

[News story: Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visit North Wales helicopter base](#)

Their Royal Highnesses have been meeting with crew members and their family, many of whom they knew when the Duke worked as a search and rescue pilot at RAF Valley between 2010 – 2013.

In 2015, search and rescue air operations transferred to HM Coastguard with Caernarfon one of ten new bases opening.

The Duke and Duchess had an opportunity to see the Sikorsky S92 helicopters, and meet members of the current search and rescue team, many of whom worked alongside the Duke during his time at RAF Valley. The Duke and Duchess heard about the support provided to promote mental health and wellbeing by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency and its SAR partners.

Damien Oliver, aviation programme director at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) said: 'As a former search and rescue pilot, His Royal Highness understands the challenges our crews face and the risks they take to save lives. The Duke was very interested in our search and rescue helicopters' capabilities and the work that they do.

'We were pleased to be able to share with the Duke and Duchess the work we do to support frontline responders who face rescuing people in traumatic circumstances.'" Capt Martin Shepherd, deputy chief pilot at the Caernarfon base, said: "A number of our crew are former colleagues of His Royal Highness, so it was a real pleasure for them to spend some time catching up on their work together, and talking about how the service is evolving.

"The Duke and Duchess have shown their unwavering support for mental health services and awareness through Heads Together. Our colleagues were able to offer their views on how support for those affected by mental health issues within the search and rescue community continues to improve."

[Press release: Grant announced to help improve the health of rough sleepers](#)

Public Health England (PHE) is today, Friday 10 May 2019, announcing a call for bids for a share of up to £1.9 million, to be awarded to projects involving partnerships between local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) that test models aimed at improving access to health services

for people who are sleeping rough.

Successful projects will focus on improving access to health services for people with co-occurring mental ill-health and substance misuse problems who are currently, or at risk of returning to, sleeping rough.

The deadline to submit an application is Friday 5 July 2019, with successful projects announced later this year.

On a single night in Autumn 2018, 4,677 people were recorded as sleeping rough in England. There is much more to do to address the root causes of homelessness and ensure that people who do sleep rough are properly supported.

The government's [Rough sleeping strategy](#), published in August 2018, sets out the vision for ending rough sleeping once and for all, with the aim of halving it by 2022. It recognises the need for action to support people sleeping rough now to move off the streets, including targeted support to enable access to health services.

Many people rough sleeping also experience mental and physical ill health and have substance misuse needs. Of the [people seen sleeping rough in London in 2017 to 2018](#):

- 50% had mental health needs
- 43% had alcohol misuse problems
- 40% drug misuse problems

Outside of London, where people are more likely to sleep rough for longer, support needs may be higher.

Rosanna O'Connor, Director of Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Justice at Public Health England said:

We know that people sleeping rough, particularly those with mental health and substance misuse problems, often find it difficult to use local health services.

Without getting the vital help and support they need to look after their health problems, some of the most vulnerable people in our communities face a 'revolving door' situation where they are repeatedly in and out of stable accommodation, while their health deteriorates.

This funding will enable the testing of models that are effective in breaking this pattern and in helping people to turn their lives around.

Minister for Housing and Homelessness, Heather Wheeler MP, said:

People should not face barriers to accessing healthcare simply because they do not have a roof over their heads.

Our £100 million-backed rough sleeping strategy aims to ensure that people experiencing rough sleeping can access the health care they need, when they need it.

The funding announced today will help local authorities and NHS services work together to improve access to services for those who have mental ill-health and substance misuse needs – helping them break free of the challenging cycle of health issues and homelessness.

For successful areas, this grant will be used to test models that are effective in improving access to health services. The models will be evaluated, and it is hoped that the learning from this will inform national policy and local commissioning of health and support services for people who rough sleep.

To support local authorities and clinical commissioning groups to develop their applications for funding, PHE has also today published [guidance and further information on how to apply](#).

[Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and providing specialist public health services.

We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and [Facebook](#).

[Press release: British exports hit a record high, according to new official data](#)

Data released today (10th May) by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows the 2018/19 financial year was a record-breaking year for UK exports, as they reached £639.9 billion.

Total exports grew at a rate of 3.0% and increased by £18.5 billion compared to the 2017/18 financial year.

Despite the uncertain global economic outlook, UK exports have been growing for the past 36 consecutive months on an annual rolling basis, an indication of the unparalleled spirit and resilience of UK exporters up and down the country.

In terms of services alone, the ONS figures show our dynamic services sector saw exports increase by 1.4% to £283.8 billion in the 2018/19 financial year.

Separate data published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) showed between 2016 and 2018, UK total exports grew at 13.8%, faster than Germany (10.5%), France (10.1%) and Italy (11.4%).

The OECD data also showed UK export growth was faster than the overall rate for the European Union (11.9%).

Secretary of State for International Trade, Dr Liam Fox, said:

UK exports continue to grow and beat records across Europe, these new numbers published today highlight the quality and innovation of British goods and services and how much they are valued across the globe.

From exports of our Scotch Whisky to our world-class cars, consumers all over the world are demanding British goods at unprecedented levels.

My international economic department is confident British businesses will continue to excel as we leave the EU and will offer its full support to businesses with the same ambition.

Not only are UK exports booming, but foreign direct investment (FDI) into the UK is also at a record high. Data released by the OECD last week showed UK inwards investment stock in 2018 increased by 5% to £1,400 billion.

The figures confirm the UK as the leading destination for FDI in Europe, and the third most significant in the world.

Notes to editors

- Balance of Payments [ONS data](#)
 - Balance of Payments [OECD data](#)
 - [OECD FDI](#)
 - Total exports = goods exports and services exports combined.
 - Exports are in reported in nominal terms.
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[News story: Darwin Initiative: £8 million in twenty-fifth funding round for international conservation projects](#)

Wild tulips, food security and coastal and forest habitat conservation are at the heart of the 32 new international conservation projects set to be awarded a share of £8.2 million from the UK government's [Darwin Initiative](#).

Recent reports on international nature have put the issue of species loss high on the nation's agenda. Last week, the [UN's Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) report showed nearly a million species are in danger of extinction and the Darwin Initiative is part of the UK government's response to this emerging issue.

This latest round of funding, the twenty-fifth since the birth of the Darwin Initiative in 1992, is putting an emphasis on nature and health and providing security of food supply to rural communities in some of the most remote parts of the globe.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey will hear more about on-going Darwin-backed projects led by [Chester Zoo](#) when she visits and meets the team in Cheshire today (10 May).

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Nature matters, and the Darwin Initiative continues to support hundreds of projects that restore and enhance wildlife and nature.

These schemes are helping nature and our wider environment, delivering clean air and water, sustainable food supplies, and recovery and resilience to natural disasters.

That is why I am delighted to announce another £8 million of funding for these crucial projects. Our government is taking action at home and abroad to ensure we are the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

Twenty-fifth round

[The Darwin Initiative](#) is a grants scheme that helps to protect nature and the natural environment around the globe.

Many of the applications reflect the UK government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) commitments to protect the marine environment, to secure the benefits of biodiversity for the poorest communities, and to help prevent the extinction

of species. The 25th round of funding comes during the government's Year of Green Action, a year-long drive to help people to connect with, protect and enhance nature.

Projects supported by [the Darwin Initiative](#) are illustrative of a 'win-win' approach, encouraging sustainable livelihoods whilst conserving some of the world's iconic and endangered species and landscapes, which benefits us all.

The projects set to benefit from the twenty-fifth round of funding include:

- Fauna & Flora International's project to secure the future and resilience of wild tulips and pastoral communities in the Kyrgyzstan mountains, which are vital to local community livelihoods
- ZSL's work in Nepal on a project called 'Ghodaghodi's Guardians: Communities restoring a Ramsar wetland at watershed scale' to increase well-being and water security whilst protecting biodiversity
- The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh's project 'Know your onions: sustainable plant use in Tajikistan', leading to increased income, access to locally grown produce and increased capacity to cultivate produce
- The World Vegetable Center's project 'Traditional African vegetables strengthen food and nutrition security in Madagascar', to secure benefits of agro-biodiversity for poor farmer households
- And WWT's project 'Enhancing wetland resilience for improved biodiversity and livelihoods in Cambodia' will work in internationally important Lower Mekong Delta to promote sustainable livelihoods and restore wildlife habitat.

Chester Zoo

Chester Zoo has been a leading partner on five Darwin Initiative projects since 2007 and Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey will visit later today for an update on their most recent project working with Andean 'spectacled' bears in South America.

Speaking about Chester Zoo's projects, Minister Coffey said:

Chester Zoo is a leading conservation organisation and has demonstrated how to achieve successful outcomes for nature around the globe by making excellent use of the Darwin Initiative funding.

Dr Mark Pilgrim, Chief Executive Officer at Chester Zoo, said:

One million species are at risk of extinction. But Darwin Initiative funding has been vital in helping us to tackle human wildlife conflict worldwide – working side by side with local communities, protecting bears in Bolivia, elephants in India and tigers in Nepal. Conservation projects like these are urgent and critical. Our planet depends on them.

For over 10 years [Chester Zoo's Assam Haathi Project](#) has been working to reduce human-elephant conflict. Conflict between elephants and people is a challenge in Assam and is unsustainable for both the survival of the elephants and the livelihoods of the local people.

[News story: New funding for rough sleepers living with mental illness and substance misuse](#)

The Health and Social Care Secretary has announced that £1.9 million will be given to councils by Public Health England to help improve the health of rough sleepers.

The funding will be awarded to projects that improve access to health services and continuity of care for people with mental ill-health and substance misuse problems who are sleeping rough or at risk of returning to rough sleeping.

This could include:

- 'in-reach' care models where specialist substance misuse or mental health workers run sessions in hostels or day centres
- 'outreach' models where specialist workers support rough sleepers at street level
- targeted interventions such as peer health advocacy that supports individuals to access and attend health appointments

To apply for a share of the funding, applicants should read the [guidance and application pack](#) before submitting their completed expression of interest and budget template to roughsleepinggrant@phe.gov.uk. The deadline is 5pm on Friday 5 July 2019. Successful projects will be announced in the summer.

Many people who are sleeping rough experience mental and physical illness and have substance misuse needs.

Rough sleepers face more barriers accessing health services, particularly those living with mental illness or substance misuse.

This can contribute to a 'revolving door', leaving individuals repeatedly in and out of stable accommodation.

Of the people seen sleeping rough in London in 2017 and 2018:

- 50% had mental health needs
- 43% had alcohol misuse problems

- 40% drug misuse problems

The government's [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) was announced last August and aims to halve rough sleeping by 2022.

The NHS Long Term Plan also committed to spending up to £30 million extra over 5 years to meet the health needs of rough sleepers to ensure better access to specialist homelessness NHS mental health support.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said:

Most of us can only imagine what it is like to sleep rough and it is devastating that so many aren't getting the right access to healthcare. Living with a mental health condition or substance misuse while homeless can lead to a vicious cycle of crisis where people can't get their lives back on track and their health issues remain unsupported.

Today's announcement, along with our NHS Long Term Plan, will provide a crucial lifeline to those at risk of being left with nowhere to go and is an important step towards achieving this government's goal of ending rough sleeping for good.

Inequalities Minister, Jackie Doyle-Price, said:

Everyone should have a roof over their head and access to the right health services, no matter who they are. We are determined to stamp out this injustice once and for all.

Understanding the factors that can lead to homelessness and the triggers that can trap people in a pattern of addiction and sleeping rough, coupled with a lack of support for their mental health, is crucial. This funding will help better equip local authorities to protect society's most vulnerable and ensure no one slips through the net.