

## **Press release: The 2018 Budget: what it means for Scotland**

The Budget committed £1 billion in extra money for Scotland, maintained the freeze on whisky and fuel duty, and saw a £150 million investment in the Tay City Region Deal. The Chancellor also committed to progress growth deals in Ayrshire, Moray and Borderlands.

Today's Budget is great news for people in Scotland.

The Chancellor's decisions mean there will be an extra £1 billion to invest in public services in Scotland. I urge the Scottish Government to use this extra money to support the NHS in Scotland, fix the roads, boost Scotland's economy and reinvigorate Scotland's high streets.

The freeze on spirits duty will be a boost to Scotland's whisky industry, maintaining the favourable tax climate for oil and gas will continue to help support the recovery of the sector, investing in fisheries technology will help support a key Scottish industry, and freezing beer duty will support large and small brewers across Scotland.

I welcome the significant investment – £150 million – in the Tay Cities Deal. The Deal will drive economic growth in Tayside, boosting jobs and prosperity throughout the region. I also welcome the announcement that we are to open negotiations on a Moray Growth Deal, and we continue to make progress on Growth Deals for Borderlands and Ayrshire. In all, the UK Government is investing more than £1 billion in City Region Deals right across Scotland, helping to drive growth in Scotland's economy.

On top of our extensive investment in Scotland's economy, individuals up and down Scotland will benefit from the ongoing freeze on fuel duty and the increase in personal allowance. Today's Budget demonstrates clearly how the UK Government is delivering for people in Scotland.

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## **Press release: FCO Minister for Asia statement on Sri Lanka**



Minister for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field said:

I am concerned by ongoing political developments in Sri Lanka and am following this fast-moving situation closely. Once again, I call upon all parties to uphold the constitution and due political and legal process.

I urge President Sirisena, in consultation with the Speaker, to reconvene the parliament immediately in order to give the democratically elected representatives of the Sri Lankan people their voice at this time.

The UK, as a friend of Sri Lanka, remains committed to working with international partners and alongside the Sri Lankan government and people to support democracy, human rights, and reconciliation.

## **Further information**

Published 29 October 2018

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## Further information

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Mark Field [@MarkFieldUK](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

## Media enquiries

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# [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.

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