

Environmental projects set to benefit from £1m funding through new landfill community scheme

The scheme is a new funding programme managed by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

A total of 27 projects across Wales will receive Grant Awards in the first round of funding raised by the scheme.

The Welsh Government established the scheme to support local community and environmental projects in areas affected by disposals to landfill. It is funded by the new Welsh Landfill Disposals Tax (LDT) which replaced UK Landfill Tax in April 2018.

LDT is a tax on the disposal of waste to landfill and is charged by weight.

It is the first time that money raised from the Landfill Disposals Tax has been used to support a bespoke Welsh funding scheme.

Successful projects focusing on the environment, wildlife, reuse, biodiversity and waste management will receive funding of up to £50,000 each.

Projects that will benefit include:

- Pembrokeshire Remakery will see £49,900 support a community project aiming to re-educate the community in repair and mend and contributing to reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill.
- Betws Family Centre in Carmarthenshire will see more than £8,000 go towards a project to enhance an outdoor space so parents and children can gain skills in gardening, growing their own food and be more physically active.
- Ysgol Y Lawnt in Caerphilly will receive £10,600 to support a project to transform the school grounds from overgrown and unused scrubby woodland to a space used for education and outdoor activities to improve the well-being of the pupils and biodiversity.
- Menter Mon in Anglesey will see £49,900 to support a project that seeks to respond to the threat the American Mink poses to biodiversity on Anglesey. Without intervention, this non-native predator could lead to the extinction of water voles and wading birds on the island.
- The Vincent Wildlife Trust in North Wales will see £49,900 go towards a project to engage with local communities and train new volunteers to ensure the recovering population of native pine martens survives in the long-term.

Applications for a second round of funding have recently closed. However, two

rounds of funding will take place in each year the scheme operates. The second round of funding included a call for a nationally significant project costing between £50,000-£250,000.

Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, praised the funding and said it would have a number of wider environmental benefits:

“I’m delighted the establishment of Landfill Disposals Tax has led to 27 projects benefitting from more than £1million through our new Landfill Disposals Tax Community Scheme.

“These projects will have far reaching benefits to communities, the environment and wildlife that will continue for generations to come.”

Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, Rebecca Evans, said:

“With the challenges of Brexit it is more important than ever that we utilise every opportunity we have to award funding to viable projects that will benefit the wider population.

“I’d like to wish the best of luck to everyone applying for the next round.”

Ruth Marks, WCVA’s Chief Executive, said:

“The successful grant applicants represent a really exciting range of projects from across Wales. From taking action to improve local community facilities, enhancing the natural environment and promoting waste minimisation, these projects will have a great impact in Wales.

“The first round generated a great deal of interest and WCVA is pleased to be working with Welsh Government and our County Voluntary Council partners to deliver this scheme.”

Reel big year for film and TV production in Wales

Sex Education, which premiered on Netflix last week, is one of many projects made in Wales in 2018 that has hit the screen this year.

The 8 part, coming of age comedy drama follows awkward teenager Otis Milburn (Asa Butterfield) as he navigates the road into adulthood. It stars Hollywood A-lister Gillian Anderson as his cringeworthy honest, sex therapist mum. Sex Education is one of a string of productions wholly or partly filmed in Wales as a result of the Welsh Government funding to the Screen Industry.

Funding is complemented by our Wales Screen service which helps production companies by sourcing crew, locations and providing facilities support.

Other Welsh Government supported productions set for release this year include:

- **Watchmen** (HBO) which filmed key sequences in Penrhyn Castle in North Wales. Starring Jeremy Irons, the American drama television series is based on the comic book limited series of the same name created by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons.
- **The Crown** series 3 (Left Bank Pictures) which includes an entire episode focussed on the Aberfan disaster. The producers used various locations in the South Wales Valleys and Cadw also closed Caernarfon castle in north Wales for the re-enactment of the investiture of Prince Charles.
- **Keeping Faith** series 2 (Vox Pictures) is currently being shot in West Wales following the success of the first series in 2018. Starring Eve Myles in the title role, series 1 set records for viewing figures and was the highest viewed drama by BBC Wales in over 20 years. iPlayer views topped 15 million which led to BBC Network buying it and screening UK wide.
- **Six Minutes to Midnight** (Mad As Birds Ltd.) was written by Celyn Jones and Eddie Izzard and directed by Andy Goddard. The feature film is a historical thriller based on true events that took place in Britain in the lead up to the Second World War, starring Eddie Izzard and Dame Judi Dench.
- **The Secret Garden** (Lennox Productions) filmed key sequences at Bodnant Garden in North Wales for two weeks for the remake of the classic tale starring Colin Firth and Julie Walters.
- **Pitching In** (LA Productions), a new Wales-based family drama, features Gavin and Stacey stars, Larry Lamb (Michael Shipman) and Melanie Walters (Gwen West). Set for BBC One Wales and BBC One Daytime, it tells the story of three generations of the same family, all struggling to make the best of a very unusual – and sometimes very difficult – situation.
- **Warren** (Hat Trick Productions for BBC One). Original comedy series penned by upcoming writers Paul McKenna and Jimmy Donny Cosgrove, centres on the life of Warren Thompson (played by Martin Clunes), a pedantic driving instructor who thinks the world is against him.

- **His Dark Materials** (Bad Wolf) continues to shoot at Wolf Studios and around locations in Wales. The BBC's forthcoming adaptation of Philip Pullman's trilogy of books stars James McAvoy, Dafne Keen and Lin-Manuel Miranda. The series will run for 8 parts, written by Jack Thorne with Tom Hooper directing. A second series is expected to shoot in 2019.

Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism Lord Elis-Thomas said:

"Hard work and investment has helped us to develop Wales' reputation as a five-star location for television drama production; a country that is geared up to support the sector and as a strong and affordable alternative to London.

"And there is absolutely no doubt that our proactive, industry friendly approach is paying dividends and bringing a whole host of high calibre productions to Wales.

"Of course our approach is focussed firmly on value for the tax payer and with current analysis showing that for every £1 the Welsh Government invests into TV and Film production, we are seeing an average of £8 being spent within the Welsh Economy, we will keep working to attract more and more productions to Wales."

Welsh in Business is good for business

Thanks to Welsh in Business, the Welsh Government's free language support service, more than 1000 businesses have interacted with the Welsh language during the first year of the initiative. Almost 200 businesses have received support to develop action plans to increase their use of Welsh, the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language confirmed today.

The initiative's focus is to increase the number of private businesses using Welsh and, in turn, the number of opportunities for people to use the language locally.

The national network of Welsh in Business officers are based in the Mentrau Iaith (Language Initiatives) across Wales and rooted in their communities. Engaging with small to medium-sized private sector businesses, they offer a wide range of support, from improving Welsh language interaction with customers to providing bilingual merchandise and advice on recruiting Welsh speaking staff. A free translation service is also available – and 140 businesses took advantage of this service within the first 12 months.

One business taking advantage of St Dwynwen's day as a commercial opportunity is Shop No1 and High Street Deli in Newtown. Elizabeth Mary Evans, owner

said:

“St. Dwynwen’s Day is special to us and to our shop because it is special to Welsh people. We are very passionate about our Welsh language products and about the fact that most of them are produced in Wales. And of course, St. Dwynwen’s Day brings more business to the shop. This week alone – the week of St. Dwynwen’s Day – about 20% of our customers have come in only to ask for cards and gifts for St. Dwynwen’s Day. And Welsh in Business are helping us to integrate more of the Welsh language and to promote our business.”

With support from the Welsh for Business network, increasingly popular businesses such as ‘The Escape Rooms’ are following in the footsteps of other successful which have seen the benefits of embracing the Welsh language.

Ellie Daniels, owner of Newport’s escape game, The Escape Rooms, said:

“We believe the language is an important part of Welsh culture and we’re keen to promote the everyday use of it. We worked closely with Welsh in Business officers, who were incredibly supportive, to offer a Welsh version of our original game, ‘Torture Corp’.

“This has generated a lot of additional interest and it’s created a ‘good-feeling’ amongst our Welsh speaking customers. The publicity alone helped us reach much higher than anticipated and caused a knock-on spike in sales across the board, not just for our Welsh language game.”

Eluned Morgan, Minister International Relations and the Welsh Language is urging businesses to take advantage of Welsh in Business:

“Getting private businesses on board is vital to the success of Cymraeg 2050. There’s still much to do, but the work Cymraeg Byd Busnes has done so far shows that businesses are willing to engage and I’d like to thank the officers who’ve been supporting them to increase their use of the Welsh language and show love to the language around St Dwynwen’s Day.

“We believe that Welsh in Business is good for business! Operating bilingually can increase customer satisfaction. To me it’s a no-brainer. If you’re a business owner who feels daunted by offering bilingual services, I want you to know that Welsh in Business is here to support you.”

For more information or to find out how your business can take advantage of this free Welsh language support, visit:

<http://cymraeg.gov.wales/business/business/swyddogion/?lang=en>

Follow #Cariad for information on businesses supporting St Dwynwen's Day.

[Plans for a rail operator Welsh headquarters move closer](#)

Following award of the contract for the Wales and Borders rail service and South Wales Metro to KeolisAmey last year, Keolis UK announced it will move its headquarters from London to a new office in Wales by 2019, and will relocate its global rail division from Paris to Wales by 2020.

This week the Minister met with Guillaume Pepy, Chair of Keolis parent company SNCF, in Cardiff Bay to discuss progress on the Keolis UK HQ move to Wales and further collaboration opportunities between Wales and France.

The Minister said:

“Guillaume Pepy has been instrumental in reforming the French railway industry since his appointment as Chairman of SNCF in 2008. He brings with him a great depth of experience in the rail industry and expertise in how new rail operators KeolisAmey, operating as Transport for Wales, will make a positive impact to our transport sector

“This partnership strengthens European economic links and I am delighted that work to move Keolis' headquarters to Cardiff is progressing well . Working in collaboration with European transport industry leaders is key in helping us achieve our vision of creating a world class transport network of which the people of Wales can be proud.”

Guillaume Pepy said:

“I am very impressed by Wales' determination to enhance the country's future through a modern public transport system. SNCF is fully committed to supporting the success of this strategy.”

In addition to the Keolis commitment, Amey announced it will open a new design hub in Wales where it will offer consultancy services and further jobs will be created when the companies open a shared services and customer contact centre providing services to both businesses.

The £5bn investment committed as part of the new Transport for Wales passenger service agreement is set to create 600 new jobs, with 30 new

apprenticeships to be created every year.

€1.9m EU funds to link communities in Ireland and Wales through stories of Celtic saints

St David, the patron saint of Wales, is commemorated in the city of St Davids, where he spent much of his life, whilst St Aidan is closely associated with Wexford, particularly in the town of Ferns. As well as enabling both communities to rediscover their shared heritage, the project aims to use this shared history as a way of attracting new visitors to these coastal communities.

Led by Pembrokeshire County Council, in partnership with Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, Wexford County Council and Visit Wexford, this cross border project will drive forward economic growth across the two regions through regeneration, cultural and educational projects and business to business mentoring.

It is claimed St Aidan travelled from Wexford to Pembrokeshire to study under St David for several years. This mentor relationship inspired St Aidan to return to Ireland to build his own monastery at Ferns. Both Ferns and St Davids have historically important cathedrals, the cathedral at Ferns is the smallest in Ireland and the cathedral at St Davids being a key tourist destination.

There are plans for the restoration of St Non's well at St Davids which is said to be the birthplace of St David, permanent artworks will be commissioned in both regions which will thematically correspond with each other. Schools will take part in a joint project to animate the story of the 2 saints, with pupils taking part in a visit to the partner country.

Jeremy Miles said:

"Ancient Connections is a great example of EU funds being used to benefit cross border areas in Ireland and Wales by encouraging visitors to find out more about our fascinating shared history. I'm delighted we've been able to fund this unique project which celebrates the ancient links between our 2 communities.

"By sharing knowledge and experience, we hope this will stimulate economic growth and create and safeguard jobs in the cultural, heritage and tourism sectors. In light of Brexit, it is more important than ever that we support and celebrate the strong links

between our 2 countries.”

The Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe TD, said:

“I welcome the announcement of another project funded by the Ireland Wales Programme. The EU funding granted to Ancient Connections will promote understanding of our shared history and support tourism development to the benefit of both our countries.”

The Leader of Pembrokeshire County Council added:

“We are absolutely delighted to hear that we have been successful in our Ancient Connections grant application. This has been a truly collaborative piece of work with a great many partners in the private, public and third sectors working with us throughout the application process. We can now look forward to 3 years of exciting cultural, heritage, arts and community-based tourism development activity in Wexford and North Pembrokeshire which will help to attract more overseas visitors, particularly out of high season.”