



Llinell Gymorth Camdriniaeth yn y Cartref  
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan  
All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual  
Violence Helpline

**0808 80 10 800**



  
**Cymorth i Ferched Cymru  
Welsh Women's Aid**  
Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf  
Putting Women & Children First

## *Welsh Women's Aid Briefing:* **UK Budget announcement 2016**

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the UK Government announced its Budget 2016, which included a number of areas of interest for Wales, including details of the 'Tampon Tax' allocation, £100m towards homelessness prevention in England, the delay to Local Housing Allowance caps, and other changes which will lead to increased funding for Wales in the longer term.

### **'Tampon tax'**

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In November 2015, additional funding for women's services using the 'tampon tax' was announced by the UK Government in the spending review, and we expressed our concerns about the way in which this 'Tampon Tax' would be allocated.<sup>1</sup>

The 2016 Budget announcement confirmed that of the £12 million pounds funding which was available through 'Tampon Tax' allocation to women's organisations in the UK, none of this was allocated to Wales-based services working on violence against women and none was allocated to sexual violence services in the UK. The vast majority was allocated to England/UK-wide providers, with just 7.3% of the total allocated to Wales for a UK children's charity for their work in Swansea.<sup>2</sup>

A summary breakdown of how £6.85m of the funds have been allocated across the UK are as follows:

- 33.6% to England £2,304,000 (10 services, - two supporting women offenders, four focusing on exiting prostitution, 1 BME service for their forced marriage and honour-based violence helpline in England, one to support domestic abuse victims, one to support health professionals working on domestic abuse, and one programme to support women whose children are at risk of care proceedings)
- 8.8% to Scotland £600,000 (one service – funding programme for small women's services)
- 7.3% to Wales £497,000 (Action for Children Swansea, supporting young mothers through care proceedings)
- 2% to Northern Ireland £118,000 (one service – parenting support for mothers)
- 48.6% UK £3,329,000 – with £1,950,000 going to three cancer charities to improve support for women; £1m to Girlguiding UK to support their national framework and develop a youth programme; £265K to the White Ribbon Campaign targeting men and boys; and £114,000 to the Muslim Women's Network UK, .

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<sup>1</sup> A full copy of our statement can be found at:

[http://www.welshomensaid.org.uk/images/stories/documents/Emma/WWA\\_response\\_to\\_SR\\_announcement\\_on\\_womens\\_services.pdf](http://www.welshomensaid.org.uk/images/stories/documents/Emma/WWA_response_to_SR_announcement_on_womens_services.pdf). We have since been in discussion with Women's Aid England about whether the allocation of Home Office funds to deliver earlier intervention could in part support piloting aspects of the 'Change that Lasts' model in England and Wales, and we await further details on this.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2016-documents/budget-2016#charities>





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The remainder (£5.2m) has been allocated to two grant-making trusts which will invite competitive applications from “ ‘women’s organisations’... in recognition of the high number of applications received from such organisations across the country”.

These trust funders are:

- Comic Relief – to create a funding partnership of £4 million (including an additional £1 million of match funding) to drive awareness of women’s issues and fund exceptional and varied partners to deliver
- Rosa Fund for Women – a £2.2 million ‘Small Grants Fund’ for local grassroots organisations that will be run by Rosa, the only UK-wide Fund exclusively for women and girls

On March 17<sup>th</sup> it was also announced that the EU have agreed a deal that will allow the UK to end the ‘Tampon tax’ entirely. A date has not yet been set for this change.

### **Homelessness prevention (England only)**

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The UK budget also announced £100 million to deliver low-cost ‘second stage’ accommodation for rough sleepers leaving hostel accommodation and domestic abuse victims and their families moving on from refuges. This will provide at least 2,000 places to enable independent living for vulnerable households and individuals, freeing up hostels and refuges for those in most acute need. Improved access to move-on accommodation is crucial to support women and children leaving refuges to rebuild their lives in a safe and suitable place, and equivalent funding provision to enable a similar approach would be welcomed in Wales.

### **Local Housing Allowance and housing benefit caps (England and Wales)**

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On 1 March 2016 the UK Government also confirmed that the date from which Local Housing Allowance caps apply to new tenancies in the supported accommodation sector will be delayed by one year, which was reiterated during the budget announcement. It will now apply to tenancies in this sector signed after 1 April 2017. The evidence review of the supported accommodation sector, due to report in the spring, will provide a foundation to support further decisions on protections for the supported housing sector in the long term.

This means in effect that housing benefit caps will apply to rents charged in the social housing sector, including supported housing, just as in the private sector. By doing so, this fails to address the need for higher rents in supported housing to reflect the cost of housing plus support charges provided by specialist support workers.

Uncertainty about refuge rents and levels of support costs that can be charged is already impacting on refuges planning for future service provision. The risk of not having an exemption continue for refuges and other supported housing will lead to unprecedented cuts in capacity and will result in closure for most of these services. We urge Governments in England and Wales to make clear their intentions to exempt refuges from these regulations from 2017 as a matter of urgency.





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## Increased funds for Wales

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Finally, as a result of the move to free Academies in England and the introduction of a 'sugar tax', there will be a small increase in capital and revenue budgets for the Welsh Government, late in the next Assembly term. These changes, will lead to a £358m increase in revenue, and £22m increase in capital over the next four years.

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## Welsh Government Budget 2016-17

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The Welsh Government Budget was debated and approved on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The debate focused on the proposals that were set out in the [Annual Budget Motion 2016-17](#) which set out the overall funding allocations for governmental departments. These include, £3.371m for Local Government; £707m for Communities and Tackling Poverty and £7.004m for Health and Social Care. A specific breakdown of how these funds will be allocated have yet to be published.

The main changes between the Welsh Government's Draft and Final Budgets include £2.5million top up revenue funding for Powys, Ceredigion and Monmouthshire local authorities; reverses a planned cut of £374,000 to the Welsh Books Council; reduction of £20million for the Higher Education Council for Wales (HEFCW) instead of £41.1million for funding the higher education sector and an additional £10million for part time provision and research.

Changes to the capital budget include £100 million towards investing in transport networks, the Intermediate Care Fund, Welsh Ambulance Service, obstetric, neonatal and paediatric developments, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Education programme, Green Growth fund, Warm Homes Arbed and the Coastal Management Programme. £20million loan funding for Land for Housing Scheme and Town Centre Loan Fund.

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*Welsh Women's Aid will continue to monitor the impact of this any new policy and legislation on survivors, children and young people, families and specialist services in Wales. If you have any feedback for us about this area and its affects, or if you have any comments or questions about this briefing, please don't hesitate to get in touch with:*

**Tina Reece**

Public Affairs Manager / Rheolwr Materion Cyhoeddus

[tinareece@welshwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:tinareece@welshwomensaid.org.uk)

02920541551

Pendragon House, Caxton Place | Pentwyn, Cardiff | CF23 8XE  
Tel: 02920 541551 | Fax: 02920 736128 |  
Email: [info@welshwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:info@welshwomensaid.org.uk) | Web: [www.welshwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk)  
Registered Charity Number: 1140962



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CHILDREN  
MATTER**



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Pendragon House, Caxton Place | Pentwyn, Cardiff | CF23 8XE  
Tel: 02920 541551 | Fax: 02920 736128 |  
Email: [info@welshwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:info@welshwomensaid.org.uk) | Web: [www.welshwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk)  
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