

## Holyhead welcomes Wales' first Cruise call of the season

The Astoria is a 580 passenger and 236 crew ship which is operated by Cruise and Maritime Voyages. After docking in Holyhead, passengers had a choice of excursions around north Wales, which included visits to Snowdonia, Anglesey and the north Wales coast.

The cruise ship market is big business for Wales and Cruise Wales and partners are working hard to grow the market. In addition to Holyhead an increasing number of cruise visitors are coming to south west Wales through cruise ships docking at Swansea, Milford Haven Port, Pembroke and Fishguard. With the support of Welsh Government support under the Tourism Investment Support Scheme a floating pontoon at Fishguard has been installed to allow larger vessels to anchor, as a result Fishguard calls have increased from 5 in 2015 to 29 for 2017.

Fishguard will get its first call of the season when the National Geographic 'Explorer' vessel – will call for the first time on 6 May. The call is as a result of a National Geographic familiarisation visit last year to see what Wales had to offer as a cruise destination. Passengers will be offered excursions to see the highlights of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and to explore the local flora and fauna.

This season, Welsh ports are set to welcome 37,000 passengers and 15,000 crew – an increase in calls of 33% year on year.

Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates, said:

“The cruise market has been highlighted in the tourism strategy for Wales as one way of growing the tourism industry in Wales by 10% by 2020 and Cruise is one of the fastest growing sectors year on year. We are working with many outside stakeholders and are looking at various infrastructure developments for the cruise market. I hope that both the cruise operators and passengers are impressed with what Wales has to offer and will return again in the future.”

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## Cabinet Secretary gives the Royal

## Welch a shot with grant

The Royal Welch Fusiliers is the oldest of the Welsh regiments and has one of the largest and most important military heritage collections outside of the National Army Museum in London.

The funding means the Museum which is situated in the Chamberlain Tower and the Queen's Tower at the Castle will remain open until at least 2020.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

"I am pleased to approve this funding that will enable the Museum to remain open until 2020.

"It will mean that visitors to the Castle can continue to enjoy all the Museum has to offer and gain an insight into the long history of the Royal Welch Fusiliers through the variety of letters, poems and photographs and other exhibits on show.

"The Museum has been providing an invaluable service since the 1960s and I am delighted that this grant will mean the service can continue to the next decade and beyond."

The Welsh Government grant of £270,000 over 3 years will ensure that the Royal Welch Fusiliers Collections Trust will continue to deliver amongst other things an Accredited Museum open to the public and provide a variety of lifelong learning and public engagement activities.

Colonel Peter Knox, Chairman of the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum Management Committee said:

"The trustees of the Royal Welch Fusiliers welcome this announcement and value the long association with Cadw and the Welsh Government."

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## Diabetes care for children improving

The Annual Statement of Progress for Diabetes highlights that the number of children and young people with Type 1 diabetes achieving blood glucose in the

target range has increased from 17.8 % (2014-15) to 27.2% (2015-16).

Meanwhile, the number of these with high blood glucose levels reduced from 21.6% (2014-15) to 18.6% (2015-16).

The rates of young people undergoing essential key care processes such as foot and kidney checks have also improved.

The report also shows:

- A decrease in the rate of people dying from cardiovascular disease, which has a high prevalence among people with diabetes
- Improved care for patients in hospital people with diabetes, with a decrease in the average length of stay
- Better opportunities for patients to inform diabetes services
- Improved care for pregnant women with diabetes
- The success of the diabetic retinopathy screening service
- The 'Think Glucose' project is supporting quality improvement of patient care whilst in a hospital

The report sets out the progress made against the Diabetes Delivery Plan. Speaking ahead of a debate later today [Tuesday 2 May] on diabetes services in Wales, Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething, said:

“This report demonstrates that paediatric diabetes care has made significant strides in the quality of care and the outcomes being achieved over the past six years. The impact of the improvement in blood glucose levels, as well as those in some essential care processes, will reduce the risk of future complications significantly. This is good news for children and young people.

“As well as the improvements in paediatric diabetes care, we have seen improved hospital care, a decrease in the rate of people dying from cardiovascular disease, and better engagement with patients.

“One of our key aims over the coming years will be to continue to work closely with the public on prevention. While there are no lifestyle factors associated with Type 1 diabetes, we must all reduce our risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by being active, eating a healthy balanced diet and maintaining a healthy body weight.”

Dr Andrew Goodall, Chief Executive of NHS Wales, said:

“Diabetes can have a major impact on the physical and psychological well-being of individuals and their families. However with careful management, healthy lifestyle choices and good blood glucose control the risks of complications are markedly reduced.

“During 2015-16 there was continued progress in the care of patients with diabetes in Wales. At an all Wales level, there have been infrastructure improvements including the creation of a number of national leadership posts and delivery structures.

“However, we continue to work to ensure standards are consistently high across the system and that people get the support they need. Ensuring adults with diabetes receive all eight health checks is a priority, which is why we are working with the NHS to ensure the checks are completed and providing more diabetes education opportunities so people are better able to self-manage their condition.”

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## Online assessments set to replace paper for national reading and numeracy tests

National reading and numeracy tests in Welsh schools are set to replace paper with innovative online assessments that adapt to a pupil's abilities, Education Secretary Kirsty Williams announced today (Tues 2nd May).

Monday 01 May 2017

Currently the tests, taken by all pupils in years two to nine, are carried out on paper. They aim to find out about pupils' reading and numeracy skills in order to identify what each child needs to focus upon to progress.

The paper tests will be replaced with new personalised assessments to be taken online that have been specifically designed for use in Wales. The new assessments will automatically adjust the level of the questions to match the individual taking the test, providing an appropriate level of challenge for each learner.

The change to online tests will reduce marking time and administration.

Benefits include:

- Assessments tailored to individual pupils.
- More detailed information on a child's performance.
- A reduction in feedback times to teachers and learners.
- Schools will be able to test classes, small groups or individuals according to their facilities and at a time that works for them and their learners.

The new tests will be phased in over three years, starting from the 2018/19 academic year.

Kirsty Williams said:

“These tests are about raising standards by showing the next steps that children need to take in their learning. The move to online personalised assessments for reading and numeracy will benefit pupils, parents and teachers.

“Pupils will be taking assessments that will adapt to their needs and skills. They will have the benefits of automatic marking and schools will have feedback faster than before, giving them a better picture of how they can help all their learners to move on.

“This approach is tailor made for Wales. It shows how we are investing in our schools to continue our national mission of education reform to drive up standards and make sure every pupil in Wales, whatever their background, has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.”

[May 2017](#)

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## [Wales' links with the Middle East set to reach new heights](#)

Following Qatar Airways' decision to invest in a new direct service from Cardiff to Doha, the First Minister is meeting with the airline's CEO, HE Akbar Al Baker, as well as senior officials from Qatar International Islamic Bank, the Qatar Investment Authority and Qatar National Bank.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“The direct service between Cardiff and Doha is a huge boost for

Wales. It will open up Wales' links with the rest of the world and deliver new economic, leisure and travel opportunities for Welsh businesses and the people of Wales.

"Providing a direct route into the world's fastest growing hub airport, Hamad International, will also bring Wales closer to leading global markets such as India, China, Singapore and Australasia.

"My visit to Doha this weekend, alongside the new service, is the beginning of a special relationship with Qatar and the Middle East.

"We will maximise the opportunities created by this new route and use it as catalyst for increased Middle Eastern investment, including from sovereign wealth funds, into new infrastructure projects in Wales.

"As we prepare for a future outside the EU, it is more important than ever before to sell Wales to the world and meet with potential investors across the globe to show them exactly what Wales has to offer."