

## Support for Streetlife project to extend outreach work

Safer Wales works with people who experience domestic abuse and sexual violence, street-based sex workers, hate crime and young people at risk.

Their StreetLife project protects women who are exploited through prostitution, working with local authorities, the NHS and other partners. The vehicle helps volunteers go out a few times a week and offer women support, advice and access to services.

Carl Sargeant said:

“I am pleased that with Welsh Government support, Safer Wales have been able to purchase a new vehicle. This has enabled Safer Wales to increase capacity through the recruitment of additional volunteers and deliver outreach work simultaneously across Cardiff and Swansea.”

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## Welsh Government boost to help up-skill Enterprise Zones

The pilots will enable all employers in Ebbw Vale and Port Talbot Enterprise Zones to access an array of pre-approved training, with Welsh Government providing a 50 percent contribution to the cost.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“I am pleased to announce a new strand of Wales’ Flexible Skills Programme will be piloted within Ebbw Vale and Port Talbot Enterprise Zones. The pilots are designed to facilitate access to a variety of skills training programmes, assisting employers and businesses to up-skill and grow.

“The programme also provides an additional incentive for employers to engage with the Welsh Government and develop mutually beneficial relationships with schools, further education and higher education institutions.

“From Robotics to quality auditing, the areas of training have been specifically selected against the needs of employers operating in

those areas and designed to assist them and enhance the skill sets of their employees, which in turn will help develop the businesses and the local economies”

“I am sure the launch events will be very worthwhile and provide an opportunity for businesses to engage with a new and exciting skills support programme. I’d encourage all employers to get involved.”

The Ebbw Vale pilot will launch at an event being held on 16 May at The General Offices, Ebbw Vale with the Port Talbot pilot launching at the Skills Summit on 23 May at The St Pauls Centre, Port Talbot.

Employers and employees who would like more information about the launch events and the scheme itself are invited to email [DFESRM@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:DFESRM@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

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## [Bridging the generational divide in the UK](#)

People of my generation grew up with a set of intuitive assumptions about human progress: hatred and prejudice would give way to reason, democracy would displace authoritarianism, and the economic good times would roll and roll.

Among those assumptions was the strong sense that we would live to enjoy a better quality of life than our parents. For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the statistics bore that out. Average incomes rose with [each successive generation](#).

No more. For Generation Y—the so-called “millennials” born between 1980 and 2000—the new century has brought a historic reversal of fortunes and a growing sense of pessimism.

UK polling conducted in 2016 found that 54% of people think today’s 18-35 year olds will have a worse life than their parents’ generation, which is a dramatic collapse in confidence since 2003, when only 12% of the public held that view.

In large part, the differential impact of the financial crisis is to blame.

While all ages have experienced wage stagnation since 2008, younger cohorts have been hit particularly hard. For many, the wage squeeze has come early in their careers when pay progression is normally at its most rapid. As a result, the oldest millennials (born 1981-85) are now earning some £40 (about US\$50) per week less around the age of 30 than those born 10 years earlier [earned at the same age](#).

At the same time, younger people are increasingly struggling to accumulate the two major assets that my generation always took for granted: a pension and a home.

Private pension schemes are now less generous on average, and the state pension will replace a smaller share of earnings.

But the real scandal is in housing. Here, the market is fundamentally broken, due to inadequate supply, and first time buyers are paying the price. The proportion of 25-34 year olds in the UK who own their own home was 67% in 1991, but had declined to 36% by 2013-14. The trend was even more striking for those aged 16-24, where home ownership has declined from [36% in 1991 to 9% in 2013-14](#). No wonder that the under-50s own only [18% of the UK's property wealth](#).

By contrast, older generations have been very effectively sheltered from the economic headwinds. The over-60s are the only age group [to have become better off](#) since 2007/08. From 2010 to 2015, the average British household saw its income fall by about £500 as a result of tax increases and spending cuts, yet the average two-pensioner household took [a hit of just £23](#).

Changes to welfare policy have exacerbated the divide. [The Resolution Foundation estimates that by 2020](#), compared with pre-crisis levels, working-age benefits will be 9% lower per person, child benefits 12% lower and pensioner benefits per pensioner 19% higher. Other perks which are specific to pensioners persist: winter fuel allowance, free bus travel, free TV licences.

Intergenerational inequality is aided and abetted by the fact that younger people are much less likely to vote than older people. 43% of 18-24 year olds voted in [the UK General Election in 2015](#), compared to 78% of over-65s. As populations age across the developed world, the "grey vote" can only become more significant.

I would like to offer some tentative first steps towards restoring balance to this desperately unbalanced state of affairs. Similar problems exist across the developed world, but the solutions offered here are specific to the UK.

First, we need to rebalance the welfare system. Further cuts cannot and should not come exclusively from working-age households. Universal, non means-tested pensioner benefits like universal TV licences and winter fuel payments are impossible to justify, while the “triple lock” (by which pensions are uprated annually by inflation, earnings, or 2.5%, whichever is greater) is prohibitively expensive in the long term. The task of finding a sustainable replacement—perhaps a “double lock” linking increases to prices and earnings, but not a guaranteed 2.5% in all circumstances—should fall to a cross-party commission.

Second, we must correct the chronic undersupply of housing through a massive, publicly-underwritten house-building programme. This will require not only money but innovative political solutions to prevent a stand-off between central government and local authorities opposed to new developments.

Finally, I believe it is time to consider giving young people the opportunity to shape the political future by considering compulsory voting (with an option to abstain on the ballot paper). The evidence from Australia suggests this can counter the “grey vote” bias and force politicians to appeal to the whole electorate.

As the Resolution Foundation has argued, renewing the intergenerational contract is a shared challenge for our times. It requires bold thinking and political courage from a generation of leaders who have enjoyed the good times, and must now act to prevent a worrying divide from becoming an unbridgeable gulf.



Visit [www.openreason.uk](http://www.openreason.uk)

## References and further reading

Corlett, Adam (2017), “As time goes by: shifting incomes and inequality between and within generations”, Resolution Foundation’s fourth report for the Intergenerational Commission, February, see [www.resolutionfoundation.org](http://www.resolutionfoundation.org)

Gardiner Laura and Paul Gregg (2017), *Study, Work, Progress, Repeat? How and why pay and progression outcomes have differed across cohorts*, Resolution Foundation-Intergenerational Commission, February, see [www.intergenerationcommission.org](http://www.intergenerationcommission.org)

IFS (2013), "Elderly see incomes rise, whilst young adults see large falls", Press release, Institute for Fiscal Studies, 14 June, see [www.ifs.org.uk](http://www.ifs.org.uk)

Let's House Britain, *UK Housing Crisis report 2014*, see <http://metrofinance.co.uk/>

Mori-Ipsos (2016), "Only a third of Generation Y think their generation will have better quality of life than their parents...", Poll, March, see [www.ipsos-mori.com/](http://www.ipsos-mori.com/)

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Shelter policy library (2015), *Housing affordability for first time buyers*, March, see [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

The Economist (2015), "The granny state: Britain should stop subsidising the old and rich at the expense of the young and poor", 26 Feb, see [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)

[OECD Forum 2017 issues](#)

[OECD work on youth](#)

[OECD work on social and welfare issues](#)

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## [Welsh Government invests over £660,000 to develop higher strength steel products to safeguard the industry's future in Wales](#)

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates has announced that £666,327 of Welsh Government Research and Development Grant Funding is being made available to Tata Steel to help the company develop new and innovative higher strength steel products at its sites in Port Talbot and Llanwern.

The grant funding is in addition to Tata's own investment in the two year

project and will enable the company to develop and test new forms of steel that boast improved functionality and increased technical specifications.

The investment in the project will mean Wales is well placed to respond to global market demand for new and advanced steel goods for the automotive and construction sectors and will place Wales in a more competitive position for the future.

Ken Skates said:

“The Welsh Government has been working to support Wales’ steel workers and this latest offer demonstrates our continued commitment to safeguarding a long-term future for the steel industry in Wales.

“Increasing the level of steel related research and development taking place in Wales is critical if we are to meet the demands of the market and secure the long term future of Welsh steel.

“Not only will increased research and development enable us to develop new products here in Wales it will also increase our competitiveness, help to reduce costs and enable us to reduce our carbon emissions.

“Ultimately it is part of our ongoing efforts to secure a long term future for our steel workers, their families and the industry as a whole.”

This latest funding agreement is part of a wider package of support from Welsh Government for Tata that includes £4m of funding towards skills development activities across Tata’s Welsh operations and a further £8m investment in its Port Talbot plant which will reduce energy costs and carbon emissions. With the exception of funding for skills, Welsh Government support will be subject to agreeing legally binding conditions with Tata.

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## **Chief Nursing Officer presents awards for excellence in nursing at annual showcase conference**

The event was held at Cardiff City Stadium and provided an opportunity for health care workers to share experiences, innovative ideas and good practice. The sixth showcase conference was attended by over 200 delegates, including nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses, health care

support workers and students.

During the event, the CNO presented the Betsi Cadwaladr Scholarship Foundation award for excellence to Corinne Hocking, sister in the Assessment and Therapy Unit, Llandudno hospital for her work in developing the infusion service provided at the unit. Debbie Tucker, senior ward sister in Prince Philip hospital was highly commended for her work to develop a new Frailty Support Worker role.

Jean White, Chief Nursing Officer said:

“It was a great honour to present the winners of the Betsi Cadwaladr Scholarship Foundation Award, to those who have achieved excellence in their field of nursing.

“I would also like to thank everyone who has contributed to this event. The enthusiasm and pride we have seen here today are a credit to all those involved.

“It was fantastic to see nurses from all sectors, as well as health care support workers and students working together, sharing ideas and experiences to improve patient care.”

The event was opened by Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, who said:

“I am glad to have the opportunity to spend time with so many nurses, midwives and health care support workers today.

“It is a chance for me to recognize and pay tribute to the fantastic work that nurses are involved in to make sure that patients have the best possible care, and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you.

“The Welsh Government has made a commitment to attract and train more nurses across Wales and we have just launched a nurse recruitment campaign, promoting the benefits of training, working and living in Wales. We are also extending the NHS Wales bursary scheme for a further year.”