

EU funding boost an Epic start to Easter

The additional funding will be used for marketing and partnership work in support of the themed years – as well as boosting the funding available to the private sector under the [Tourism Investment Support Scheme](#) (TISS).

Funding will also be made available to the public sector under TISS to improve visitor facilities and amenities.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“This package of investment by the Rural Development Programme will make a major contribution to how we develop the products that we have here in Wales as well as how we market Wales to the world. It will enable us to make sure that the correct amenities are in place at the local level; to encourage innovative and top quality product development; and it will help us take these products to the world through Visit Wales marketing. With the existing EU tourism funded projects currently in development with partners in Wales, we are looking at more than a £100 million investment in the sector up until 2020 which will have a big impact on Wales’ competitiveness in the global marketplace.

“I’m delighted to be making this announcement at the beginning of what will hopefully be a busy season for the tourism industry in Wales. We’ve experienced two record breaking years for tourism, with figures for the first 9 months of 2016 showing a substantial increase of 12% in the number of overseas visitors coming to Wales and a 9% increase in the amount they spend during their visit. We’ve also seen a significant increase in the number of day visitors coming to Wales – there was 31% increase in day visit expenditure last year. Our aim for 2017 is to sustain these record breaking figures with continued investment and innovation in marketing and product development.

“The recently launched Year of Legends campaign, which includes an advert starring Luke Evans has been hailed as a game changer by industry leaders, there was a sharp spike in visitors to the [visitwales.com](#) website on 1 March as the advert launched and Facebook posts published on St David’s day were seen by more than 1 million people. Campaign work now continues to convert early interest into bookings for the summer.

“This week, the popular EPIC installation is back with a new legendary new look for Easter and its first appearance of the year will be at Margam Park. I’d like to wish the industry a successful start to the season.”

Further information on application process for the RDP funding will be available to the industry following the Easter holidays.

Visit Wales' innovative travelling art installation, a focal part of the summer campaign last year, has undergone a makeover over the winter to reflect the Year of Legends theme for 2017. The sign has been refreshed and recovered with illustrations of our most popular and well known legends. Visitors will be able to read all about the stories behind the legends as these are printed on the base of the sign which measures 4 meters high and 11 meters wide. This year's campaign film with Luke Evans is also a feature of the sign; with a QR code to view the film printed on the sign. The sign will be at Margam Park from Tuesday 11 April until the May Bank Holiday before moving to another legendary location in Wales.

The letters will again act as a focal point for visitors' selfies and is designed to encourage image and content sharing on social media using the campaign hashtag #FindYourEpic. The tour is supported by an integrated campaign consisting PR and other media activity including digital advertising, e-mail marketing and social media activity targeting families and visitors in our core regions in North West England, The Midlands, Yorkshire, London and the South East.