

# £84m convention centre on track to deliver UK Space Agency conference

The last struts of steel will be slotted into place this week to complete the 4,600-ton steelwork frame as the ICC Wales venue takes shape ahead of its opening next summer. The UK Space Agency Conference from July 9-11 will be the first major event to be staged at the new centre.

ICC Wales will accommodate up to 5,000 delegates within a 26,000 square metre footprint, making it the largest centre of its kind in Wales and south west England.

On a visit to see the progress at the site, Economy Secretary Mr Skates said:

“The work done to date really emphasises what an impressive project this is. The International Convention Centre Wales will be an iconic, major asset for Wales, enabling us to compete with any venue in the UK and beyond to attract and host key events that will make a huge contribution to our economy.

“It’s already providing opportunities for local businesses throughout the construction phase, but the economic benefits of the new convention centre will stretch far beyond the new building itself. Business tourism brings with it wide ranging benefits and the new centre will allow us to build on our international reputation as hosts of some of the world’s biggest events.

“This is a project that will make a huge statement along the M4 corridor about the shared ambitions of Welsh Government and the Celtic Manor Resort and I am delighted that everything is on track to deliver major events, starting with the highly anticipated UK Space Agency Conference in 2019.”

ICC Wales will house a 1,500 auditorium and a 4,000 square metre exhibition hall which will be Europe’s largest pillar-free ballroom.

The venue represents a step change in capacity for both Wales and the Celtic Manor Resort to accommodate globally significant corporate events and association conferences, and build on the reputation established by hosting the Ryder Cup and the NATO Summit in the last decade. The Welsh Government and Celtic Manor are 50:50 joint venture partners in the project.

Celtic Manor Resort and ICC Wales Chief Executive Ian Edwards said:

“ICC Wales will be a real game-changer for Wales and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the whole country to benefit from business tourism.

“The events industry is worth about £42 billion to the UK economy. That is a huge sum and Wales’ share of that right now is only about 1.5% purely because we don’t have the facility or the infrastructure. ICC Wales will change that.

“We are delighted by the progress made on construction and it was a pleasure to show the Cabinet Secretary around what is going to be an inspiring venue as it begins to really take shape.”