

£2.4 million boost to build better destinations

The funding has been made available through the Tourism Amenity Investment Support scheme (TAIS), aimed at public, third sector and not for profit organisations for investment targeting small scale infrastructure (visitor amenity) projects in the tourism sector in Wales. This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

The funding has been allocated to infrastructure projects across Wales which will see improvements to visitor amenities as well as products which help develop high quality destinations.

Cabinet Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“The Tourism Amenity Investment Support scheme is an excellent way for us to assist the tourism sector to make the improvements to the local facilities and amenities. These facilities often go unnoticed – but are an important part of the experience that people have of Wales and they impression with which they leave – and will also benefit those who live in the area.

“The funding has provided a great opportunity for local partners to identify a cluster of products which can really make a difference. Visitors expect the best quality in all aspects of their visit from the accommodation through to information provision, toilets and parking. The management of our tourism destinations is key if we are continue delivering a high quality visitor experience in line with our strategic ambitions – this funding is another building block to create better destinations.”

The projects include Improvements to cycle paths; Upgrades to access & facilities at blue flag beaches; Visitor parking; Signage and public conveniences and reflect local and regional destination activity as well as national priorities.

Specific examples include:

- **Gwynedd County Council – Upgrade Coach Park and upgrade facilities (£40,792).** In recent years, around £6m has been invested in and around Harlech Castle and this has seen visitor numbers increase by 35%. However, parking & toilet facilities in the town are substandard and this not only impacts on customer satisfaction but the absence of dedicated coach parking facilities has actually stopped many tour companies from including them on itineraries.
- **Canal and River Trust – Create new visitor parking (Pontcysyllte**

Aqueduct & Canal). Since Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal became a World Heritage site in 2009 the visitor numbers have incrementally increased by as much as 70% in some locations. Trevor Basin, adjacent to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, is a major hub for people visiting the World Heritage site and is now attracting over 250k visitors a year.

- **Natural Resources Wales – Artwork in relation to Coast path for Year of the Sea (£32k)**. To celebrate the Wales Coast Path (WCP) during the Year of the Sea, NRW propose commissioning artwork that will capture the public's imagination, framing our iconic landscape and embodying the path's status as Wales' premium walking route.
- **Neath Port Talbot CBC – Waterfall Country Pontneddfechan (£88,822)**. Currently car parking within Pontneddfechan is informal with parking along the main road into the village. The project to create approx. 43 off road car parking spaces at the Visitor hub at Pontneddfechan increasing the capacity of existing parking provision, safer parking facilities and significantly enhancing the visitor experience and dwell time.

All organisations have received a letter offering the funding through TAIS, these offers will be formally accepted over the next few weeks and a project plan put in place with the relevant managing authority.