

Litter on road network is an issue for us all

A month long anti-littering campaign using electronic signing on trunk roads across Wales has been in place to encourage road users to think wisely about disposing of waste.

A group of six workers can cost more than £1,000 a night to clear litter from a 2km stretch of trunk road and roadside, whilst the cost of a lane closure to do so is in excess of £2,600 a night.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Welsh Government is responsible for litter picking and debris removal on the M4, M48, A48(M) and the section between Llanddulas and Conwy Morfa on the A55. Local authorities are responsible for litter picking, debris removal and the provision and emptying of bins on the remaining trunk roads and local road network.

Economy and Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Whilst the vast majority of people do the right thing and carry litter in their vehicles until they find a bin to dispose of it appropriately, there are unfortunately others that don’t.

“Littering on our roads can be costly and have far reaching implications, from impacting on our economy to blighting our environment and putting the safety of other motorists at risk. Frustratingly, it also means lane closures are required for litter picks which is something we all want to avoid seeing on our network unless absolutely necessary.

“We receive a number of complaints about litter on the road network and while we work closely with local authorities to coordinate litter picking activities, this is an issue where we all have an important role to play. I urge everyone to play their part and by working together towards the same goal we can help ensure our roads and roadsides are safer, tidier and litter free.”

Environment Minister Hannah Blythyn said:

“Disposing of litter responsibly helps keep our roads safe and clean. We support local authorities and organisations such as Keep Wales Tidy to help create a cleaner, more pleasant environment for us all to live in. But by simply taking litter home and recycling it or putting in the bin, we can all do our bit, not just for our environment, but also our economy.”

Wales' first science park to 'SParc' innovation and business growth

Menai Science Park (M-SParc), which is situated within the Anglesey Enterprise Zone, brings together business from the ICT, science and research sectors, encouraging knowledge sharing and a creative, supportive environment to help businesses grow.

As part of Bangor University, M-SParc bridges the gap between cutting edge academic research and businesses. The park's 30-year vision is based on creating highly skilled jobs for local people, developing a knowledge-sharing environment and creating an economic hub in sectors such as low carbon, energy and environment and ICT.

The 5000 sq. mt. three-storey science park, constructed to BREEAM Excellence standards, hosts a state-of-the-art laboratory, office and workshop space, and meeting rooms – as well as a café where employees from across the science park and students from Bangor University can meet to share knowledge and ideas.

Officially opening the science park, First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“This cutting edge science park, supported with £20m of Welsh Government and European funding, is an excellent example of collaboration between Welsh Government and Bangor University – working together to drive innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth.

“It is great to see local businesses and companies from further afield choosing M-SParc as their business base. It is a facility that is full of energy and innovation, supported by an enthusiastic team who work with tenants to help their businesses grow.

“The science park offers a unique mix of business support, commercial expertise and academic support. I look forward to this successful combination continuing to bring more top companies and well paid jobs to North Wales.”

During the event, Managing Director for M-SParc Pryderi ap Rhisiart said:

“We want to attract the brightest and the best from the region, that's what M-SParc is all about. At the moment, Wales loses companies who outgrow their facilities, and have to go across the border to relocate, M-SParc aims to stop this. Many of the businesses are local, but we also have some inward investment, and

some new companies who are establishing themselves on M-SParc.”

Prof. John G. Hughes, University Vice Chancellor said

“We work together with companies to ensure spin-outs and commercial research from the University can find a home at M-SParc. It is encouraging to see the uptake this early on, and the aim now will be to continue to support companies based at M-SParc, and encourage graduates to see that there are prospects in North Wales, and high-level jobs are being created in the region.”

[New road marks new chapter](#)

Welsh Government is investing £15.5m in the Northern Access Road (NAR), which will be an essential part of the highway network leading to the St Athan and Cardiff Airport Enterprise Zones.

In addition to providing the necessary access to the airside business park, the design has incorporated environmental defence works to help protect the villages of Llanmaes and Boverton from flooding.

Constructed by Alun Griffiths Contractors Ltd, the NAR will be 2km of an entirely new section, tying in to the existing Eglwys Brewis road and the B4265. It has been developed to take traffic away from St Athan and the Eglwys Brewis road, creating an improved local environment and a safer route for children to walk to school.

Cutting the turf to mark the start of the work, Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Unconstrained vehicular access to the Aerospace Business Park is essential to allow it to compete on an international stage and maximise the economic benefits that come with such increased exposure.

“The Northern Access Road provides the business park with a fit for purpose access to major highway routes for vehicles of all sizes, including logistic. The new road will be able to accommodate successful future growth and the route is sympathetic to needs identified in the area’s Local Development Plan.

“This one project fulfils three equally important roles, and I am pleased Welsh Government has been able to invest in it.”

Alun Smith, a Director of Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Ltd said:

“We are delighted to have been successful in our bid to assist Welsh Government in providing the improvements in infrastructure around the St Athan area, which will allow the Aerospace Business Park to be developed to its full potential. The project team are fully committed to completing the scheme within time and budget, despite having to resolve some challenging circumstances along the way. Our primary concern as always is to complete the project safely and with as little disruption to the local residents and travelling public as possible.”

Cllr John Thomas, Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, said:

“The momentum behind the Vale’s economic development continues to grow and this project is just one of a number that will drive prosperity in the area over the coming years. Effective transport links will be vital to the success of the business park and the wider enterprise zone in general. This scheme will also bring great benefits to local residents by taking traffic away from the surrounding villages and giving local children safer walking routes to schools. I am delighted that the preparatory work has now been completed and construction can now start as planned.”

Advance works commenced in January with top soil strip, along with the installation of site fencing and archaeological investigation works. Some minor historic finds were discovered as part of the investigation, but nothing so significant that would cause delay to the start of planned construction, with completion predicted in Autumn 2019.

More than 500 adults start learning Welsh thanks to Clwb Cwtsh

Clwb Cwtsh is a free eight-week taster programme which focusses on words and phrases for use with young children. While the grown ups are learning, children are entertained through the medium of Welsh, therefore beginning their own Welsh language journeys.

More than 500 adults across Wales are due to complete the first programme which comes to an end this week. As well as supporting learners to use their new skills, participants are also encouraged to move on to other Welsh for Adults classes to continue their learning.

Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning, Eluned Morgan said:

“Clwb Cwtsh has already experienced a great deal of success. Enabling more than 500 adults to start learning Welsh in such a short period of time is a significant achievement.

“Providing increased opportunities for adults to learn Welsh is vital to reaching our target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Offering entertainment for children whilst adults learn is a creative way of increasing access to opportunities for adults to start on their journey to becoming confident Welsh speakers.

“Llongyfarchiadau – congratulations – to all of those who have taken part in Clwb Cwtsh, and to Mudiad Meithrin and the National Centre for Learning Welsh for delivering such an innovative scheme.”

Gwenllian Lansdown Davies, Chief Executive, Mudiad Meithrin said:

“The majority of children who receive Welsh-medium childcare in a Cylch Meithrin come from English-speaking families. Enabling and supporting parents and families to start learning Welsh – in an informal atmosphere – is imperative.”

Efa Gruffudd Jones, Chief Executive of the National Centre for Learning Welsh, said:

“We know that many people want to learn Welsh in order to support their children to be bilingual and we’re delighted this new, joint initiative with Mudiad Meithrin has proved so popular.

“Offering flexible learning solutions is one of our key aims. As well as developing innovative schemes such as this, we offer a range of classroom and online learning options, with plans to further increase the online offering.”

The next Clwb Cwtsh groups are due to begin later this year. For more information and to find your nearest group class visit

<http://www.meithrin.cymru/clwb-cwtsh/>

£13.5m innovation project is delivering ground breaking results

The Agor IP project brings together academics, clinicians and businesses to pioneer research into cutting-edge technologies and drive commercial success.

Today's launch event in Swansea University will showcase some of the innovative work already underway as a result of the project.

This includes an app developed to help prevent eating disorders, and a simple blood test that could make it easier for GPs to diagnose bowel cancer. Both have been developed in a partnership between Aneurin Bevan Health Board and scientists at Swansea University.

The Agor IP project has been backed by £6.7m from the Welsh Government and the European Regional Development Fund with additional funding from Swansea University.

Led by Swansea University, the scheme, which began in January 2016 and runs until December 2020, works with the NHS and industrial partners to turn innovative research into new products, processes and services.

Speaking ahead of the event, Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

"The Agor IP project is one that is truly worthy of celebration. Projects like the app to prevent eating disorders developed in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board have the potential to drive tangible results and economic benefits.

"The project is adding genuine value to our innovation goals and demonstrating to the world that the Welsh Government is committed to translating academic research into results that benefit the lives of Welsh people and our wider economy. Projects like these are crucial in promoting Wales as a global location of choice for innovation, creativity and technology."

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

"The Agor IP project is full of examples where science and healthcare are working together at the forefront of clinical innovation. I strongly support the NHS working confidently with university and industry partners, linking better health technologies and services to economic growth opportunities in Wales."

Over the last 12 months Agor IP has supported nearly 100 commercial opportunities, which are attracting significant private sector investment and helping create highly skilled, well paid jobs.

These range from digital tools for university students, early stage medical devices, diagnostics and therapeutics for cancer, clean technology and many collaborations with NHS Wales Health Boards.