

Press release: Welsh Lifeboat charities pocket slice of £1 million UK Government fund to boost search and rescue efforts

The money has been made available by the inshore and inland rescue boat grant fund and is the fourth round of funding under this 5-year, £5 million scheme.

Five charities across the length and breadth of Wales will use the funding to purchase new lifeboats and maritime equipment including lifejackets, helmets, boots, ropes, knives and torches.

They are:

- Ferryside Lifeboat – £7,363.20
- Loughor Inshore Rescue – £10,242.08
- North Wales Mountain Rescue Association – £28,155.44
- Porthmawr SLS – £17,380.62
- Rhose Lifeguards – £5,679

UK Government Minister in Wales Guto Bebb said:

Wales benefits from countless volunteer and charitable organisations working round the clock to help during emergencies on our rivers, lakes and inshore waters, as well as during flooding and other extreme weather. This funding supports the vital rescue services they provide.

Supporting our volunteers remains an integral part of the UK Government's ongoing drive for a fairer society. I am delighted to see Welsh rescue services benefitting in this latest round of funding, ensuring they have the equipment and resources they need to provide their crucial, life-saving services.

Maritime Minister John Hayes said:

Every day water rescue volunteers risk their safety to protect the lives of people across the UK. Their dedication and highly specialised skills are absolutely crucial to providing inshore and inland rescue services.

This extra money means that the volunteers and charities can purchase the lifeboats and equipment they need. It means that assistance is never far away for those in need or in distress on or around our waterways.

Since its launch in 2014, the grant has provided water rescue services up and down the UK with funding for new boats, vehicles and equipment.

A total of 62 organisations will receive a share of the £1m funding for 2017-18 after their bids were considered by an expert panel.

Chaired by the Department for Transport and made up of representatives from DfT, DEFRA, devolved administrations, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, RNLI and the Royal Yachting Association, the panel assessed bids taking into account:

- How the equipment listed supports or enhances the organisation's rescue capability
- Evidence that the items funded represent good value for money
- Applicants were also required to match fund 10% of the costs of funded items, and to provide a letter of support from the authority that tasks them to rescues

Sir Alan Massey, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, said:

These smaller, independent charities are the lifeblood of our communities, playing a vital role in supporting the daily lives of thousands of people across the UK.

We often need to remind ourselves that these brave women and men may be called at any time of the day or night to assist persons in difficulty. Those persons may be lost or injured, in trouble at sea, or needing to be rescued from fast-flowing water or floods.

It's essential that funding like this is available to independent lifeboats so that they have the proper emergency equipment to aid in rescues. This funding will help meet their goals and ease their financial burden.