

## £32million to reduce flood risk to over 2,000 homes

The funding, which is allocated for 2017-18, is the largest capital budget for flood risk management in recent years and demonstrates the priority the Welsh Government places on supporting communities.

Later today, the Cabinet Secretary will update the National Learning to Live with Flooding in Wales conference on the Welsh Government's work to support those living at risk of flooding.

During her speech the Cabinet Secretary will also confirm over £144million capital funding for flood risk management, in addition to the £150million coastal programme, over the five year Government term. Of this, £5million will support design and development work for coastal risk management projects.

The Cabinet Secretary will also use the speech to announce that £1million of the flood budget will be ring-fenced each year for the next four years to support smaller scale works and maintenance to be carried out by Local Authorities.

This follows the successful trial of a grant scheme to support smaller works, which provided funding for 73 projects to reduce risk to 700 properties across Wales. This demonstrates it is not just big expensive flood schemes which make a difference to communities.

Speaking ahead of today's conference, the Cabinet Secretary said:

"Flooding can have a devastating impact on the lives of those affected. We know that climate and weather patterns are continuing to change and as a result flooding is likely to become more frequent. We therefore need to do all we can to reduce the risk to our communities while helping them to adapt to the risks they face which are beyond control.

"I am pleased to confirm we will be providing £32million in 2017-18, our largest capital budget in recent years, to help reduce the risk of flooding to thousands of homes and businesses. This highlights the priority we place on protecting and strengthening communities against flooding."

Changes will also be made to make sure focus and funding is going to the areas most at risk. Future flood programmes will be prioritised by making use of the Communities at Risk Register alongside local knowledge and data of historical flood events.

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## International Women's Day: Overcome prejudice, support engagement and promote women's empowerment

8 March 2017 – In his message on International Women's Day, Secretary-General António Guterres stressed that while women's rights are human rights, in these troubled times, the rights of women and girls are being reduced, restricted and reversed.

He asserted that women's legal rights, which have never been equal to that of men's on any continent, are being eroded further. Women's rights over their own bodies are questioned and undermined and they are routinely targeted for intimidation and harassment, including in cyberspace. Mr. Guterres underscored that in the worst cases, extremists and terrorists build their ideologies around the subjugation of women and girls and single them out for sexual and gender-based violence, forced marriage and virtual enslavement.

He emphasized that only by empowering women and girls can their rights be protected and their full potential be ensured.

### **Imbalances**



A woman in Sudan holds a poster promoting the collective abandonment of female genital mutilation. Photo: UNICEF/UNI73778/Holt

Historic imbalances in power relations between men and women, exacerbated by growing inequalities within and between societies and countries, are leading to greater discrimination against women and girls.



Transparent. Photo: Belinda Mason, Silent Tears

Denying the rights of women and girls is not only wrong in itself; it has a serious social and economic impact that holds us all back.

### **Women benefit all**



Women on the job at a workshop in the Dominican Republic. Photo: UNDP Dominican Republic

Gender equality has a transformative effect that is essential to fully functioning communities, societies and economies.



Abissdoun Charlotte, 26, with her 7-week-old triplets, Morouta, Nasifaté and Nasif, is receiving postnatal and newborn care at the Cooperative Clinic of Sikecoudji, in Cotonou, Benin. Photo: UNFPA/Ollivier Girard

Women's access to education and health services has benefits for their families and communities that extend to future generations. An extra year in school can add up to 25 per cent to a girl's future income.



Women and technology – the attitude gap. Photo: UN Women/Gaganjit Singh

When women participate fully in the labour force, it creates opportunities and generates growth. Closing the gender gap in employment could add \$12 trillion to global GDP by 2025.



Students of Computer Sciences at Khowaja Institute of Information Technology (KIIT) in Hyderabad, Pakistan learn computing skills. Photo: Visual News Associates/World Bank

Increasing the proportion of women in public institutions makes them more representative, increases innovation, improves decision-making and benefits whole societies.



Women in Pakistan build their knowledge and skills at an FAO-supported rural livelihoods school. Photo: FAO/Farook Naeem

Gender equality is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the global plan agreed by leaders of all countries to meet the challenges we face. Sustainable Development Goal 5 calls specifically for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and this is central to the achievement of all the 17 SDGs.

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**[Speech: British High Commissioner's](#)**

# speech marking International Women's Day 2017

Honorable Minister for Aviation Mrs. Cecilia Dapaah, Chairman of the Electoral Commission Charlotte Osei, distinguished guests, Colleagues from the diplomatic community, the media, ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed.

Last year, organizations and individuals around the world, including myself supported the #PledgeForParity campaign, pledging to help women and girls achieve their ambitions, through commitments which included, but are not limited to; challenging conscious and unconscious bias; calling for gender-balanced leadership; valuing women and men's contributions equally; and creating inclusive flexible cultures. From awareness raising to demonstrations of concrete action, organizations rallied their people to pledge support to help forge gender parity on International Women's Day (IWD) 2016.

But the World Economic Forum predicts the gender gap won't close entirely until 2186. This is too long to wait. Around the world, IWD can be an important catalyst and vehicle for driving greater change for women and moving closer to gender parity.

In this light, this year's theme "Be bold for change- Women in the changing world of work," calls us all here today to help forge a better working world – a more gender inclusive world. A world where female voices and leaderships are heard and seen in sectors traditionally dominated by men.

The British High Commission is delighted to be partnering with the Canadian and the Australian High Commission today bringing together successful industry professionals to mentor female students selected from senior high schools. Indeed, we know that women and girls typically make up just over half of most national populations, including here on the African continent.

The UK's Gender Equality Act 2014 puts existing commitment to gender equality on a statutory footing and ensures that gender equality remains at the heart of our development assistance. Through our Department for International Development -DFID, we work closely with the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders to address key barriers to the attainment of gender parity.

In 2016, the UK's DFID launched a new initiative: 'Leave No Girl Behind,' an initiative committed to delivering quality education to disadvantaged girls. We believe that access to a good education, in a safe environment, significantly improves the life chances of girls. In Ghana, DFID programming provides over £100m every year, much of which is focussed on women and girls, helping those who are at significant risk of dropping out of school complete their secondary education. Our Complementary Basic Education programme targets out of school children, including girls, and provides them with a second chance at education.

In health, the UK remains a key partner in promoting, protecting and supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights. Our Adolescent Reproductive Health programme worth £17 million works with vulnerable girls in the Brong Ahafo region to improve their knowledge and behaviour around reproductive health.

I hope students alongside mentors here today will continue to be inspired to take up professions in various industries, but more importantly to be bold; successfully taking up the study and or training and thereafter excelling in professions that have typically in the past, been associated with male dominance.

I wish you all a successful and insightful evening.

Thank you

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## **[News story: Licence variation for South West disposal](#)**

This follows the announcement that the new disposal site is open for marine licence applications for the disposal of dredged material.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation's (DIO) licence has now been [varied to change disposal activities to Plymouth Deep](#). The variation changed the disposal site from Rame Head and conditions referencing Rame Head South have been amended.

No changes to the dredging methodology have been made. The marine licence for the maintenance dredge at HMNB Devonport allows DIO to complete one maintenance dredge campaign of the dockyard's critical areas between now and the end of March 2017.

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## **[News story: UK's research and innovation bodies welcome budget](#)**

The spring budget announced an initial investment of £270 million in 2017 to 2018. This is to kick-start the development of disruptive technologies that have the potential to transform the UK economy.

## First challenges announced

Following engagement with experts in academia and industry, the budget announced the first wave of challenges funded through the ISCF, part of the [Industrial Strategy](#). These include:

- leading the world in the development, design and manufacture of batteries that will power the next generation of electric vehicles, helping to tackle air pollution
- developing cutting-edge artificial intelligence and robotics systems that will operate in extreme and hazardous environments, including off-shore energy, nuclear energy, space and deep mining
- accelerating patient access to new drugs and treatments through developing brand new medicine manufacturing technologies, helping to improve public health

## Investing in skills

The budget also announced plans to build the pipeline of high-skilled research talent necessary for a growing and innovative economy. There will be an investment of £250 million over the next 4 years including:

- £90 million to provide an additional 1,000 PhD places in areas aligned with the Industrial Strategy. Around 85% will be in STEM disciplines, and 40% will directly help strengthen collaboration between business and academia through industrial partnerships
- £160 million to support new fellowships for early and mid-career researchers in areas aligned to the Industrial Strategy

## Research and innovation leaders respond

Dr Ruth McKernan, Chief Executive of Innovate UK, said:

The Chancellor's announcement today is a great example of how the Industrial Strategy challenge fund will deliver the science that business needs.

The first 3 challenge areas are developing revolutionising battery technology, getting innovative medicines to patients more quickly and developing robots for use in hazardous environments. The UK has scientific expertise in these areas. We have excellent companies ready and willing to translate the technology into business growth across the UK.

The challenge fund is like nothing we have seen before, and it has enormous potential to deliver. These challenges announced today are just the start. Innovate UK and the research councils are already working together, building on the evidence we've gathered from organisations across the country to look at how we can get the UK's researchers and businesses working together and firing on all

cylinders.

Professor Philip Nelson, Chair of Research Councils UK, said:

The Chancellor's announcements are most welcome. Long-term funding for research and developing high-skilled research talent is vital to the UK's future as a science power, continuing to feed the pipeline that transforms research into products and services. The UK is at the fore in many aspects of these fields, but countries across the globe are putting effort and resource in too, so these investments are strategically significant.