

National Armed Forces Day is our chance to say “thank you” – First Minister

The First Minister said:

“I am honoured this event to celebrate our Armed Forces is taking place in Wales.

“We have a proud history of military tradition here and National Armed Forces Day is an opportunity to mark our debt and gratitude to veterans of previous conflicts in our nation’s history.

“2018 is a particularly important year as we mark the centenary of both the end of the First World War and the formation of the RAF.

“Today is a special day when we can join together to offer our support, and honour our present service men, women and reservists, and remember the valiant service of those who have served in past conflicts.

“The occasion is also an opportunity for the younger generation to learn and appreciate the sacrifices made by our Armed Forces so that have the freedom we enjoy today.”

The Welsh Government is a major funding partner, supporting Conwy County Borough Council to deliver National Armed Forces Day 2018.

Brilliance of the Seas basks in the Anglesey sunshine

The Royal Caribbean’s ‘Brilliance of the Seas’ is a 90,090-ton, 2,112 passenger capacity cruise ship, with passengers mainly from the USA.

Tourism Minister, Lord Elis-Thomas had the opportunity to step on board the ship to meet with the crew and captain and explore how Wales can further increase its share in the lucrative cruise sector.

The cruise ship market has been identified as growth market for Wales. In 2016 the cruise industry was worth an estimated £7 million to the Welsh economy.

There are 103 planned cruise calls across Wales in 2018, a year on year increase of 15%. Holyhead will welcome 53 of these calls – an increase 30% from 2017.

The Welsh Government and Cruise Wales have been working in partnership with Local Authorities and Ports on a marketing programme for Wales as well as improving what we have to offer in Wales for the cruise market.

Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

“Today has been an excellent opportunity to see how a cruise ship such as the Brilliance of the Seas operates and look at the opportunities these cruise calls present for the wider economy of Wales. The growth of the sector is testimony to the collaborative work between public and private sector partners, working closely with the cruise liners to ensure that Wales is developing the right infrastructure and products which will appeal to their customers. I’m sure the passengers will have had an excellent time exploring the variety and quality of what Wales has to offer and we look forward to welcoming more ships to Wales during 2018.”

In order to develop the cruise sector, the Port of Holyhead are developing their infrastructure with a new multi user berth which will allow larger cruise vessels (up to 365m) to berth. This work is being done with advice from the Royal Caribbean on the berth design.

“The economic benefits the cruise industry brings to Anglesey and North Wales are hugely important,” added Anglesey’s Major Projects and Economic Development portfolio holder, Councillor Carwyn Jones.

“Anglesey Council is pleased to be leading the North Wales Regional Cruise Project, and support via the Regional Tourism Engagement Fund (RTEF) has helped us attract many more cruise ship passengers to the region.

“Our annual cruise ship programme is going from strength to strength. We’ll welcome 53 cruise ships to Anglesey this summer, compared to 43 in 2017; bringing around 30,000 visitors and crew to the region. We will continue to market North Wales as a unique destination, build on our success and cement Holyhead’s position as one of the UK’s premier cruise ports.”

The cruise industry is also supported by the Destination Anglesey Partnership, where key private sector representatives collaborate with the public sector to maximise benefits.

Health Secretary welcomes week-long NHS 70 celebrations

He also reflected on Wales' role in shaping the NHS of today and set out how the Welsh Government aims to ensure the NHS in Wales continues to provide high-quality healthcare, free at the point of delivery, when it reaches its 100th birthday and beyond.

Since its creation in 1948 by Ebbw Vale MP Aneurin Bevan, Wales has played a key role in the development of the NHS. Following devolution Wales has also led the way across the UK in a number of areas, like introducing an organ donation opt-out system, now being adopted by other home nations.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething said:

"It's a great honour to be the Health Secretary during the NHS 70 celebrations, here in Wales where the NHS was born. I am looking forward to celebrating our much loved NHS alongside the dedicated, hardworking staff who truly make the service what it is today. It is an opportunity to celebrate what has been achieved since 1948 and also to remember the core principles of the NHS.

While much may have changed since 1948, the words of NHS founder Aneurin Bevan still ring true today as they did 70 years ago,

"No society can legitimately call itself civilised if a sick person is denied medical aid because of lack of means."

As well as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the NHS, Mr Gething said the 70th birthday was also an opportunity to look to the future.

"The Welsh Government's long-term plan for the future of health and social care in Wales, A Healthier Wales, focuses on providing more joined-up services, in community settings – removing many of the current frustrations expressed by those both using and working within the system.

"In the future people will only go to a general hospital when it is essential. The intention is to create even better care locally, with support and treatment available across a range of community-based services. Fundamental change is needed to ensure a sustainable future and to ensure the NHS in Wales can remain true to that core value, born in Wales 70 years ago, to provide free

healthcare for all.”

A number of events are being held across Wales to celebrate NHS 70 and the Health Secretary along with the First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, will be attending a number of those.

The centrepiece of the celebrations, on the eve of the birthday (4 July), will be a thanksgiving service at Llandaff Cathedral for the NHS attended by HRH, the Prince of Wales who will be greeted by current and past NHS staff from across Wales, as well as Aneira Thomas, the first person born in the NHS.

Wales to allow termination of pregnancy medication to be taken at home

After listening to the views of clinicians and women’s groups, guidance will be issued to health boards in Wales today to allow Misoprostol, the second medication needed in a medical termination, to be self-administered at home.

Women meeting the inclusion criteria will be required to attend a clinic for the administration of Mifepristone, the first medication. They will then have the option to be discharged home to self-administer the second medication, Misoprostol. They still have the option to attend a clinic if they prefer.

The Health Secretary said:

“I am pleased to announce that the approval, allowing the second dose of medicine for termination of pregnancy to be carried out at home, has been issued to health boards today.

This change in practice offers additional choice to women requesting an abortion and enables them to complete treatment in an environment where they feel most comfortable.

It will also reduce the burden currently placed on clinical resources, increase the availability of appointments for women who want to access termination of pregnancy services and enable a greater number of women to access abortion provision at an earlier point in their pregnancy.”

Wales leading the way towards becoming a circular economy

Of 16 key indicators used in the study, Wales was found to meet 14 of the key themes, more than any of the other UK nations.

The [independent report](#), by Resource Recovery from Waste, analysed the approaches of the four UK governments towards developing a more 'circular economy'.

A circular economy keeps resources in use as long as possible and seeks to recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their life, rather than making, using and then disposing of them.

Comparing the results to government plans in the four UK nations shows great differences in progress towards becoming a circular economy. The report makes recommendations for growth, innovation, and resilient infrastructure whilst contributing to quality jobs and welfare throughout the UK.

Hannah Blythyn, Minister for Environment, said:

"This is welcome recognition of the hard work being done in Wales across many sectors to become a more circular economy. This work is being driven forward by policies such as Towards Zero Waste and initiatives like WRAP Cymru's Plastic Route Map for Wales, due to be published in the autumn.

"My ambition is to move towards a circular economy in Wales, as set out in our Economic Action Plan, which means making more of what we consume here and recycling waste as much as possible. This approach not only benefits our environment, it also brings economic opportunities and creates jobs.

"Welsh schemes such as our Circular Economy Investment Fund and the Collaborative Change Programme are supporting both the private and public sectors in Wales, helping towards our ultimate aim of becoming a zero waste nation by 2050."