.

That is on top of all of the other UK Government support packages including the furlough scheme, the Eat Out to Help Scheme and the different business loans.

It is important that this funding now gets to the businesses and individuals across Wales as we look to rebuild the UK economy.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Steve Barclay said:

We're committed to giving the Welsh Government the resources and flexibility it needs to tackle coronavirus and today we're delivering an extra £650m boost.

We have worked closely with the Welsh Government in advance of this announcement to ensure they have the certainty they need ahead of finalising their budget on 16 February.

UK Treasury schemes such as furlough, support for the self-employed and business loans also continue to protect jobs and livelihoods across Wales.

Following the previous update on 24 December, this is expected to be the final update for 2020-21 as part of the process for finalising departmental funding at Supplementary Estimates.

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Invitation to Tender for research for the 2021 report and beyond



The Low Pay Commission (LPC) has launched an invitation to tender for research projects to inform recommendations on next year's National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) rates. There are two separate open calls for projects, with deadlines on Thursday 11 March and Friday 12 March respectively.

This work is part of our ongoing remit to monitor the operation of the NMW and NLW, and to assess the impact of increases in the levels of those minimum wages. We carry out continuous evaluation of the impact of minimum wage upratings on the sectors and groups of workers most affected, and on the labour market more generally. To do this, we draw on a range of evidence to make our assessments, including research projects commissioned specifically to inform our recommendations. As in previous years, we wish to commission a number of new research projects to inform our future work. However, the onset of the pandemic and its continuing effects makes our assessment of the impact of minimum wages much more difficult than in previous years.

We are therefore keen to understand the impact of the recent unprecedented upheaval in the economy and the labour market caused by measures to control the global pandemic. This has affected some sectors, in particular many low-paying sectors, more than others. It has also disrupted many of the usual data sources upon which much of our standard analysis depends. The pandemic has, however, also led to the development of new data sources. We are therefore keen to consider tenders that can take advantage of these. In addition to the impacts from the pandemic, the UK began a new trading relationship with the EU on 1 January 2021 that will see significant changes in the way the UK trades. This will have different implications for low-paying sectors and minimum wage workers. We are therefore also keen to try and understand these developments.

With concerns about the pandemic and its impact on the labour market our usual data sources, we have broadened the coverage of our call for research this time. We would particularly encourage innovative use of new and existing sources of information to help us assess the impact of minimum wages in the UK. The evidence generated will inform our deliberations on the recommendations for future changes in the minimum wages.

In both of these open calls, we have identified a number of areas of research that might be particularly interesting but we would welcome any research that gives insight into the impact of the NMW, including the NLW. These insights will help inform our recommendations in our autumn 2021 Report and beyond.

Information about previous LPC research projects is available elsewhere on [our website](#).

Please direct all enquiries through UKSBS Research and Contracts Finder. Details of how to apply are given in the links provided for the individual calls.

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Last updated 18 February 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 18 February 2021

Page updated with link to the second invitation to tender (UK SBS CR21035).

2. 16 February 2021

Recovered appeal: Land at Mitchelswood Farm, Allington Road, Newick, East Sussex (ref: 3119171 – 16 February 2021)

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Bringing the benefits of clean growth and resilient economies to countries around the world

Thank you so much.

Friends, ladies, gentlemen, honourable guests.

Good afternoon from Nigeria. I've been here over the past twenty-four hours and I've had a range of productive meetings with the Vice President, other government ministers, and civil society on our shared need to act urgently to tackle climate change.

And it is an absolute pleasure to be joining you today and a very great thanks to my friend Dr Mathur for inviting me to participate in this very important summit.

And I'm also very delighted to be speaking alongside Mr Frans Timmermans and Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, who we know are great champions for climate action.

May I first start by expressing my deepest condolences for the situation in

Uttarakhand. Our thoughts and prayers are for all of those who have been sadly affected by this tragedy.

As we've heard, today marks the conclusion of the 20th annual World Sustainable Development Summit. Over those past two decades, the world has experienced its hottest ten years on record.

We have seen what the UN calls a "staggering" rise in climate disasters.

Affecting more than four billion people across the world.

And causing almost \$3 trillion of losses to the global economy.

It is overwhelmingly clear that the climate crisis is impacting all our lives. And that crisis is unfortunately accelerating.

And to avoid it getting unimaginably worse, we must act now.

And we must act together.

As an international community we have agreed what we need to do.

In 2015 the world came together and signed up to the Paris Agreement, which established the framework for a clean, resilient global economy.

But although progress has been made, we are not on track to meet its goals.

If we do not change course, the climate impacts that we are already experiencing will grow into a tragedy of epic proportions.

We will end up seeing entire communities destroyed.

We'll see many millions more pushed into poverty.

So, our aim as the COP26 Presidency is to get the world on track to make the Paris Agreement a reality.

This requires countries to act and to act now.

By making robust adaptation plans and policies.

By investing in green recoveries.

And by committing to net zero.

And of course, by announcing aligned Nationally Determined Contributions, and policies and plans to get there.

Plans like Prime Minister Modi's commitment to generate 450 gigawatts of renewable power by 2030.

And NDC's like the UK's – which puts us on track to meet our 2050 net zero target.

But we also need action from across society.

And we need to work together.

Because making the Paris Agreement a reality requires us all to act in concert.

The UK COP Presidency aims to unite countries, and groups across society, behind the aims of the Paris Agreement. And, importantly to place inclusivity at the heart COP26.

We are urging businesses, investors, cities and regions to join the Race to Zero campaign for example, by committing to reach net zero by 2050 at the latest.

And we've seen many companies come forward. Companies like Dalmia Cement and Mahindra group have done so. We've seen cities like Delhi and Kolkata have signed up to this too.

And we are bringing the voices, of civil society, women, young people, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalised groups, into COP26.

These communities are some of the most affected by climate impacts.

Their knowledge, leadership, and expertise are absolutely essential to developing effective solutions.

Over the past two weeks I have met personally with youth and civil society climate activists in Ethiopia, in Gabon in Egypt, and here in Nigeria.

And I will continue to prioritise these interactions in all my country visits on the road to COP26.

The UK's COP26 Presidency has established the Civil Society and Youth Advisory Council to help shape the Summit.

And this group includes brilliant young climate leaders from countries such as India and Kenya.

Our Friends of COP Advisory Group includes Indigenous leaders.

And the UK Government is supporting a mentoring initiative to encourage women from a diverse range of backgrounds to participate in climate negotiations.

And I also want to welcome and thank the work that has been done by TERI and WSDS to bring the voices of youth and women to the forefront.

The UK COP Presidency is also working to enhance international collaboration.

Between countries and across society.

Bringing together governments, business, civil society and financial institutions around five critical climate issues: finance, adaptation, nature, clean energy and clean transport.

Because we know that if we all focus on specific challenges and sectors, we can make progress faster.

By sharing solutions, bringing down costs, and driving innovation.

Together, we can accelerate the transition to clean growth.

Creating those jobs and prosperity and spurring development, which we all want to see.

And I very much recognise India's leadership in this area. With pioneering initiatives like the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

I look forward to working with both organisations over the coming year. And to showcasing them at COP.

And we are delighted that India is participating in the new forums for collaboration that the UK COP Presidency has created. Like the Energy Transition Council and Zero Emissions Vehicles Transitions Council.

With its vision and its flair and its leadership, India will be absolutely vital to the success of COP26.

As we approach Glasgow, I am pleased to say that the partnership between our two countries on climate change has never been stronger.

And I very much look forward to visiting in person next week and hearing first-hand about India's ambitions.

The UK COP Presidency is committed to working in partnership with those countries most vulnerable to climate change.

Which for so many years have led the world's attempts to tackle it.

We saw this in 2015 when Prime Minister Modi played a decisive role in getting the Paris Agreement over the line. And Small Island Developing States touched the conscience of the world, persuading it to pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

And we see this today too.

As Barbados and the Maldives announce their aim to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.

And we see countries like India and Bangladesh use early warning systems to save thousands of lives.

And Ethiopia – where I've just been – plans to plant 20 billion trees by 2024.

The UK COP Presidency wants to amplify the leadership of those countries vulnerable to climate change. And to work together to make progress on critical issues like finance and adaptation.

So, we're very pleased to be co-chairing the next meeting of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in March, alongside our friends and partners in India.

And, last month, Prime Minister Boris Johnson launched the Adaptation Action Coalition.

Which the UK has developed with Egypt, Bangladesh, Malawi, the Netherlands, St Lucia, and the UN.

This Coalition is a chance for developed and developing countries to share knowledge and best practice on adaptation and resilience at every level: local, regional and global.

And next month the UK COP Presidency will hold a Climate and Development Ministerial.

This will bring Ministers together to look at four key issues: access to finance; quantity and quality of climate finance; response to impacts; and fiscal space and debt.

And civil society organisations will be part of this conversation.

Together, we will look for ways to move forward on these key issues. And plan how we can make progress through events like the G7, the UN General Assembly, and COP26 itself.

Friends, in conclusion, we all share one precious life-giving but fragile planet.

And we all have a stake in its future.

Through partnership, collaboration, and with all of us on board, we can bring the benefits of clean growth and resilient economies to countries around the world.

And thereby protecting our people and our planet.

Thank you.

New legislation to address the plant health threat posed by Xylella

The Government has today (16 February) announced plans to address the plant health threat posed by Xylella, a key step for setting plant health legislation tailored to risks in Great Britain.

A new Statutory Instrument will come into force next month to introduce stricter measures against *Xylella fastidiosa* ("Xylella") – a bacterium which causes disease in a wide range of woody commercially grown plants such as grapevine, citrus, olive and several species of broadleaf trees widely grown in the Great Britain, as well as many shrubs and herbaceous plants.

The new changes have been identified as priorities for improving our plant biosecurity in response to known threats, protecting businesses, society and the environment in the short term, as well as in the future.

New requirements will apply to those countries where Xylella is known to be present and will include:

- Only allow imports of *Polygala* and *Coffea* from countries where Xylella is known not to occur.
- More stringent requirements for the import of Olive, Almond, Lavender, Rosemary and *Nerium oleander* from countries where Xylella is known to occur.
- Allow imports under certain conditions including inspections of the place of production and the surrounding area, testing, pre-export inspections and a one-year quarantine period prior to import.

The existing requirements for high-risk plants from countries where Xylella is not known to occur will be retained, which include annual official inspection, with sampling and testing of the plants concerned.

Biosecurity minister Lord Gardiner of Kimble said:

We take the nation's biosecurity very seriously. That is why we are increasing restrictions and requirements for the import of high-risk Xylella host plants to reduce the chances that Xylella is introduced into Great Britain.

These measures will enhance the level of protection against this devastating disease and are necessary to protect our country.

Chief Plant Health Officer Nicola Spence said:

Xylella is not currently in Great Britain and it is essential that all of us with an interest in a healthy, thriving plant and horticulture industry do all we can to keep it that way and protect our environment and businesses.

To keep our country protected, it is vital that all plant importers and traders welcome these new measures and continue to make careful decisions on sourcing plants, particularly those from countries where Xylella is present.

Xylella is continuing to spread in Europe with outbreaks of the disease

occurring in Italy, France, Spain, Germany and Portugal.

The pathogen is not known to be present in Great Britain, but the possibility remains of *Xylella* arriving on high-risk hosts, such as olive, and those plant species commonly associated with outbreaks in the EU. The long latency period of *Xylella* means that, without additional requirements, it could be carried into non-infected countries via imports of plants, long before the infection is identified.

These new measures will cover Great Britain. Following a consultation process with the Plant Health Advisory Forum and individual businesses, the new measures give a high level of assurance that imports are from areas where *Xylella* is not present, while also providing the desired level of protection for plants imported from countries and areas where *Xylella* is present.

New legislation is due to come into force on 4 March 2021. [A copy of the regulations is available here.](#)