

## Accelerated Growth programme creates 2000 jobs in Wales

Launched in 2015, with Welsh Government and EU funding, the Business Wales Accelerated Growth programme has been developed to support ambitious businesses in Wales to fulfil their growth potential.

It offers a bespoke package of support aimed at helping businesses to grow faster, become stronger and more resilient.

Latest statistics reveal that the Business Wales Accelerated Growth programme as well as supporting companies to create 2,308 jobs, has also helped participating companies attract £70.1m of private sector investment and generate £33.1m worth of exports.

The programme is currently supporting over 400 companies, across Wales and within a wide range of sectors.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Our Business Wales Accelerated Growth programme is making a real difference to our economy and I am delighted that it has now been successful in helping to support over 2000 new jobs in SMEs and Start Ups right across Wales.

“These companies are the lifeblood of the Welsh economy and I am proud that our bespoke Accelerated Growth Programme is delivering the support Welsh businesses need to help them overcome issues and strategic constraints that may otherwise have hampered their true growth potential”.

“With the help of the programme, 455 businesses are now delivering tangible results, creating jobs, increasing turnover and export sales and making a real difference to communities right across Wales and I look forward to the success of the programme continuing as it moves into its third year and beyond.”

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## Wales is taking the lead in empowering nurses and ensuring resources are

# there to care sensitively for patients – Vaughan Gething

Following a productive consultation period and collaboration with the Royal College of Nursing, new guidance will help the nursing workforce prepare for commencement of the Act in April 2018.

The Act places a duty on health boards and NHS Trusts to take steps to calculate and maintain nurse staffing levels in adult acute medical and surgical inpatient wards. It also contains a broader duty to consider how many nurses are necessary to provide the right level of care for patients sensitively in all settings.

Vaughan Gething said:

“Wales is the first country in Europe to legislate on nurse staffing levels and I’m proud of what we have achieved so far.

“The evidence unequivocally tells us that having the right number of registered nurses reduces patient mortality and improves patient outcomes.

“Ensuring patients have safe, high quality care was one of the main reasons why we supported the introduction of the Act. I’m very keen to see the health boards use this guidance to bring the legislation to life and affect positive change for the benefit of our patients in Wales.”

Chief Nursing Officer, Professor Jean White said:

“Nurses are the largest section of the health workforce and fulfil roles right across our health and social care services.

“It is essential that we have a nursing workforce that has the right skill set, in the right numbers with an appropriate skill-mix, deployed at the right time to meet patients’ needs.

“The Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 requires the NHS to ensure there are enough nurses to sensitively care for patients and we’re working hard to help get those numbers right. The publication of this statutory guidance – developed in partnership with the NHS and key partners like the RCN – is a big step towards making that a reality.”

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## £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.

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## [Dusty, unused musical instruments needed for new homes](#)

Today (2 Nov) Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams is calling for people in Wales to dust off their old, unused instruments for a new Welsh Government pilot, Instruments for Kids.

Instruments for Kids will gather up all instruments found hidden in attics, garages and the backs of cupboards across Wales and distribute them through local authorities to children and schools where there is a need for music provision.

The pilot was launched at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama on 2 Nov with a special performance by members of the temporarily named Not New Novello Orchestra, led by David Mahoney using instruments already donated by Assembly Members.

The pilot follows a campaign earlier this year by Welsh Government and National Assembly for Wales where more than 50 instruments were donated by Assembly Members and staff.

People across Wales are being encouraged to donate their once loved, but no longer played instruments across Wales from 20 – 24 November – Music Instrument Amnesty Week.

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams said:

“Whether we stuck at it or just gave it a go, most of us have memories of learning to play a musical instrument as a child.

“We believe that every child should have the opportunity to learn an instrument. That is why, together, we are making a commitment to finding new and innovative ways of making sure children across Wales get access to music. Instrument for Kids is part of this.

“We hope that Wales’ love of music will inspire people to dig out and dust off their old instruments in November for us to give them a new lease of life and pass on to children to enjoy for many more years to come.”

WLGA Leader, Councillor Debbie Wilcox (Newport) said:

“As a former teacher, I know first-hand how music can not only enrich children’s learning experiences, but provide pleasure and enjoyment to people throughout their lives. Many of us will have had the chance to learn to play musical instruments from an early age, and what better way to pass those skills on than dig out our unused instruments to help the next generation of musical maestros and have-a-go newbies!”

David Mahoney, Founder of The Novello Orchestra and member of Only Men Aloud, is just one of several Welsh musicians supporting the campaign:

“Music is such a big part of Welsh culture and every child in Wales should be given the opportunity to pick up an instrument and give it a go. The benefits of music making are endless and this scheme will provide a perfect opportunity to introduce musical performance to those who may not otherwise have been exposed to it.”

For more information on Instruments for Kids and to find out where you can donate your old instruments from 20 – 24 November, visit: [Education Wales on Facebook](#) (external link)

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# New powers not so fly for offenders

Last week, the National Assembly for Wales approved the [Unauthorised Deposit of Waste \(Fixed Penalties\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2017](#) (external link). It followed a public consultation, earlier this year, which revealed overwhelming support in favour of the new powers.

Local Authorities are now able to set a [fixed penalty amount](#) between £150 and £400, with a default of £200 where no amount is specified. A reduction for early payment can be made available and Local Authorities can retain the receipts to help contribute to the costs of dealing with fly-tipping. The Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) can be applied on both publicly and privately owned land.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“Fly-tipping blights our communities and it damages our environment.

“These powers will provide Local Authorities with an additional enforcement tool for small-scale fly-tipping offences where a prosecution is considered disproportionate.

“I am sure Local Authorities and communities will welcome these new powers. However, I feel it is important Local Authorities accompany these new powers with the appropriate level of public engagement, awareness raising and wider education programmes. I believe this is essential to ensure a positive response from the public and a sustainable reduction in offending behaviour”.