

Welsh Secretary visits Ferryside rescue team to celebrate £40,000 funding boost

- Lifesaving search and rescue teams in Wales to receive share of £1 million to boost resources
- Over £70,000 will be provided to fund vital equipment for Ferryside Lifeboat crew and North Wales Mountain Rescue Association
- Fund has awarded almost £6 million to date, saving lives on UK waterways

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart is visiting St. John Cymru Ferryside Lifeboat crew in Carmarthenshire today (Thursday 20 February) following the announcement of a £1 million UK Government funding boost for two Welsh search and rescue teams.

The funding, confirmed by Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps, will benefit 50 charities across the UK to provide essential search and rescue equipment.

During his visit, Mr Hart will hear how the Ferryside Lifeboat crew will use the £40,000 of UK Government funding to purchase new communications devices and protective gear.

Volunteer, Simon Lambie, will explain how the new equipment will allow them to boost their ability to search for missing people in water and rescue those who are stranded.

The North Wales Mountain Rescue Association, which has also been awarded over £31,000 today, has been using equipment part-funded by previous UK inshore lifeboat grants to undertake vital searches of the River Dee in the wake of storm Ciara and Dennis.

This new round of funding will be used to replace protective kit and purchase rescue equipment such as water rafts and sleds, improving the teams' capabilities in the event of floods and water incidences.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps said:

Our rescue boat teams carry out vital work to keep our rivers, lakes and inshore areas safe.

These inspirational charities and their dedicated volunteers save lives every day and this additional funding will ensure that they have the craft, equipment, and resources to provide these services all year round.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

Volunteer and charitable organisations across Wales work selflessly 24/7 to provide life-saving support to the public.

These organisations are absolutely vital in protecting our communities and I'm therefore delighted to see Welsh services benefitting from the latest round of UK Government funding.

This money will help ensure that the Ferryside Lifeboat crew and North Wales Mountain Rescue Association have the equipment they need to continue delivering their crucial work.

Chief Executive for St John Cymru, Helen Smith said:

We're delighted to have the support of the UK Government to help our team of volunteers in Ferryside to continue their lifesaving work.

Working on the water is incredibly tough and the exposure to the elements, coupled with the nature of the role means the lifecycle of equipment is short.

Ensuring our volunteers are properly equipped to perform their roles is of uttermost importance and this newest round of funding will really help us in supporting our volunteers so they can continue to be there for their local community and those who get into difficulty.

Simon Lamble of St John Cymru said:

Our team of volunteers work incredibly hard to raise funding to help us to continue to provide vital services in our community. This grant is a huge boost which will enable us to save more lives across the Towy, Taf and Gwendraeth river estuaries and help us continue to be there when we are needed.

Gerald Davison from the NWMRA said:

Over successive weekends NWMRA team members made good use of Water Rescue equipment in part provided by the Rescue Boat Grant Fund while tasked with water rescue and search incidents during storms Ciara and Dennis in North Wales. We were deployed on flood rescue work at Llanfair TH and St Asaph and a water search for a missing person near Llangollen.

The provision of the right equipment in the correct quantities and sizes permits our highly trained team members to respond quickly and effectively when flood and other water related incidents arise.

Our volunteers are an integral part of the multi-agency response to incidents as core participants in the North Wales Local Resilience Forum.

Since launching in 2014, the Rescue Grant Boat Fund has provided £5.7 million to 104 charities around the UK.

A full list of successful charities can be found [on the Department for Transport's website.](#)