

Minister sees how Welsh Government schemes are helping people into work

The Minister met with the delivery teams of both programmes and local residents who have benefitted from the schemes. Both programmes are supported by the EU and will operate until 2020. Combined, they will provide over £83 million in employment services across Wales.

Delivered in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions through Job Centre Plus, Communities for Work is a community based advisory service, supported by the European Social Fund. It works with people in the most deprived communities across Wales to increase the employability of 16-24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), and economically inactive and long-term unemployed adults who have complex barriers to employment. The programme has so far supported over 13,000 people and helped almost 4000 into work up to December 2017

PaCE helps economically inactive parents into work by covering the cost of childcare while parents undertake training to gain the skills they need to get a job. Across Wales, 43 PaCE advisers work in community settings to help people find a variety of solutions to overcome childcare barriers so that they can move towards and into sustainable employment. Jointly delivered by the Welsh Government and the Department for Work and Pensions, the programme builds upon services offered via Flying Start and Families First and complements other projects such as Communities for Work. The scheme has helped over 750 parents into work so far

The Minister said:

“I found the visit to the Noddfa Centre both interesting and inspiring. It was a pleasure to meet those who have benefitted from both the Communities for Work and PaCE schemes and to hear how they have overcome their difficulties to find work and training opportunities.

“Sustainable employment is still the best route out of poverty. These programmes combined support the most deprived communities as well as rural areas across Wales and provide a real opportunity to help people achieve their aspirations.”

Project gives Welsh speaking throat cancer sufferers a voice

The *Lleisiwr* project, which has received £20,000 from the Cymraeg 2050 grant fund, develops technology which builds personal synthetic voices for Welsh speakers at risk of losing their ability to speak due to diseases such as throat cancer. It is being developed by Canolfan Bedwyr at Bangor University, in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board and, once ready, will be available across Wales.

Currently, patients who have lost their voices only have access to English medium synthetic voices which impacts on their ability to converse with friends and family with whom they have always spoken Welsh.

The Cymraeg 2050 grant is a key element of the Welsh language strategy, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers. It provides small grants of up to £20,000 each to fund innovative, short-term projects which aim to increase people's daily use of the language and to promote technology which supports the use of Welsh. Twenty-six projects were approved in the first round of funding last year while a second round of funding will open for applications later this year.

The Minister said:

"Today's visit has been both informative and very inspiring. I have built a career on my ability to speak so know maybe more than most how devastating it would be to lose that ability through illness. A far greater loss would be to lose the ability to speak to my family and friends in the language we use every day so I am delighted Bangor University and Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board are working on the Welsh Voices project and proud the Welsh Government is contributing to the project."

Following the visit, Head of the Language Technologies Unit at Canolfan Bedwyr, Delyth Prys, said:

"It was a pleasure to welcome the Minister for the Welsh Language and to showcase this project. This hugely exciting project gives us an opportunity to apply our Welsh language speech technology in a way that benefits patients. We look forward to the feedback from patients as they're referred to us by the National Health Service, and to further developing this technology in the future."

We are gambling with our health, says Chief Medical Officer

In his second annual report, *Gambling with our Health*, Dr Atherton calls for more support for those experiencing gambling-related harm in Wales, better research and monitoring of the impact of gambling on health, and for greater regulatory control of gambling in Wales and the UK.

In Wales, 61% of adults gambled in the last 12 months. 1.1% of the population, which is equivalent to 30,000 people, self-reported as having a problem with gambling. A further 3.8% of people in Wales are estimated to be at risk of problem gambling in Wales.

Whilst recognising that gambling can be a source of enjoyment, it can lead to financial difficulty and harm, including anxiety, stress, depression and alcohol and substance misuse. Gambling does not just affect the individual; it can impact on their family, friends and wider society.

Dr Atherton is calling on the Welsh Government to agree a strong and ambitious action plan to reduce gambling-related harm across Wales, to make effective use of its existing powers to minimise the harm from gambling, and to seek to extend these powers. He also calls on the UK Government to take stronger action to restrict advertising of gambling products, to improve player protection, and to impose a levy on the industry to research, prevent and correct the adverse effects of gambling.

The Chief Medical Officer launched his annual report at the Newport Citizens Advice Bureau today. He was joined by Tim Miller, executive director of the Gambling Commission who welcomed his report.

Dr Atherton said:

“I’m pleased to present my second report as Chief Medical Officer for Wales, and I intend to use this as a platform to highlight areas of emerging or underestimated public health importance, which is why we have decided to focus on gambling-related harm.

“While it may be harmless fun for some, gambling has great potential to cause harm to individuals and can have devastating effects on the people closest to them, and communities.

“There are still big gaps in our understanding of this issue, and we need to reduce stigma around gambling so that more people who require help come forward.

“I hope my annual report will help highlight this issue, to be addressed, before it becomes a major public health issue.”

Tim Miller, executive director of the Gambling Commission said:

“Gambling related harm is a public health concern and the Gambling Commission is committed to preventing that harm. We’re pleased Dr Atherton is raising awareness of the impacts that gambling can have to both individuals and those around them.

“As the gambling regulator, we will continue to work with public health professionals, government and the industry to forge a sustained, world-leading approach to make gambling safer for people across Wales and the rest of Great Britain.”

[Minister appoints Two Members to the Careers Wales Board](#)

The appointments will run from 17 November 2017 to 16 November 2020.

Careers Wales, a wholly-owned subsidiary company of the Welsh Government, provides high quality, bilingual, impartial careers information, advice and guidance to people of all ages.

Liz Harris is a retired NHS professional with considerable nursing and management experience. She is an experienced manager with expertise in workforce planning and learning and development.

Emma Richards is a Senior Manager in in Chwarae Teg leading on the design and delivery of leadership, management and career development opportunities for women across Wales. Following open competition she returns to the Board for a second time bringing a wealth of Board level experience.

The post of Board Member is an unpaid voluntary position with a commitment of a minimum 8 days. Neither appointee has declared any political activity.

Announcing the appointments, the Minister said:

“I attach great importance to role of the CCDG Board and the accountability relationship between Chair, Board Members and Welsh Ministers.”

“The CCDG Board has a key role in delivering Careers Wales’ remit and ensuring the service achieves maximum impact. I look forward to working with them.”

First Minister launches 2018 programme of events to mark centenary of the First World War

Programme 2018 is the latest in the Welsh Government's series of annual Cymru'n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 brochures, which highlights events and projects of Welsh interest, taking place in Wales and further afield throughout the year. It also includes a range of articles written by partner organisations on commemorative plans and historical events. The launch coincides with the First World War Partnership Day 2018 held in the Pierhead Building, Cardiff Bay on 30 January.

This year's focus will be the centenary of the Armistice on Sunday 11 November. The National Service of Remembrance will take place at the National War Memorial in Cardiff in the morning to be followed by another commemorative service later in the day.

This year also marks the centenary of the Royal Air Force. The centenary itself will be marked by special events, activities and initiatives throughout 2018. Wales will play a part when the National Aircraft Tour comes to Cardiff City Hall Gardens from the 16th – 20th May 2018. Other events will be held across Wales enabling the public to engage in the centenary. These activities follow on from an event held at Llanystumdwy on 12 January to mark the centenary of Prime Minister David Lloyd George's role in the formation of the RAF.

Other key events include 14-18 NOW, the UK's cultural programme for the First World War centenary, launching their project Now the Hero / Nawr yr Arwr, as part of Swansea International Festival in September.

Nawr Yr Arwr (Now The Hero) is an immersive theatrical experience from Welsh artist Marc Rees that will take visitors on an extraordinary journey through three intertwining narratives of war via a military storming, a raucous wedding party, a protest dance and an ancient wake. The work is inspired by the little-known British Empire Panels painted by Frank Brangwyn that were originally commissioned by the House of Lords to commemorate the First World War, and includes a new requiem composed by double Oscar-nominee Jóhann Jóhannsson.

Another highlight will be a film by Peter Jackson, best known for directing The Lord of the Rings trilogy, who has been commissioned by 14-18 NOW and the Imperial War Museums to create a film on the First World War. Footage from the Imperial War Museums' extensive First World War film archive and audio from the IWM and BBC archives will be restored, and the film will be screened in cinemas and schools across the UK, before being broadcast on BBC One in November 2018. Accompanying resources are being developed and distributed to

secondary schools and the Welsh Government is providing funding to ensure engagement across Wales.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“Cymru’n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914 – 1918 gives us the opportunity to remember the lives of those who served in the First World War.

“Programme 2018 continues the outstanding level of engagement across the whole of the country, which acknowledges the sacrifices made by the people of Wales, as well as the rest of the UK and allied forces, during the First World War.

“It is vital that future generations understand how this terrible war affected Modern Wales, and ensures that we learn from the past in safeguarding a peaceful future.

“The Welsh Government is committed to continuing to support and develop targeted commemorative activities and to present a strong national identity for Wales’ centenary commemoration of the First World War as part of its Cymru’n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 programme, which will continue until March 2020.”

To find out more about events happening around Wales in 2018, go to www.walesremembers.org