

# Press release: Welsh language programming set to benefit from a multi-million pound boost from the UK Government

Millions of pounds of additional funding will be injected into Welsh language programming as part of a UK Government boost for the independent broadcast sector, it has been announced today (19 October) by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Jeremy Wright.

A share of the fund which aims to halt the decline of UK produced children's content will be used to commission Welsh language programming and content, stimulating the creation of dynamic and distinctive Welsh language productions from the independent sector.

The UK Government investment will be used to reverse the growing trend of airing repeats and facilitate the creation of Welsh language programmes that can repeat the success of all-time favourites such as Fireman Sam. It will also include:

- A multi-million pound boost for commercial radio; and
- A special fund to help fledgling production companies develop and pitch their original ideas to make them a reality

The Contestable Fund recognises the significance that Welsh language productions have had on the cultural and social life of Wales, which is why the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport has aimed to allocate 5% of the available budget to Welsh and other indigenous UK languages.

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

This funding announcement will provide a significant boost to Welsh language programme creators, helping to secure a whole new generation of young Welsh language programme viewers.

With this UK Government investment, the thriving Welsh language broadcast sector will be able to build on its success and create distinctive, captivating programmes that will educate and entertain the growing number of Welsh language speakers in the country.

Production levels of new children's content have declined over the past decade, with public service broadcasters spending roughly 40% less than they did in 2006. As a result a significant amount of children's programming on children's channels now consist of repeats.

**Minister for Digital Margot James said:**

Young people in the UK deserve high quality content that entertains, informs and reflects their experiences growing up across the country today.

The UK broadcasting and production sectors are world renowned, and a success story to be proud of. This innovative project is an instrumental part of our support for the UK's vibrant media sector and will help it continue to go from strength to strength.

In 2016, 98% of children's content on commercial children's channels and 91% on public service broadcasters were repeats. To directly combat this decline in content for younger people in the UK, £57 million will be invested in to a Young Audiences Content Fund, administered by the BFI. This will focus on funding a new influx of creative and distinctive content that represent UK children and teenagers today. Five per cent of the Young Audiences fund will support production companies develop their ideas.

**Ben Roberts, Director of Lottery Film Fund, BFI said:**

We're excited to be working with Government to deliver the new Young Audiences Content Fund to help support UK companies to create exciting and distinctive new programmes for young people. It goes hand-in-hand with the BFI's own mission to connect audiences with the widest possible range of content. We look forward to making the most of this new opportunity to back talent to create bold and original programming and expand the choices available for young people.

Also announced today as part of the Contestable Fund is a £3m Audio Content Fund which will encourage greater innovation and experimentation in the commercial radio sector.

Currently, examples of public service content (aside from national and local news) on commercial radio are rare due to commercial pressures. By removing the necessity for commercial stations and producers to seek as much sponsorship and advertising revenue, the fund will provide significant support to radio producers to try something different, particularly with new voices who do not have an established relationship with broadcasters and therefore access to funding.

**Siobhan Kenny, Chief Executive at Radiocentre, said:**

Commercial radio stations are always looking at new ways to serve their listeners, but sometimes the financial reality makes it

difficult to do everything they would like. The Audio Content Fund has the potential to provide a significant boost in public service content for audiences, as well as a great opportunity for commercial radio broadcasters to broaden the range of output they provide.

Further guidance, including how to apply to both of the funds, will be published by the fund administrators in the new year. The pilot will then be open for applications in April 2019.

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## [Press release: Government launches plan to ban plastic straws, cotton-buds, and stirrers](#)

The Government has today (22 October) set out its plan to ban the distribution and sale of plastic straws, drinks stirrers and cotton buds to protect our rivers and seas.

The plan is subject to a [consultation](#) launched by Environment Secretary Michael Gove.

In England, it is estimated that annually [we use](#) 4.7 billion plastic straws, 316 million plastic stirrers and 1.8 billion plastic-stemmed cotton buds. An [estimated](#) 10% of cotton buds are flushed down toilets and can end up in waterways and oceans.

Even though non-plastic alternatives are readily available, these single-use plastic items are used for just a few minutes but take hundreds of years to break down. Cleaning up the effects of littering costs local Government millions of pounds every year.

In order to eliminate these items from use, the Government intends to introduce a ban on their distribution and sale. The ban would come into force at some point between October 2019 and October 2020, subject to the views collected during consultation.

We recognise there are instances where using plastic straws is necessary for medical reasons and our consultation seeks views on how to ensure those who need straws for medical and accessibility reasons can still use them. For example, pharmacies will still be able to sell plastic straws and restaurants, pubs and bars will be able to stock some straws for use on request. The Government will work closely with stakeholders to ensure these exemptions are crafted exactly right.

Launching the consultation, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Our precious oceans and the wildlife within need urgent protection from the devastation throw-away plastic items can cause.

In England we are taking world-leading action with our ban on microbeads, and thanks to the public's support have taken over [15 billion plastic bags](#) out of circulation with our 5p charge.

I commend retailers, bars and restaurants that have already committed to removing plastic straws and stirrers. But we recognise we need to do more. Today we step-up our efforts to turn the tide on plastic pollution and ensure we leave our environment in a better state than we inherited it.

The announcement follows the success of the government's world-leading ban on [microbeads](#) and 5p charge on single-use plastic bags, which has seen distribution by [major supermarkets drop by 86%](#).

Greenpeace UK's political adviser Sam Chetan Welsh said:

Our society's addiction to throwaway plastic is fuelling a global environmental crisis that must be tackled.

Ministers are doing the sensible thing by looking to ban single-use plastic items that can be easily replaced with better alternatives or that we can simply do without. But this should be just the start.

If we are to protect our oceans from the scourge of plastic, the flow of waste needs to be cut off at the tap. And that means the companies producing and selling all this packaging must take responsibility for it and cut down the amount of plastic ending up in our shopping baskets.

Kate Nicholls CEO of UKHospitality said:

We wholeheartedly welcome this consultation on an issue of vital importance and one which hospitality has already taken significant action.

Since UKHospitality's Unpack the Future of Hospitality summit in the spring, thousands of pubs clubs, restaurants and hotels across the UK have changed their straws and stirrers to biodegradables, or adopted policies that cut or eliminate their use in their venues.

The Government is seeking views on how we can cut plastic waste and we look forward to continued engagement to play a part in achieving that goal.

It is estimated there are over [150 million tonnes of plastic in the world's oceans](#) and every year one million birds and [over 100,000 sea mammals die](#) from eating and getting tangled in plastic waste. A [recent report](#) estimates that plastic in the sea is set to treble by 2025.

Today's move builds on the Prime Minister's recent visit to Kenya, where she announced a further five African Commonwealth Countries (Seychelles, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and the Gambia) have joined the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance, pledging their support to end the scourge of plastics in our oceans. The Alliance, announced in April during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), sees countries across the Commonwealth join forces in the fight against plastic, whether through a ban on microbeads, a commitment to cutting down on single-use plastic bags, or taking other steps to eliminate avoidable single-use plastic.

The UK government has committed [a £61.4 million package of funding](#) to boost global research and help countries across the Commonwealth stop plastic waste from entering the oceans in the first place.

The government is also looking at further ways to reduce avoidable waste and recycle more as part of its Resources and Waste Strategy to be published later this year.

## Further information:

- Single-use plastics can be [defined](#) as all products that are made wholly or partly of plastic and are typically intended to be used just once and/or for a short period of time before being disposed of.
- The figure that plastic in the sea is set to treble is taken from the [Future of the Sea](#) report, 2018.
- The [consultation](#) will be open for six weeks.

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# Press release: UK Government unveils extensive measures to clamp down on global corruption, giving criminals “nowhere to hide”

International campaign launched to clamp down on companies where the identity of the real owners is unknown, aiming to bring to a halt the getaway vehicles of the corrupt.

£4.6 million of funding announced to support anti-corruption initiatives abroad, helping the public hold their governments to account.

The UK Government has announced wide-ranging measures to tackle corruption at home and abroad ahead of the International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) in Copenhagen today.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, announced today [Monday, 22 October] wide-ranging measures to tackle corruption at home and abroad ahead of the International Anti-Corruption Conference in Copenhagen, where the UK will call on international partners to join them in tackling systemic global corruption.

The conference, the biggest of its kind with more than a thousand participants from a hundred countries, is being hosted by the Danish Government and follows the UK's [Anti-Corruption Summit](#) in 2016.

At the conference, the Department for International Development, alongside the Prime Minister's Anti-Corruption champion, John Penrose MP, will launch an international campaign to promote transparency of company ownership.

The UK Government will urge countries to follow the UK's lead and ensure every company registered in their country publicly discloses their real owner. Secret companies – companies where the identity of the owners is unknown – are a major facilitator of corruption, enabling fraud, tax evasion, organised crime and terrorist financing.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, said:

Corruption destroys governments, economies and public services by taking money away from society and lining the pockets of ruthless criminals.

That's why we are bolstering our work on tackling corruption both



here at home and in the most fragile states in the world, giving these criminals nowhere to hide.

Dealing with endemic corruption in developing nations is vital for our national security and in creating trading partners for the future. It is a win for the developing world and a win for the UK.

Ms. Mordaunt has called on countries to work together to create a new “global norm” whereby a critical mass of nations will publish who actually owns the companies that are registered in their country.

The conference will also see the Government of Ukraine sign an agreement with [Open Ownership](#), a DFID-funded organisation that is working to build a [Global Beneficial Ownership Register](#), bringing together data about who owns companies from around the world. There are already 5.3 million companies on the register. DFID is supporting Open Ownership to help governments, such as those of Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya, to implement the commitments they made to publish their own national registers of company ownership.

DFID also announced funding today aimed at furthering the UK’s world-leading work on anti-corruption and international illicit finance.

£2.6 million of support for the [International Budget Partnership \(IBP\)](#), an organisation that reports on the transparency of government budgets. This helps measure global progress on budget transparency and tackling corruption.

A £2 million contribution for the [International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions Development Initiative \(IDI\)](#), an organisation which strengthens governments’ audit institutions – particularly fragile states in Africa, curtailing corruption. This helps to transform countries into becoming the trading partners of the future, and builds on the Prime Minister’s landmark visit to Africa in August.

The announcements follow the publication of the [UK Anti-Corruption Strategy](#) in December 2017. That strategy set out how tackling corruption is crucial to UK national security, to international prosperity, and to building citizens’ trust in government.

Earlier this month, there was a further boost to the UK’s fight against corruption at home and overseas when the Court of Appeal lifted anonymity on the target of the UK’s first [Unexplained Wealth Order](#), the wife of an Azeri banker jailed for defrauding a state-owned bank. She spent £16 million in Harrods, and is now obliged to explain how she sourced that wealth.

The Court of Appeal’s decision has set a precedent which will act as a deterrent for individuals looking to use the UK as a destination for illegal funds.

## Notes to Editors

1. The cost of corruption worldwide is estimated to be more than 2% of global GDP, and the World Bank estimates that over \$1 trillion is paid

- in bribes each year.
2. The World Bank estimated that 70% of grand corruption cases involved the use of companies with anonymous owners.
  3. Unexplained Wealth Orders were introduced in 2018 in the [Sanction and Anti-Money Laundering Act](#). They give UK law enforcement the power to challenge suspected corrupt individuals who appear to have assets inconsistent with their declared incomes. They place the obligation on defendants to justify or explain their wealth.
  4. During the Prime Minister's visit to Kenya in August, the UK announced a series of major new programmes to recover millions of pounds of illegal assets in developing countries. This included creating new centres of British expertise in major financial hubs and training law enforcement officials in southern and eastern Africa to improve criminal justice systems by tightening legislation and strengthening investigation techniques. This is helping to build their capacity to clamp down on serious organised crime. You can read more about this [here](#).
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### General media queries

Email

[mediateam@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:mediateam@dfid.gov.uk)

Telephone

020 7023 0600

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