

Health Secretary delivers Christmas message to health and care service in Wales

Vaughan Gething said:

“As Christmas approaches, I want to say a heartfelt thanks to everyone working tirelessly – day in day out – to deliver health and care services across Wales.

“Staff working in our NHS are the beating heart of a service that is the envy of the world. Without them it simply won’t function.

“Over the last twelve months I’ve seen and heard first hand, so many, examples of NHS workers going the extra mile and performing the extra ordinary for those in the greatest need.

“Only recently in the heavy snow, I heard about staff battling terrible conditions to get into work to deliver high quality care for the people who need it most.

“It is stories like these, stories about commitment and compassion which make me proud of our NHS and what it achieves across Wales 24/7.

“As people enjoy a peaceful Christmas, I know many will be working to save lives, treat the ill and injured and provide care. They have our admiration and our thanks.

“I hope everyone working tirelessly for our NHS and in our care services has an excellent Christmas. I wish them the best for the year ahead. *Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.*”

Tackling food waste on the agenda during festive visit

Every year, the UK bins poultry costing around £660m. The Minister visited the frozen food specialist to hear more about their plans to tackle waste in the supply chain. She also took the opportunity to endorse [Love Food Hate Waste](#)'s seasonal poultry campaign.

This year's 'Give a Cluck' campaign aims to increase awareness amongst 25 – 34 year olds of how much poultry is wasted every year and offers hints and tips on preserving food to decrease the amount unnecessarily ending up in the bin.

Wales has already made impressive progress on reducing household food waste. In 2015 household food waste levels were lower than the rest of the UK by around 9% per person. In addition, household food waste reduced by 12% per person between 2009 and 2015. This equates to around £70 million of food not being wasted. 99% of households in Wales are now covered by separate local authority food waste collections.

The Minister said:

“Family get-togethers over food are obviously a massive part of Christmas but we need to help people understand more about correct freezing and storage to reduce food waste.

“I learnt today Iceland sells over 20,000 frozen turkeys through its Welsh stores at Christmas. However, every year in the UK, 86 million birds are thrown away uneaten and the value of thrown away poultry in Wales costs us £31m every year.”

Iceland is, like the Welsh Government, a signatory of [Courtauld 2025](#), an ambitious voluntary agreement that brings together organisations across the food system to make food and drink production and consumption more sustainable. The company sends no unsold food to landfill; instead putting it to good use in the community, converting it to animal feed; or sending it to Anaerobic Digestion.

Earlier this year, the Welsh Government confirmed its plans to consult on introducing a non-statutory target for Wales to [halve food waste by 2025](#).

The Minister said:

“We are proud Wales is right up there among the world's best recycling nations. We know though more needs to be done, in particular on tackling food waste.

“We have made great progress but if we are going to realise our ambition to halve food waste by 2025 we need householders and businesses to be fully on board. I was pleased to hear about Iceland's work in this area and I would encourage other companies across Wales to sign up to the Courtauld agreement.”

Welsh Government maps out latest transport finance plans

The National Transport Finance Plan (NTFP) was published in 2015 and set out how the government proposed to deliver the outcomes set out in the Wales Transport Strategy from 2015 and beyond. The plan included all transport interventions financed by the Welsh Government.

This NTFP 2017 update provides information on progress since publication and provides a revised programme for the next 3 years and beyond. It also sets out:

- the timescale for financing and delivering the schemes undertaken by the Welsh Government
- the estimated expenditure required to deliver the schemes
- the likely sources of financing to allow delivery to take place.

This plan is not a policy document nor does it seek to prioritise schemes to be taken forward. Some projects are being delivered, some are under construction and others are under development. This is a live document and the delivery schedule will continue to be reviewed and updated as the profile for specific schemes becomes clearer.

Cabinet Secretary for Transport Ken Skates said:

“I am pleased with the progress we have made to deliver an ambitious programme of transport interventions. We have already delivered a number of high profile schemes including Metro Phase 1; upgrades to the A55 Tunnels; Section 3 of the ‘Heads of the Valleys’ A465 Brynmawr to Tredegar dualling; Eastern Bay Road Link as well as several smaller scale measures.

“The programme over the next 3 years is an ambitious one and includes important interventions such as the roll out of the metro concept to North East Wales and to Swansea Bay and the Western Valleys.

“Sustainable forms of travel are also prominent – targeting new railway stations, improvements to bus and rail services and promoting walking and cycling and integrated transport solutions.

“We are focused on ensuring value for money and driving efficiency in all transport schemes. The financial envelope within which we have to deliver our Plan remains challenging but I am confident the investments we propose will lead to a step change to our transport system.”

[Luke Evans Takes to the Skies to Showcase Wales' Epic Seascapes](#)

Available from today to preview online, the advert has been created to launch Visit Wales' 2018 Year of the Sea tourism campaign. It shows Evans flying a seaplane along Wales' outstanding coastline, showcasing the stunning scenery, sea-bound activities, and coastal wildlife.

Visit Wales' campaign film will make its TV debut on ITV on Christmas Day during the Victoria Christmas Special from 9.45pm and The Great British Bake Off Christmas Special on Christmas Day, which will air from 8.15 pm on Channel 4. The film will be shown in Wales on S4C and ITV Wales from 1-7 January.

Luke, who originally hails from Pontypool, starred as Gaston in one of this year's biggest grossing- the new Disney remake of Beauty and the Beast – before returning to his home country to film the ad.

Returning to the heart of Snowdonia, Evans pilots a classic seaplane, taking flight from Llyn Gwynant, around the award-winning coastline, before finally landing at sunset in Cardiff Bay.

He takes us through a mix of geographical, cultural and historical references celebrating the fact that Wales is the first country in the world to provide a dedicated footpath that runs the length of its coastline – all 870 miles of it.

He said of his involvement in Wales' Year of the Sea campaign:

“Being able to see Wales' coastline in this way was both an honour and privilege.

“We passed hundreds of beaches, harbours, inlets and islands – while spotting porpoises and bottlenose dolphins play in the distance – and saw people kayaking, paddleboarding and coasteering. There is just so much to do along Wales' coast.

“I have such fond memories spending holidays by the coast in Wales, and I try to get back here as often as I can. It offers complete respite from the hustle of everyday life and reminds me how lucky I was to grow up surrounded by such awe-inspiring scenery.”

Visit Wales' 2018 film follows up on Wales' Year of Legends story that began in 2017. Created by Wales/Amsterdam creative agency Smörgåsbord, it's a mini epic of discovery and adventure directed by Marc Evans (Hinterland, Safe House, Trauma) that offers a bird's eye view of the country's beautiful

seascapes.

Actress Hannah Daniel provides the voiceover on the Welsh version of the TV advert. Hannah was born in Cardiff and is best known for her role as DS Sian Owens in *Hinterland* (BBC) and as Beca Matthews in the S4C drama series *Gwaith Cartref*. Hannah can currently be seen on S4C's latest Sunday night drama *Un Bore Mercher* playing Cerys Jones, with the English version *Keeping Faith* due on BBC in January 2018.

Minister for Tourism, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

“Our Year of the Sea advert harnesses the best of Wales’s creative talent – bringing together our inspiring scenery with Hollywood actor Luke Evans, Hannah Daniel and production from our talented creative sector – it’s a showcase of a confident Wales which will be hook for people to find out more about what Wales has to offer during Year of the Sea 2018.”

This activity is part of a wider multi platform marketing campaign promoting Wales to the world as a 21st-century coastal destination during Year of the Sea. The film will be back on screens in March to coincide with St David’s day with extensive out of home advertising at Waterloo station in London – part of an integrated campaign of on and offline activity.

To see the campaign film’s TV debut, tune in to Victoria and the GBB0 ad break on Christmas Day. You can preview it from 22nd December on Visit Wales’ to see the campaign film’s TV debut, tune in to Victoria and the GBB0 ad break on Christmas Day. You can preview it from 22nd December.

View: [YouTube](#) (external link).

“Let’s all look after our elderly and vulnerable this Christmas” – Huw Irranca-Davies

In his Christmas message, the Minister praised social services staff and other volunteers across Wales for the care and support they provide some of the most vulnerable people, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“Being Wales’ social care minister really is a special privilege. Each and every day, I see and hear countless examples of staff in

the social care sector going the extra mile to support children in care, the elderly, the disabled and the vulnerable in our communities. On behalf of the Welsh Government, I want to say thank you to you all.

“As many of us prepare to spend Christmas with our families and friends, many people across Wales are set to spend it alone. But I know Wales is a caring country. As a society, we care about those less fortunate than ourselves.

“So I’m calling on people right across Wales to look after elderly family and neighbours, call in on them, and if you can, offer them the opportunity to join you and your family in celebrating Christmas.

“I hope you all have a happy Christmas, surrounded by people you care for, and by those who care for you. Let’s make sure those who don’t need to be alone, are not alone this Christmas.”