

Wales representative to VisitBritain Board selected

Ian Edwards is CEO of both the Celtic Manor Resort in Newport, south east Wales, which hosted the 2010 Ryder Cup and staged the 2014 NATO Summit; and the new International Conference Centre for Wales which is to open early next year and based within the resort site. Ian was named Hotelier of the Year at the 2015 European Hospitality Awards; and was a member of the Welsh Government's former Ministerial Tourism Advisory Board.

The Minister said,

"I'm delighted to appoint Ian to represent Wales on the VisitBritain Board, with Ian's wealth of knowledge of the tourism industry in Wales and internationally, I'm confident that he will be an asset to the Board, will help in contributing to the overall development of tourism in Wales and help define, develop and scrutinise VisitBritain's plans and achievements. Never has it been more important to bridge Wales culturally, digitally and physically to the world – and our work with VisitBritain is an important way of building relationships in a bid to grow our share of international visits to Wales."

Ian Edwards, said:

"I am delighted to be appointed as Wales' representative on the VisitBritain Board at this very exciting time for Wales. I look forward to bringing my 30 years of experience in the hospitality and events industries to this important role, as well as my personal passion to promote Wales and Britain as an outstanding destination for visitors. I also look forward to working with the team at Visit Wales more closely through the Tourism Management Board."

As well as representing Wales at VisitBritain Board meetings Ian will also attend the Welsh Government's Tourism and Marketing Department's internal Tourism Management Board meetings.

Economy Secretary offers Pembrokeshire £3m per year for removal of tolls

In October 2017 the Welsh Government announced it would be scrapping the tolls on the Cleddau Bridge in an effort to increase economic competitiveness and better connect people, communities and businesses with the jobs, markets and facilities they need.

Now in a letter to the Chief Executive Officer of Pembrokeshire Council, the Economy Secretary has offered £3m per annum to cover the loss of revenue as well one off payments to cover the removal of the toll infrastructure and to cover redundancy costs for those staff who might lose their jobs as a result of the change.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“Abolishing the tolls on the Cleddau Bridge is the right decision for Pembrokeshire and its surrounding areas. I am confident that it will serve to accelerate local economic growth, better connect our businesses and communities, and make it easier and cheaper for people to travel to access the quality employment opportunities they need.

“Indeed a study commissioned by Pembrokeshire County Council shows that the removal of the tolls will support the areas economic development strategy, providing a boost to its local economy, to the Enterprise Zone and to the small and medium-sized enterprises in the area.

“However we absolutely recognise that the decision to abolish the tolls will have implications both on the Council’s budget and on the employment status of the majority of those workers who have been manning the booths.

“With this in mind we have offered the Council a generous deal of £3m per annum to cover loss of revenue as well as additional funding to cover redundancy costs and toll infrastructure removal.”

Paying tribute to the staff who will be affected by the toll removal, Ken Skates added:

“I know that the Council is making every effort to deploy the toll staff who will be affected by this change but unfortunately I understand that some redundancies will be unavoidable. I appreciate how difficult this will be for the workers and their families and would like to thank them for their public service and wish them every success in finding new employment.”

The two-year Budget agreement with Plaid Cymru included £2m in 2019-20 to remove the tolls on the Cleddau Bridge. The Cleddau Bridge tolls are set to be abolished in Spring 2019.

[Lesley Griffiths officially names new fisheries patrol vessel after former First Minister Rhodri Morgan](#)

The vessel, named FPV Rhodri Morgan, will form part of a fleet patrolling Welsh waters looking for illegal fishing activity.

As per tradition, Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths ceremoniously poured champagne on the vessel and was presented with a velum of the new Welsh Government Fisheries Enforcement flag.

The vellum contains crests from all five vessels that will form part of the new fleet. The rest of the fleet are named FPV Lady Megan, FPV Catrin, FPV Gwenllian and the FPV Siwan.

Each crest carries a picture that reflect the identity of the person the vessel was named after.

Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths was given a tour of the vessel and shown how the latest technology will be used to enforce fisheries and marine laws. As well as meeting those who crew the vessel, she was also shown their accommodation and facilities. The FPV Rhodri Morgan can accommodate eight people with four twin cabins. It also comes equipped with GPS, Radar, Echo and search lights.

The new vessels will replace the current ageing boats, to effectively protect from illegal fishing activity in Welsh waters and safeguard Wales' fishing industry and coastal communities in the years ahead.

The FPV Rhodri Morgan, a 26m patrol vessel that weighs 75 ton and carries 11,000 litres of fuel, incorporates the former First Minister of Wales' name and an illustration of dolphins chasing mackerel to reflect his fondness of spotting dolphins in Mwnt, West Wales. The vessel, built by Mainstay Marine Solutions Ltd this year, also has room for a 6.5metre sea-boat.

Rhodri Morgan's wife Julie Morgan attended the naming ceremony in his memory. After undergoing sea trials all of the new fleet will be in operation from January.

Speaking at the official naming ceremony, Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths said:

“It’s an honour to be able to name this vessel after Rhodri Morgan today; a man who gave so much to Wales and left an indelible mark on our history. This will be a fitting tribute to someone who had a great love of the Welsh seas and our wonderful nature

I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my tour of this new patrol vessel and seeing first hand the cutting edge technology that will be leading the fight against illegal fishing activity.

These vessels will be at the forefront of protecting Welsh waters and our fishing industry, providing a high speed response capability to ensure Wales continues to effectively enforce fisheries and marine laws.

Ahead of the challenges that we face in a post-Brexit world, it is more important than ever that we focus on sustainability and ensuring our fishing industry is at its strongest possible so we can thrive in the years to come.”

[Support to help businesses Inspire, Hire and Grow with veterans](#)

We know that while employment levels in Wales have grown steadily in recent years, employers have often found it difficult to recruit skilled vacancies to support their growing businesses.

We also know that Wales has a pool of uniquely-qualified, high-performing people who may just need a little extra support to bring them into the workforce. By working with employers to increase sustainable employment opportunities, we can help to prevent the more serious social and health issues that come with unemployment such as homelessness and poor mental-health.

This is why the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services Alun Davies asked Business In The Community Cymru to work to develop a toolkit for employers in Wales, which is being launched at an event with employers and veterans in Cardiff today.

The Employers’ Toolkit – Inspire, Hire, Grow: How to capitalise on military talent – aims to raise awareness to prospective employers of the unique and broad range of skills ex-Service personnel possess and how those skills and experience could benefit a company.

Alun Davies said,

“We all recognise the value of our Armed Forces in Wales and we are proud of our veterans and our shared military history.

“I am delighted to launch the Employers’ Toolkit to raise awareness to those companies who may not have considered the advantages of employing Service leavers and veterans before. It shows how employers can enhance their workforce by capitalising on the skills and disciplines gained during Service, including leadership, resilience and organisational skills.

“Our veterans deserve every opportunity for a successful second career after giving so much for their country.”

Matt Appleby, Director at BITC Cymru, said:

“It makes sense for us to make the most of our veterans in Wales. There is a skills shortage here with some 6% of employers having at least one vacancy to fill – and, in veterans, we have a pool of uniquely-qualified people who, with support, can be brought into the workforce. As one of our members who employs veterans says, military people are flexible and versatile as they are used to being thrown blind into situations and getting on with it. They can also possess organisational skills and resilience which can be an asset in business.”

“The Welsh Government and businesses work closely together to make the most of veterans’ talents. BITC offers businesses who want to capitalise on military talent practical step-by-step advice, a toolkit for businesses to follow and many inspiring case studies.”

[Places to enrich people’s lives at heart of new Planning Policy](#)

Launching the Planning Policy Wales, the Cabinet Secretary has called on planners and developers to think first and foremost about the people who will live there and how they will go about their everyday lives.

The refreshed Planning Policy Wales, which will underpin all future planning decisions, will put an emphasis on people and places and ensure developments built today leave a legacy of well-designed, sustainable places which improve lives.

The new policy has a firm focus on ‘placemaking’ – an approach to development which ensures communities have all the services they need within easy reach

and development is of high quality. Wales will be the only country in the UK to take this approach to planning.

Other key changes to Wales' planning policy which are designed to help Wales lower its carbon emissions at the same time as creating places people can live well, include:

- Promotion of Active Travel (walking and cycling) to create good places and support health and well-being. Services will need to be easily accessible by active travel and a new transport hierarchy is being introduced for planners to consider;
- A new policy on Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) which requires new non-residential developments to have charging points in at least 10% of the spaces available. This is the first national policy of its kind in the UK;
- Promoting renewable energy developments (wind, solar and other renewables). It will require planning authorities to define areas where wind and solar developments will be permitted and set renewable energy targets;
- Restricting extraction and use of fossil fuels (including fracking) by placing them at the bottom of the energy hierarchy. It states proposals for opencast or deep-mine development should not be permitted and oil and gas (including fracking) should be avoided. It will be supported by a new Notification Direction which will state the Welsh Government must be notified of any planning applications which local planning authorities intend to approve for new coal and petroleum developments; and
- The agent of change principle has been incorporated into national planning policy and will require that a business or person responsible for introducing a change is responsible for managing that change. For example, a developer constructing new homes near an existing music venue will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate mitigation is put in place so that the noise generating use is not curtailed in the future by complaints from the new residents. This is the first policy document in the UK to introduce the concepts of soundscapes in protecting the acoustic environment.
- Planning Policy Wales draws heavily on the landmark Well-being of Future Generation's (Wales) Act 2015, which requires public bodies to take sustainable development into account when making their decisions. The new policy has been developed working closely with the office of the Future Generations Commissioner, Sophie Howe.

Earlier this week, the Cabinet Secretary visited the Tramshed in Grangetown, Cardiff, which is a good example of a mixed-use place which Planning Policy Wales is encouraging.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

"It is essential developments built today, which will last for many years, have a legacy of well-designed, sustainable places which will improve the lives of all.

“Our new version of Planning Policy Wales is all about ensuring future developments have a lasting impact and enrich people’s lives.

“I want to make sure when planners and developers are formulating their plans and schemes, they think first and foremost about the people who will live there and how they will go about their everyday lives – something which doesn’t always happen. This involves thinking about environmental, social, cultural as well as economic needs, including the impact on both mental and physical health, caused by new developments.

“The new Planning Policy Wales will ensure we have well-designed spaces which will benefit future generations.”