

Wales and Ireland announce community football partnership ahead of crunch World Cup qualifier

More than €1m of EU funding is being invested in a partnership between the Football Association of Ireland and the Welsh sports organisation Vi-Ability to capitalise on the popularity of football, by turning local clubs into social enterprises that deliver a range of sport-based life science and educational programmes.

The 'More than a Club' initiative will be piloted over the next two years at four clubs in Wales and Ireland, with Haverfordwest County, Cork City and Dublin-based Bohemian FC already signed up.

The project is supported by the Ireland Wales 2014-2020 European Territorial Co-operation Programme, which is helping to strengthen collaboration between Ireland and Wales, to address common economic and social challenges.

Welsh Government's Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government Mark Drakeford said:

"This is a very creative approach to improving health and wellbeing in local communities, and the project will benefit hugely from the ideas, expertise and resources that will be shared across the Irish Sea.'

"The Ireland-Wales co-operation programme is a vital platform for collaboration that is bringing investment into our economy and creating opportunities for our businesses, universities and specialist organisations to work together. I'm delighted that €1m of EU funds will be supporting another exciting collaboration between our nations."

The Irish Minister for Finance and for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe T.D., said:

"The 'More than a Club' project is an example of the benefits of ongoing partnership under the Ireland Wales Programme. EU funding will allow this project to combine the expertise of organisations in the two nations to engage young people in social enterprise through football.'

"The positive impact of continued cooperation under the Ireland Wales Programme is strongly supported by the Irish government and we remain committed to its successful implementation."

Through the project, participating clubs will deliver community-focused programmes to help improve the physical and mental health of people of all ages, alternative learning opportunities for children, and other social programmes aimed at improving the quality of people's lives locally.

FAI Project Manager, Derek O'Neill, said:

"For millions of people, football is a hugely attractive sport to play, to watch and to talk about, but it can also be a powerful vehicle to promote physical health, personal development, community development and general well-being."

"The FAI and Vi-Ability are delighted to have secured EU funding to help expand the role and potential of football in the community, and we're looking forward to working together to exchange ideas, share resources and expertise and develop a flagship model which other football clubs in both nations can seek to emulate."

Carmarthenshire's looked after children get their just rewards for educational attainment

Kirsty Williams joined the Children's Commissioner Sally Holland, council leaders, foster carers and school teachers to acknowledge the hard work and educational achievements of looked after children in Carmarthenshire who come from a background of family crisis or breakdown.

The children and young people were awarded for good school attendance and educational achievement as well as their contribution to sports, music and volunteering.

Kirsty Williams said:

"Children who enter care often come from very difficult family circumstances. We cannot change their personal experiences, but we have to mitigate the impact and support them into a rewarding, fulfilling and independent adulthood. Research shows that too often simply being 'in care' lowers the expectations placed on these young people.

This culture impacts negatively on their ability to achieve in all aspects of their lives, including education. Today's awards ceremony proves that this needn't be the case and showcases just

what our looked after learners are capable of given the right support.”

The awards reflect the achievements of cared for children at Key Stage 4 where last summer, 23% of looked after children in Wales achieved L2 Inclusive (5 GCSEs at Grade A*-C in English or Welsh and mathematics) representing a 10 percentage point increase since 2013.

[Grŵp Llandrillo Menai gets £6.75 million Welsh Government boost for state of the art engineering centre at Coleg Menai](#)

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The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams today (6 October) announced a £6.75 million Welsh Government investment in a state of the art further education engineering centre on Grŵp Llandrillo Menai’s Llangefni Campus, as part of the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme. Total investment in the centre is worth £13.5 million.

Friday 06 October 2017

The centre will enable the college to support a number of additional places for engineering students studying for both vocational and technical qualifications.

The new centre will be located on the same campus as the existing Energy Centre and Construction Centre and together these facilities will help students develop their engineering and construction skills in support of the Wylfa Newydd development.

Kirsty Williams said,

“This project will not only benefit students wishing to strengthen their engineering skills but also the local economy, allowing highly skilled engineers to live and work in an area which will see major investment with the Wylfa Newydd development.

“The centre will also enable older students and other learners to

enhance their skills, improving wider employment prospects.”

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[Wales the place for Legendary Autumn breaks as figures show increases in visitors and spend for summer](#)

Figures released today show that there were 4.24 million overnight trips to Wales from Great Britain between January and June 2017, an increase of 6.3% on the same period in 2016. The amount of spend during this period has also increased to £724 million pounds an increase of 9.5% compared to January to June 2016.

In comparison, volume of trips and nights taken in Great Britain between January and June 2017 has slightly fallen compared to the same period in 2016, with 53.09 million trips and 146.89 million nights. The amount of spend has increased by 3.6% to £10,133 million.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates, said:

“These figures for the first half of 2017 are extremely encouraging and I’m delighted that overnight stays from GB visitors are again showing recovery and growth – especially when looking at the GB wide picture – where numbers have fallen.

“Although market conditions remain challenging we remain on track to achieve 10% growth of the industry by 2020 and the tourism industry is in a strong position, with confidence levels high as we go into the Autumn.

“Following our successful summer campaign targeting London and South East of England, our Autumn campaign will begin next week which will inspire new high-yield visitors to consider Wales as

destination for a legendary autumn weekend.”

Visit Wales’ integrated autumn campaign includes a mixture of TV advertising, digital, press partnerships and extensive out of home advertising in Paddington station. The campaign will be a showcase the range of things to do and see – and giving one last consumer facing push to the Year of Legends theme as the year draws to a close.

[Welsh Government issues guidance to NHS Wales on the care of babies on the threshold of survival](#)

The guidance, which has been set out in a Welsh Health Circular (WHC), sets out what Health Boards need to do to care for babies born alive before 24 weeks of gestation, whilst also supporting their families and ensuring they are fully involved in making decisions about their care and treatment.

The WHC was developed in response to a concern from a member of the public – Emma Jones – that current professional guidance from the British Association of Perinatal Medicine (BAPM) does not state what the NHS should do to care for babies born alive before 24 weeks. This followed the death of her son, Riley, who died after he was born at the age of 22 weeks and 4 days in December 2013.

As a result, the Welsh Government has worked with Emma Jones over the last few years to develop additional guidance that promotes the highest quality, evidence-based and compassionate services for mothers and babies born alive before 24 weeks.

The guidance states that where the birth of a baby on the threshold of survival is anticipated or occurs, maternity teams should consult the on call neonatal or paediatric team (whenever possible before the baby is born), to ensure that clinical assessments are planned and undertaken.

Additionally, the family of the baby will be involved in the decision making about ongoing care. It takes into account the professional advice that is available to clinicians for the care of babies born on the threshold of survival.

Bereavement services are needed by many families, and every Health Board in Wales now has a bereavement midwife lead to promote best practice.

Concerned member of the public and mother, Emma Jones said:

“My journey for change started at the National Assembly when I presented my signed petition.

“From Riley’s death came a fight for change, which ended in success.”

The Chief Medical Officer for Wales and Medical Director of NHS Wales, Dr Frank Atherton said:

“When a baby is born very early, parents and professionals are faced with difficult and distressing decisions. Whilst medical science has provided many advances in the care of very premature babies, especially those born under 26 weeks of gestation, there are limits to what is possible in terms of survival.

“Very tiny babies, even when they are born alive, may not be able to be resuscitated because their airways and lungs are too immature and delicate to withstand intubation and ventilation, and their blood vessels too small to administer medicines or fluids.

“We recognised there was a need for the Welsh Government to develop this additional guidance, because the current professional guidance from the British Association of Perinatal Medicine (BAPM) does not state what the NHS should do to care for babies born alive before 24 weeks.

“We are very grateful to Emma Jones for sharing her painful experiences with us, and for working with us to develop the new guidance, which will help maternity services to support sensitively mothers and families where babies are born on the threshold of survival.”