

[New funding for musical instruments in schools – Kirsty Williams](#)

The funding of £220,000 will help local authority music services to purchase instruments that can be shared across Wales and be targeted at those most in need.

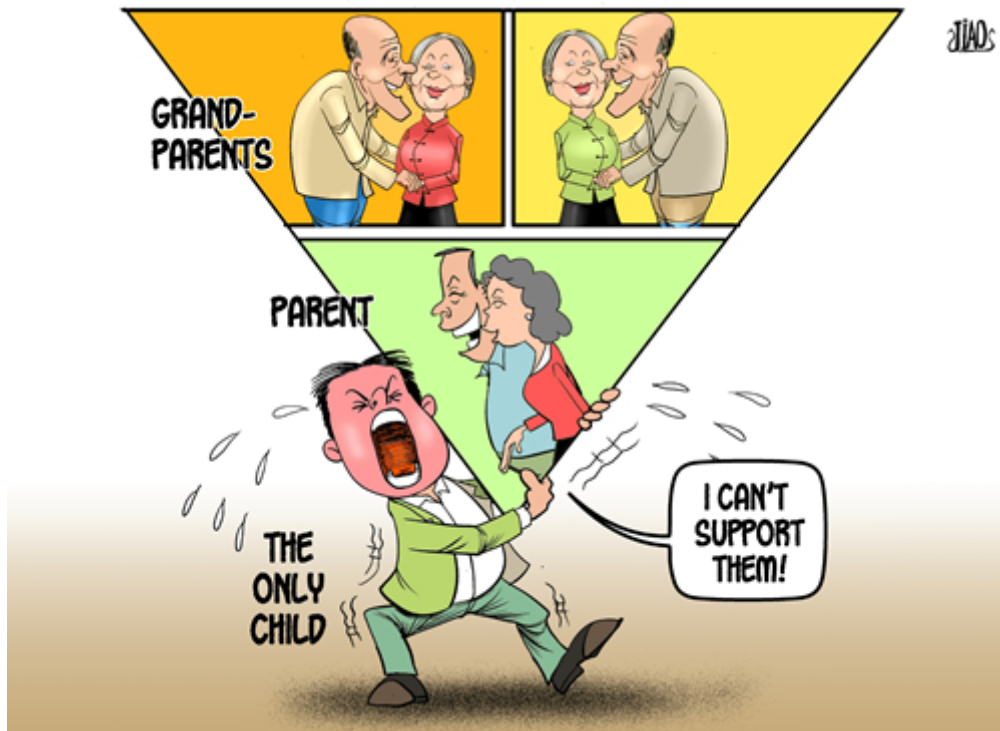
Kirsty Williams said:

“A young person’s love and talent for music cannot be developed unless they have access to the instrument of their choice, especially for those who want to progress to the next level with individual music tuition. That is why I am announcing an extra £220,000 of funding, meaning £10,000 will be available to each local authority, through the Welsh Local Government Association, to buy new musical instruments.

“We are also working with councils to establish a mechanism for sharing instruments nationally to ensure that local authorities can make better use of their existing stock of instruments and identify gaps, which this new funding can help them address”.

The Welsh Government recently announced £1 million to establish a National Endowment for Music, which will enable more young people to access musical opportunities. The aim is for the fund to eventually generate at least £1m per year, which will be used to fund additional music activities for young people across the country.

[China’s aging population will reach 255m by 2020](#)



Inverted pyramid [By Jiao Haiyang/China.org.cn]

Chinese authorities are projecting the country's aged population (above 60 years old) will reach 255 million by 2020, but the provision of necessary healthcare and nursing will fall seriously short of requirements.

According to a plan for elderly healthcare in the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016–2020) jointly issued by 13 Chinese government departments including the National Health and Family Planning Commission and National Development and Reform Commission, the aging population will grow at an average rate of 6.4 million a year. By 2020, there will be 255 million elders, representing at least 17.8 percent of the entire Chinese population.

The planning document indicates there will be an increasing number of totally and partially disabled elders in the future. In 2015, the figure was 40.63 million, among whom 11.35 million had disability identity certificates.

However, China lags behind in elderly healthcare services and the growing population imposes worrying pressures on the system. In 2015, China had 453 elderly convalescent hospitals, 168 nursing homes and 65 nursing service stations to provide the much-needed medical care for the elderly.

Also in 2015, there were only 36,441, 11,180 and 316 staff members respectively in the specialist hospitals, nursing homes, and nursing stations.

Luo Qimin, a senior engineer who has been undertaking researches into elderly people's rehabilitation assistance devices for more than two decades, told 21st Century Business Herald that China has just made a start in dealing with aging issues, which are very complicated.

"The most urgent issue is the government should organize a really professional team on the national level, involving every aspect, including

medical care, rehabilitation, creation of environment suitable for the elderly, and policy-making, and treating the aging problem as a severe problem needing urgent resolution," he said.

The planning document proposes the concept of "growing old healthily," which means that to comprehensively and systematically intervene at an early stage of life in all elements that may influence health. This will create a favorable environment for living and nurture social support for elders' health, which can extend the life expectancy and maintain good health.

It also pointed out that China has not built a comprehensive and continuous service system yet to meet elders' various health demands.

Li Fen, a research director from Shanghai Healthcare Development Research Center, added that elderly people usually suffer from more than one disease including chronic conditions, so there is great need for close cooperation among various hospitals and medical care institutions and personnel, as well as in the technologies and medicines. Currently, there is no strong connection and interaction among different institutions and medical professionals.

[China to announce annual water-quality rankings](#)

Starting from this year, China will publish the annual rankings of cities with the best and poorest water quality, as the government moves to further increase transparency.

In addition, results of investigations into major or sensitive environmental emergencies, their impacts on the environment, and assessments of losses will also be made known to the public in line with the law, according to the central government's agendas for 2017 unveiled by the State Council.

Water quality has not drawn as much attention from the public as air quality, and the rankings will serve as a form of supervision over local governments, as well as motivate them to step up efforts to treat polluted water and improve water quality, said Peng Yingdeng, a Beijing-based researcher in urban environmental pollution control.

China still has a long way to go in the treatment of polluted and odorous water, Peng said, adding that the rankings will prompt cities that have done poorly in this regard to strive harder for improvements.

Speech: UK government supports training of Zambia peacekeeping defence forces

It is a great honour to be here today. I lived and worked for two years with the British, US and Afghan military in the war-zone of Helmand, southern Afghanistan, during which time our coalition forces were losing lives on an almost daily basis. And my eldest son is a British army officer who could be deployed on operations at any time. Therefore I know from personal experience about the good that our armed forces can achieve in trying to stabilise places in the world that are shattered by conflict. And I know about the sacrifices that brave military personnel are often called upon to make.

I repeat that it is an honour to be here today.

I echo the US Ambassador's congratulations to President Lungu, to the Government, to the Zambian Defence forces, and to the Zambian people, for supporting peace and security mission in Africa, with boots on the ground.

I am glad that British Army trainers could assist again with the Zambian Defence Force's pre-deployment training, in 2017 as we did in 2016. The training of ZAMBATT 3 over the last 2 months has been a joint effort between Zambian, US and UK trainers: the Zambian Army under Colonel Changala, US African Contingency Operations Training & Assistance under the direction of Curtis Crum, and British Army under W01 Regimental Sergeant Major Ash Curson.

The training package involved individual specialist courses ranging from advance medical training to creating and training the female engagement teams rightly highlighted by the US Ambassador. This training then progressed from training individuals to Companies of around 120 personnel, and to the whole Battle Group 750-strong.

I wish to thank the Zambian and US teams for their patience in trying to understand the wide variety of British accents within the UK team. While Britain can't compare with Zambia for the number of local languages spoken, we display our diversity through regional accents and dialects which can be difficult to comprehend when first heard, even for fellow countrymen like myself.

The British team have described to me the training as "testing". I gather that Mr Crum and Colonel Changala, who designed, coordinated and, ran this package, are not the kind of trainers who would allow anyone to have an easy or comfortable time.

Credit must go to Colonel Changala, and his Zambian trainers, who worked tirelessly to ensure their fellow country men and women are now well placed to achieve a positive effect in the Central African Republic.

Mention should be made of the Zambian Air Force contingent, under the command of Col Alipher Phiri, who have been put through their paces – from base protection to helicopter casualty evacuation exercise. I wish you well with your probable mission to South Sudan.

I wish to pay tribute, as well, to Lt Col John Banda, CO of ZAMBATT 3, for the sterling effort he and his headquarters team have put into shaping ZAMBATT 3 into an effective force of which Zambia can proud.

ZAMBATT 3 can expect a challenging tour, with your subunits spread over great distances in a confusing and contested environment, where the belligerent forces are neither easily defined nor contained.

ZAMBATT 3, you represent a glimmer of hope to the people of the Central African Republic. Treat them with respect. Since you are guests in their land, the onus will be on you to understand their story, their pain and anger, after the trauma they have experienced. When you finish your work in their country, let them remember the people of Zambia with affection and pride.

Lt Col John Banda, I wish you and the men and women of ZAMBATT 3 the best of luck. From what my British Army colleagues have told me, I don't believe that ZAMBATT 3 will be found wanting.

[Corrupt Chinese fugitive repatriated from Zimbabwe](#)

A retired Chinese tax official has been returned from Zimbabwe to China less than four months after he fled a corruption probe and hid in the southern African country.

It is Jiangsu Province's fastest repatriation of a corrupt fugitive, provincial anti-graft officials said.

Yang Xingfu, who retired as the deputy head of Local Taxation Bureau of Nantong City in 2015, fled to Zimbabwe last December, fearing a graft investigation.

Initial probes revealed evidence of Yang's abuse of power and acceptance of bribes in construction projects, corporate financing, and handling tax transfers since 2010 during his term of office.

The local procuratorate issued detention orders for Yang in January 2017. Learning he was in Zimbabwe, a law enforcement team was promptly assembled and dispatched, the officials said. Police in Zimbabwe held Yang and transferred him to the team in accordance with the law.

The case is still being investigated.

“The operation shows that there is no haven for corrupt officials abroad,” said Yao Aishan, deputy head of the Jiangsu provincial procuratorate’s anti-corruption bureau. “They won’t escape punishment by the law, no matter where they flee.”

Yao urged other fugitives on the run to turn themselves in to be considered for leniency.

China has stepped up efforts in international cooperation to hunt criminal fugitives. Operation “Sky Net,” for example, repatriated 908 fugitives, including 122 officials, from over 70 countries or regions in 11 months last year.

Most fugitives have fled to developed countries, including Canada, the United States, and Australia, but a few have also taken refuge in Africa.