

New Freeport in Wales will deliver regeneration and high quality jobs

- From today, applications are open to set up a new Freeport in Wales
- Bidders must set out how the Freeport will turbocharge the surrounding economy, deliver regeneration and create high-quality jobs
- Builds on UK Government's plan to level up whole of UK and is backed by £26 million UK government funding

The UK and Welsh Governments have today set out their shared ambitions for a new Freeport Programme in Wales as bidding opens for the innovative new site.

Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate how a Welsh Freeport will provide more high-quality local jobs, attract fresh investment to Wales, and support the country to become more sustainable to reach net zero by 2050.

Consortiums will have 12 weeks from today to assess the prospectus and prepare their bids, which will be jointly assessed by officials from the UK and Welsh governments in an open and transparent selection process.

It is expected that the successful site will be announced this winter and become operational in 2023.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Darparu ar gyfer y dyfodol! (Delivering for the future)

It is fantastic to mark this first step in opening up this tremendous opportunity for the people of Wales to reap the rewards of a Freeport – from Porthcawl to Prestatyn.

Freeports have the potential to place rocket boosters under communities with their huge power in driving, harnessing and delivering tangible growth – in the same way Wales has with its proud and historic role as the engine room of success for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Secretary of State for Levelling Up Greg Clark said:

A new Freeport will provide a huge boost to people in Wales, and I am delighted to open bidding as we continue our work with the Welsh Government to bring jobs and prosperity to the country.

The UK Government's Freeports Programme is already delivering benefits to businesses and communities across England.

I look forward to seeing similar benefits for Wales as we deliver a

ground-breaking new Freeport and level up the whole of the United Kingdom.

Welsh Government Economy Minister Vaughan Gething said:

As an intrinsic part of our rich industrial history and the engine room of our economy, ports have huge potential to accelerate future industries which support net zero – from off-shore energy to advanced manufacturing.

Thanks to the agreement we have reached with the UK government, we are launching a Freeports Programme in Wales which offers an opportunity to harness Wales' abundant economic potential domestically and internationally by reimagining the role of ports, whilst promoting fair work and sustainability.

The Welsh Government believes a better deal for workers is essential to a fairer and more equal Wales. So, I am looking for bids that break the industry ceiling on net zero standards, exemplify the high labour standards that promote fair work, and articulate a shared vision formed by long-lasting partnerships which genuinely involve all social partners.

I look forward to considering innovative bids which deliver meaningful economic and social benefits for Wales.

Backed by £26million in UK Government funding, a key aim of the Freeport Programme in Wales is to create jobs in new and exciting industries, boosting the local economy and regenerating the areas that need it most.

Applicants are being encouraged to show how the new Freeport will:

- help to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales
- support Wales to build a stronger, greener economy as it makes maximum progress towards decarbonization, with an emphasis on fair work and supporting the industries and services of the future
- form strong coalitions and partner with leaders in the private and public sectors to support businesses with a global reach, and businesses who aspire to a global reach, to achieve their ambitions.

Welsh Secretary Robert Buckland said:

The UK Government's ambitious Freeports agenda will help to level

up communities and bring opportunities for people and businesses across the country.

By creating hundreds of local jobs and driving investment, the successful Welsh Freeport will bring significant benefits to its surrounding region.

This is hugely exciting for Wales and I look forward to seeing bids from as many potential sites as possible.

The UK Government and the Welsh Government have jointly agreed that they would be prepared to consider the case for a further additional Freeport in Wales, if a truly exceptional proposal were presented at the bidding stage.

Wales has already received millions from UK Government to support levelling up. This has gone towards projects such as transforming Haverfordwest Castle into an attraction ready for all seasons, a facelift for the Queen's Ballroom in Tredegar and giving Llandrindod Wells a new lease of life in the form of affordable, energy efficient homes.

The progress made on a new Freeport for Wales builds on this ambitious agenda, delivering on our commitment to level up by spreading opportunity more equally across the whole of the UK.

Welsh Freeport bidding prospectus in [English](#) and [Welsh](#)

Applicants and multi-applicant partnerships must submit their proposals to both governments via the online bidding portal by 6pm on 24 November 2022. Potential bidders can register for portal access via the [Pre registration form](#).

Freeports are special areas within the UK's borders where different economic and customs regulations apply. Freeports are sites centred around one or a combination of air, rail, or seaport, within an encompassing outer boundary. [See more information on Freeports](#).