

People across Wales could benefit from change to care home charging

The Welsh Government's five year plan, 'Taking Wales Forward', committed to more than doubling the capital limit used in charging for residential social care, from £24,000 to £50,000. If the regulations presented are passed by the Assembly, the limit will move to £30,000 from 10th April this year – increasing in phases up to £50,000 thereafter.

Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, is today encouraging individuals who may benefit from the change, or their families, to contact their local authority.

Rebecca Evans said:

“People who need residential care and who have capital over a certain amount are required to use this to pay for the full cost of their stay.

“This Government is committed to supporting older people, and those requiring care, which is why our five year plan 'Taking Wales Forward', pledged to significantly increase this capital limit. This frees up more of people's money for them to use as they wish.

“From 10th April people who require residential care and have capital up to the new amount of £30,000, will not have to use this to pay for their care. Instead their local authority will be responsible for funding their care, only charging a contribution based on a person's available income.

“As people who pay for the full cost of their residential care usually have private arrangements in place with their care home, local authorities will often be unaware of how much capital individuals have. I am therefore encouraging anybody who thinks they, or a family member, may benefit from the change to contact their local authority.

“People do not need to wait until the 10th April to do this. Individuals can contact their local authority now, to check whether they might benefit and prepare everything ready for the change in April.”

[Press release: Environment Agency unveils new paintings to promote fishing](#)

The Environment Agency has unveiled three paintings by top wildlife artist David Miller to promote angling. The images front the 2017/18 fishing licences which go on sale today (1 March). The three fishing licence designs depict salmon (*Salmo salar*), mirror carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) in their natural habitats.

You can see the images, and download posters here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rod-fishing-licence-campaign>

The Environment Agency has also launched "Get a Fishing Licence" on GOV.UK to simplify the process of buying a fishing licence:

www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence. This is part of a series of improvements to the service, which include:

- Free licences for junior anglers, up to the age of 17, announced in November 2016
- The fishing licence now lasts for 12 months from the day it is bought, rather than expiring at the end of March each year
- The use of three rods now needs just one licence, rather than two.

People are required to buy a fishing licence in order to fish legally in England, Wales and along the Border Esk in Scotland. Sales of licences for the 2015/16 season raised [£21 million](#). The money was used to restock rivers with 452,220 coarse fish, encourage over 35,000 people to try angling for the first time and bring 2,043 successful prosecutions against crimes like poaching.

Artist David Miller said:

I'm delighted to have provided the images for the fishing licences again this year, not only because it gave me the opportunity to paint three species for the first time but also because all the money raised goes back into supporting fisheries. Of the three I was particularly pleased with the brown trout, my favourite UK game fish, and one I love to fish for on small rivers and streams.

Judy Proctor, Head of Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said:

We hope David's stunning images encourage people to give fishing a go. Angling creates over 37,000 full time jobs and generates over £1 billion for the UK economy, but at its heart it's a much loved outdoor sport connecting people with nature. We've listened to

anglers' concerns and improved the fishing licence to make the process of getting out and fishing legally simpler.

People who don't buy a fishing licence are not only cheating other anglers and the future of the sport but running the risk of criminal conviction and a fine. The Environment Agency urges anyone to report fisheries crime as quickly as possible by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

For those who can't access the internet, fishing licences can still be bought by phoning 0344 800 5386 or over the counter in the Post Office.

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Notes:

The Environment Agency publishes a detailed breakdown of how fishing licence money is spent in the annual fisheries report on GOV.UK. Read it here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-report-shows-how-21-million-of-rod-licence-money-helps-angling>

More on the changes to licences here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/free-fishing-for-children>

News story: Appointment to the board of the Environment Agency

Joanne Segars OBE has been appointed to the board of the Environment Agency by Environment Secretary, Andrea Leadsom.

The appointment will take effect from 1 March 2017 for three years.

Joanne is the Chief Executive of the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association, having originally joined the organisation as Director of Policy. She is a board member of the Pensions Infrastructure Platform and Pensions Europe, with experience spent as Chair of both. Joanne is also on the board of Pension Quality Mark Ltd. Joanne is a founding governor of the Pensions Policy Institute and sits on its council. She is also a Director of TUC Stakeholder Trustees Ltd.

Formally, Joanne was Chair of the Scheme Advisory Board for the Local Government Pension Scheme; a member of the Secretary of State's Advisory Group on Stakeholder Pensions; and a board member of the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority.

Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the Environment Agency's executive through regular board meetings, committees and

groups. They also undertake individual lead roles on relevant issues and with local operational teams.

All appointments to the Environment Agency board are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointment complies with the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (which was superseded by the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments in January 2017).

The Environment Agency is a Non-Departmental Public Body, set up under the Environment Act 1995 to take an integrated approach to environmental protection and enhancement in England. The Environment Agency has major responsibilities in flood management, water resources and quality, climate change, land quality, chemicals, pollution prevention and control, waste, conservation and biodiversity, fisheries conservation, air quality and navigation.

Press release: Children living in workless households at lowest level since records began

The number of households where no one works has fallen by 828,000 since 2010 and is now at its lowest level in more than a decade, according to new independent figures released today.

Over 17.6 million households now have at least one working adult, meaning that around 9 in every 10 children live with a working adult.

Less than 15% of households are classed as workless, with the number having fallen by 72,000 since last year.

Work and Pensions Secretary, Damian Green said:

More parents now have the opportunity to find work and enjoy the dignity and security of having a regular wage.

We will continue to build on this success as we roll-out Universal Credit to all parts of the country – ensuring that it always pays to be in work.

The latest employment figures show that there are 31.84 million people in work, and the unemployment rate (4.8%) is at the lowest in over a decade.

The proportion of lone parents working rose to 67.9% in 2016, an increase of

over 10% since 2010.

The government's welfare reforms are returning fairness to the benefit system and encouraging people who are able to work to do just that. They include:

- the benefit cap, which ensures that families don't receive more in benefits than the average family earns
- Universal Credit, the biggest change to the welfare system in a generation
- the Claimant Commitment, which spells out what we expect from jobseekers when they search for work
- the New Enterprise Allowance scheme, which helps people on benefits to become their own boss

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5124

Follow DWP on:

[Dubs Amendment: the families that opened their doors to child refugees that have yet to come](#)



1 March 2017

Catherine Marchand: “Our lives, like many others in our position, are on hold as we wait to see whether Theresa May will let us open up our home and provide the safety and security that these unaccompanied minors so desperately need.”

Duncan Blinkhorn: “Our message to politicians is: we are here, we are waiting to help, and we are not alone.”

Keith Taylor MEP: “There are families and local authorities across the country that are waiting to provide the support and security these vulnerable children need.”

There are families, communities and local authorities across the UK waiting to help vulnerable child refugees, according to Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East.

The former Brighton councillor is highlighting the story of a Brighton couple who have spent the last seven months going through a rigorous fostering process in the hope of offering a safe home to a vulnerable child fleeing conflict.

Catherine Marchand and Duncan Blinkhorn from the Hanover and Elm Grove area of the city are speaking out about the Government's 'callous' abandonment of child refugees ahead of [Wednesday's Commons vote](#) on the Dubs Amendment.

Catherine and Duncan, both 55, hope to demonstrate to MPs that there are compassionate families across the UK keen and able to care for and provide homes for the 3000 unaccompanied minors the Government had originally promised to bring to safety.

Catherine, a Community Nurse who has worked in the NHS for more 35 years, said:

"The government's decision to renege on its promise to thousands of the most vulnerable refugee children is utterly appalling."

"Our lives, like many others in our position, are on hold as we wait to see whether Theresa May will let us open up our home and provide the safety and security that these unaccompanied minors so desperately need."

"The success of the World War II Kindertransport scheme, to which my family and countless others will forever owe a debt of gratitude, relied on the goodwill of national governments and their peoples. The British people's compassion and goodwill is not lacking – so where is our Government's? History will not judge us kindly if Theresa May insists on maintaining her callous approach to a refugee crisis that is driving unaccompanied children into the arms of human traffickers and extremist groups."

Catherine's partner, Duncan, the co-ordinator of the Brighton Bike Hub, added:

"We have invested much of the last seven months in making preparations to help. We are lucky to have the support of our community and are proud that Brighton and Hove identifies as a 'city of sanctuary'. Ours is not an isolated case, there are families like ours in communities across the country that are keen and able to help"

"Our message to politicians is: we are here, we are waiting to help, and we are not alone; now is not the time to pull up the drawbridge, it is the time to embrace your humanity and uphold a promise you made to three thousand vulnerable child refugees."

Keith Taylor, who has been a vocal critic of the Government's wavering response to the refugee crisis, said:

"I share, wholeheartedly, Cathy and Duncan's sense of anger and frustration at the Government's behaviour towards the most vulnerable child refugees. While I want to commend Cathy and Duncan for their patience and their compassion it is important to recognise that their story is not unique; there are families and local authorities across the country that are waiting to provide the support and security these vulnerable children need."

"The UK has taken just 350 lone child refugees which is nowhere near the 3000 originally proposed by Lord Dubs and is equivalent to fewer than one per

local authority in the UK.”

“Britain has a proud tradition of welcoming those most in need. We stepped up to rescue 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi persecution. Which is why I am echoing Cathy and Duncan’s calls for MPs to stand by the country’s values and fight to reverse Theresa May’s decision and keep the Dubs scheme alive.”

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