

Wales is having a Good Air Day

Lesley Griffiths has today issued [new guidance](#) to Local Authorities on air quality management. The guidance stresses the importance of planning for the long term, integrating policies which can impact on air quality, involving local communities in solutions to local air quality challenges, collaborating with others and preventing problems from getting worse or from arising in the first place.

The new guidance follows the Welsh Government's commitment to developing a clean air zone framework for Wales as part of a UK-wide consultation to develop a new air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The average levels of air pollution across Wales continue to improve but we must do more to ensure the overall improving trends continue across Wales and compliance is achieved in pollution hotspots.

“The responses to our recent consultation on local air quality management were very supportive of our air quality proposals for Wales. This new guidance and our commitment to develop a clean air zone framework for Wales marks our determination to ensure clean local environments for the wellbeing of our future generations”.

The UK's first Clean Air Day is being co-ordinated by the charity Global Action Plan. It offers people a chance to find out more about air pollution, to share information with friends and colleagues and to take action to make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone. Clean Air Day activities will focus in particular on the cities and regions of the UK already known to be putting in place low emission zones or clean air zones.

[Clean Air Day](#) (external link) in Wales will also mark the development of a much-needed programme of awareness-raising and educational activities in Wales.

Welsh legends and locations feature in Transformers: the Last Knight

Alongside Merlin and King Arthur, the Paramount Pictures production also features a transformer dragon in this action packed sequel to Transformers:

Age of Extinction which sees giant robots exploring the history of Transformers on Earth in order to combat a new threat.

Directed by Michael Bay and written by Art Marcum and Matt Holloway (Iron Man) and Ken Nolan (Black Hawk Down), it stars Mark Wahlberg, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Josh Duhamel.

It will be released in the UK on 22 June 2017 and in the USA on 21 June and set to become one of this summer's biggest hits.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Transformers is a hugely successful big screen franchise and its great news – and very apt – that they chose to film part of this highly anticipated sequel in Wales. It features some legendary figures and locations from Wales which ties in perfectly with our Visit Wales 2017 Year of Legends promotion. It also provided a tremendous opportunity for crew from Wales to get involved and gain invaluable experience of working on such a major production.”

Wales Screen helped find suitable locations for the production team who selected a disused quarry within the Brecon Beacons National Park as the ideal backdrop for some dramatic action sequences that featured Josh Duhamel who shared Instagram posts of his time in Wales as did Director Michael Bay.

The crew of 400 – which included 50 freelancers from Wales – spent a total of 28 days in the area last August preparing the site, filming and then deconstructing the set.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, which has experience of working with large scale productions that have previously filmed in the area, also assisted during filming.

John Cook, CEO Brecon Beacons National Park Authority added;

“Having Transformers film in the Brecon Beacons National Park last summer was an exciting time for everyone involved. We are lucky to have a wide variety of beautiful locations available here, including everything from dramatic open landscapes, native forests, spectacular waterfalls and in this case a deserted quarry. Our Filming Officer and team of Park Wardens are experienced in working with a wide range of filming requests and these in turn support the local economy.”

First Minister sets out a way forward for devolution post-Brexit

Speaking at a Wales Governance Centre event in Cardiff, the First Minister will say that while leaving the EU has the potential to destabilise the United Kingdom, it also offers the opportunity for the country's reinvention.

The paper presents a blueprint for a major constitutional renewal of the UK, which can meet the challenges Brexit poses for the devolved nations and the future governance of the country as a whole.

The First Minister will say:

“Leaving the European Union is the biggest challenge facing the United Kingdom, a challenge thrown into even sharper relief by the outcome of the General Election.

“Decisions taken now will affect Wales for decades to come. Our ability to trade, travel, attract investment, determine policies, legislate, support our countryside, invest in our regions – all of these will be influenced by how we leave the EU.

“I have been completely consistent in arguing that securing full and unfettered access to the Single Market should be our top priority. But, the fall-out from Brexit also has the potential to destabilise the United Kingdom as we know it – or, if we work together, we can use this as an opportunity to reinvent and strengthen our Union.”

The paper proposes replacing the current Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) with a new UK Council of Ministers that would take forward negotiations, reach binding decisions and help resolve disputes.

The council, served by an independent secretariat and a structured work programme, would bring the 4 governments together to negotiate and agree binding UK frameworks in devolved areas where they are needed, as well as considering non-devolved policies, such as state aid.

The paper also proposes a convention on the future of the United Kingdom. The convention, chaired by a respected, independent figure, would consider major questions which will face the UK once it is outside the EU and take evidence from all political parties, civil society and all parts of the UK.

The First Minister added:

“The opportunities presented by EU exit must be about the future, not the past – and that is what our paper is about. It represents

an important step forward in the work which we must undertake together with England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – through discussion, not diktat – to map our collective future.”

[Brexit: Securing Wales' future](#)

[Review into support for Publishing and Literature in Wales](#)

The wide ranging review, which was commissioned by Ken Skates in September 2015, and Chaired by Professor Medwin Hughes considered the main aims of the Welsh Government in supporting publishing and literature in Wales, and looked at whether these aims remain fit for the 21st Century.

The review also considered the current support for publishing and literature in Wales, the relationships between those bodies responsible for delivering it, the impact of digital developments on the publishing industry and the administration arrangements for the Welsh Government's support of a Welsh language, daily online news service.

Speaking in the Senedd, the Economy Secretary welcomed the contribution of partner organisations and the public into the review and said it demonstrated the importance that was attached to Wales' rich literary tradition and vibrant publishing industry.

Ken Skates said:

“I have now received the report of the independent review into Welsh Government support for publishing and literature in Wales which summarises the range of evidence that was received from key partner organisations, the industry and the public.

“The panel recognised significant good practice and effective support for publishing and literature that should be continued and built upon for the future.

“It identified areas where support needs to evolve to meet the changing needs of the digital age, and it also found clear evidence of real problems in some areas, related to strategic planning, priority setting, governance, risk management, spending and in ensuring that activities are effective in delivering the outcomes we need.

“The report that I am publishing today sets out a series of recommendations. Some of these are for the Welsh Government, others

are for the industry and the key delivery organisations.

“Given the significant weight and compelling nature of the evidence received, I am minded to accept the main recommendations and the Welsh Government will now work with the relevant organisations to implement them.”

In its report the panel makes a strong case for the Welsh Government to continue to provide appropriate financial support for Wales’ bi-lingual literary tradition, so it can enable it to thrive in the 21st century, ensure its global reach and support access and participation across Wales.

It makes the case for a strong, innovative publishing industry that provides high-quality jobs, competes internationally and allows professional writers of all backgrounds to develop career pathways in Wales.

The report includes a series of recommendations which the Welsh Government will respond formally to in due course.

One recommendation is that the Welsh Government should seek agreement from the Welsh Books Council to take on some of Literature Wales’ current functions, including Book of the Year (aiming to increase its commercial impact), bursaries, literary events and Writers on Tour and provision for children and young people.

The Economy Secretary added:

“Some of these recommended changes are extensive but they are in response to specific needs in a specific area of activity. They are in no way a reflection of the wider good work of the Arts Council or Literature Wales including the excellent delivery of major events and activities linked to our themed years, which will remain unchanged.

“I am persuaded that these steps are needed to create a support structure for publishing and literature which is more effective and fit for the future.

Ministers celebrate success of outstanding health professionals who have achieved ‘Grand Slam’ of nursing

and midwifery award triumphs in 2017

Wales swept the boards at nursing and midwifery awards earlier in the year; today the First Minister and Health Secretary met:

Melanie Davies, from Morriston Hospital in Swansea, who was named RCNi Nurse of the Year, for her work making far-reaching changes to the care of vulnerable patients with learning disabilities.

Health Visitor Lead Sharon Fernandez, for Powys' Perinatal Mental Health services, who won the Journal of Health Visiting Awards 2017, Health Visitor of the Year Award.

Bereavement midwife, **Laura Wyatt**, from Cardiff and Vale UHB, who has been awarded the Emma's Diary Mums' Midwife of the Year 2017 for Wales. The award is one of the Royal College of Midwives Annual Midwifery Awards, recognises the remarkable work done by inspiring midwives across the country.

And, **Cemlyn Roberts**, from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, who has won the RCNi- UK Healthcare Assistant Award Winner 2017. Cemlyn won the award for improving care for people with learning disabilities through an individualised, gentler approach to taking blood.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

"It was an absolute privilege to meet this outstanding group of health professionals today. They are shining examples of what our health service in Wales does on a daily basis – helping those who need it most.

"They have proved themselves to be the best at what they do in the UK. It is important that we celebrate success and I congratulate them on their fantastic achievements. I hope they inspire other health professionals across the country to reach the heights of what they've achieved this year."

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

"Our grand slam of nursing and midwifery award triumphs shows just how exceptional our healthcare staff truly are.

"It was a great to meet the group today. Each one is an ambassador for this country. I hope nurses, midwives and other health professionals from across the UK will look to Wales as a place where they would want to pursue a career in the future.

"I have said it before, Wales is a fantastic place to train, work and live; a place where we will continue to offer NHS Bursaries for

eligible student nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in 2018/19. It's a place where we will continue to support professional development. We continue to invest in nursing and midwifery education, and the number of nurses working in NHS Wales continues to increase year on year.

"Melanie, Laura, Sharon and Cemlyn should be very proud of what they've achieved for themselves, their families and the NHS as a whole in Wales; we certainly are."