

Press release: UK Government and Chwarae Teg join forces to #PressforProgress to mark International Women's Day

Governments, business and society must continue to be bold if we are to deliver real change for women in Wales and the world, Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns said today as the UK Government marks International Women's Day (8 March).

This year's theme is #PressforProgress – a call to action for the world to take concrete steps to help achieve gender parity more quickly.

And right across Wales today, men and women alike will take part in impressive programme of rallies, concerts, workshops, conferences and performances to send out the message that continued awareness and action is required to ensure that women's equality is gained and maintained in all aspects of life.

The UK Government in Wales and Welsh gender equality charity Chwarae Teg will play their part on Monday 12 March when they join forces to host an International Women's Day themed business breakfast at the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales in Cardiff Bay.

Giving women and girls the support and opportunities to progress from the classroom right through to the boardroom will top the agenda at the event which will also look at ways to break down workplace barriers and how to build inclusive workplaces for the benefit of the Welsh economy.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

For too long, not enough has been done to help women to fulfil their true potential. That is something that we, as a Government, have been working hard to address.

The past few months have seen a real sea change in attitudes to women and gender equality, and the UK Government wants to seize and build upon that strength of feeling and drive forward even more change.

That is why I'm delighted to be working together with Chwarae Teg to welcome women together at this event to celebrate the advancement and achievements of women in business, but to also pause and reflect on the many challenges that lie ahead.

Chwarae Teg Chief Executive, Cerys Furlong, said:

Our vision at Chwarae Teg, is for Wales to become a world leader in gender equality. It is only when women have equal representation and equal access to the workplace that the economy of Wales can truly flourish.

Chwarae Teg works with businesses and organisations across Wales to help them to tackle the barriers that women face and to build inclusive workplaces to the benefit of everyone. Women must be seen and heard at all levels and across all of society.

More women at the table means that the issues affecting women are discussed and solutions are found, leading to better services and better legislation for all. Women must also feel safe in the workplace, we want to see a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and abuse leading to a shift in working cultures.

There are now 44,000 more women in work in Wales than there was in 2010, and the UK Government is making significant strides in delivering the changes and creating the conditions required for women from all walks of life who want their horizons broadened and aspirations lifted.

How the UK Government is leading by example:

- The UK has become one of the first countries to introduce gender pay gap (GPG) reporting requirements. This law will mean all large employers have to publish their GPG figure, shining a light on where women are being held back.
- Introducing Shared Parental Leave to offer choice to eligible parents when it comes to childcare, and allow mothers to return to work sooner if they wish to.
- Rolling out tax free childcare schemes benefitting thousands of families in Wales.
- Pledging to end violence against women at home and abroad by introducing tough new laws to protect women from domestic violence, forced marriage and FGM.
- Launching the [Industrial Strategy](#) – a long-term plan to build a Britain fit for the future by helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK.

Notes to Editors

- International Women's Day is a day of global celebration marking the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.
- Chwarae Teg is a charity working in Wales to support the economic development of women as well as working with businesses and organisations to develop and improve working practices

News story: Record number of women on FTSE 100 boards

- Record 309 women on FTSE 100 boards, new data reveals
- A quarter of FTSE 350 board positions now filled by women
- FTSE 100 firms on track to hit target of a third of board positions being filled by women by 2020

New data to mark International Women's Day reveals more women than ever before are on boards of the UK's largest companies.

These figures show 309 positions – almost 29% – of FTSE100 board positions are held by women, up from 12.5% in 2011. In FTSE 350 companies, the number of women chairs has risen from 17 to 20 while the number of women on boards has increased to 25.2%.

If progress matches the same gains made over the last three years then a third of board positions will be filled by women by 2020 – the target set by the Government-backed Hampton-Alexander Review.

Business Minister Andrew Griffiths today urged businesses to renew their commitment to tackling gender inequality.

Business Minister Andrew Griffiths said:

International Women's Day is about celebrating women's achievements and I am delighted to see that a record number of our largest companies' board positions are now filled by women.

There has been a lot of progress in recent years with high-flying women breaking down barriers to more than double the number of women on FTSE 100 boards but there is still a lot more to do to ensure that women are not held back in the workplace.

Sir Philip Hampton, chair of the Hampton-Alexander Review said:

Today is a day to celebrate the efforts of all women and men who have worked hard to ensure a women's place is absolutely in the boardroom.

British business and the UK economy are all the better for it and we have now created a strong platform on which to build.

Under new laws, over 1,400 companies have reported their gender pay gaps

revealing an overall pay gap of 18.4%. All companies with more than 250 employees must report their gender pay gaps by April 4 (30 March for the public sector).

Tackling the gender pay gap is part of the Industrial Strategy Government's long-term plan to build a Britain fit for the future, with the ambition to help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs and ensure everyone can be successful in the workplace. Bridging the gender pay gap could add £150 billion to the UK economy by 2025 .

Notes to Editors:

Figures for women on boards of FTSE companies published on 6 February by BoardEx, a business intelligence provider, show:

- FTSE 100 is at 28.7% up from 27.7% in October
- FTSE 250 is at 23.4 % up from 22.8%
- FTSE 350 is at 25.2% up from 24.5%
- All-male boards down from 10 to 8
- The number of women Chairs across the FTSE 350 has gone up from 17 to 20

[News story: James 2 and Vertrouwen report and flyers published](#)

MAIB's report on the collision between the fishing vessel Vertrouwen and the motor cruiser James 2, resulting in the sinking of James 2 with the loss of 3 lives in Sussex Bay on 6 August 2017 is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, subsequent actions taken and recommendations: [read more](#). This page also contains a short video about the investigation findings.

[Safety flyers to the fishing vessel industry and sea angling community](#) summarising the accident and detailing the safety lessons learned, have also been produced.

Press enquiries

Press enquiries during office hours 01932 440015

Press enquiries out of hours 020 7944 4292

[News story: New UK-Saudi Arabia partnership to boost livelihoods and economic development in world's poorest countries](#)

The UK and Saudi Arabia are building a new long-term partnership to improve livelihoods, boost economic development and create vital infrastructure to support some of the world's poorest people in drought and conflict-stricken countries. This includes a commitment to work together in East Africa, which will in turn strengthen global prosperity.

The partnership – announced during the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia's visit to the UK – is the first of its kind between the Department for International Development and the Saudi Fund for Development. It will see British development experts working closer with Saudi counterparts, including in the Horn and East of Africa where both countries are already helping to lift people out of poverty.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Global Britain is rightly recognised as an international leader when it comes to helping the most vulnerable, saving lives and tackling global challenges.

The Saudi Fund has a long record of investing in successful development projects around the world. We are sharing the best of British expertise, and our collective efforts will help create jobs and livelihoods to support the poorest people to stand on their own two feet. This in turn will help to boost global prosperity which is in all our interests.

By building critical infrastructure for some of the world's poorest whose lives are threatened by drought, disease and conflict, together we can make a bigger difference and ensure that everyday tasks like collecting drinking water are made much easier.

Today both countries signed the Joint Cooperation Memorandum recognising the collaboration between DFID and KS Relief to strengthen both countries' humanitarian efforts.

During the meeting, the UK noted that it was encouraged by the easing of restrictions into Yemen to ensure vital food and other supplies get through Hodeidah and Saleef ports to those in need.

While the UK recognises Saudi Arabia's legitimate security concerns and will continue to provide support to prevent illegal arms smuggling into Yemen,

there is no excuse to prevent humanitarian and commercial supplies from reaching those in need.

This builds on the International Development Secretary's visit to Saudi Arabia in December, where she called on all parties to the conflict in Yemen to restore and maintain full access for humanitarian and commercial imports and find a peaceful solution to stop Yemen falling into famine.

Notes to Editors

- Both the UK and Saudi Arabia are already providing support to progress economic development across the East and Horn of Africa. Today's partnership will see a joint commitment of £100 million between the two countries to further these efforts – the UK's contribution will include allocations from existing country budgets.

[News story: Public Health England statement regarding events in Salisbury](#)

Public Health England statement regarding events in Salisbury – GOV.UK

Summary of public health actions and advice on the ongoing incident involving 2 people in Salisbury.



Paul Cosford, Medical Director and Director of Health Protection at Public Health England (PHE) said:

All known first responders have been contacted through their organisations and encouraged to seek further advice should they experience any symptoms. The sites recently visited by the 2 people affected have all been secured and PHE is reminding local clinicians of the symptoms to look out for.

Based on current evidence, the risk to the wider public is low and it is likely that, had any member of the public been exposed to the substance, they would have presented with symptoms by now. However, anyone who was in the area and is concerned because they feel unwell, should dial 111 or 999 depending on the severity of their symptoms.

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Thank you for your feedback