

Wrexham team helping the homeless praised by First Minister

The Community Care Hub, which has benefited from Welsh Government funding, provides health and social care services to rough sleepers, together with housing and welfare advice and a range of other services.

The hub was founded in 2016 by Wrexham GP Dr Karen Sankey, Dewi Richards, a mental health manager at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Tanya Jones from homeless charity The Wallich.

It holds weekly drop-in sessions with a number of organisations, including the health board, Department for Work and Pensions and Wrexham Council. The hub now supports more than 100 people who are homeless, sleeping rough or have mental health or substance misuse problems.

The First Minister joined one of the drop-in sessions at the Salvation Army building in Wrexham.

Mark Drakeford said:

“As the weather turns colder it is vital the right support is available for people who are homeless and sleeping rough.

“We’ve recently announced £1.34m to tackle rough sleeping in Wales this winter, including £54,000 for the Community Care Hub, in Wrexham.

“The multi-agency approach here, with everyone available in one place to provide vital advice and support is exemplary. There are a number of complex reasons why people find themselves homeless and it is important they have the opportunity to access the right support at the right time – as they do here.

“I would like to thank all those involved in this project for their hard work and dedication.”

Dr Sankey said:

“I am delighted with what the community care collaborative has achieved at the hub in partnership with AVOW and the Salvation Army, working with a wide range of voluntary and statutory sector partners.

“The hub is an innovative model of primary care offering an accessible, holistic, person-centred approach that meets the health and wellbeing needs of some of the most vulnerable people in our

community.

“The success of the hub has attracted funding support from the Welsh Government, the Steve Morgan Foundation, the Waterloo Foundation and the Allen Lane Foundation, enabling the collaborative to employ care navigators – one of whom was a hub user in its early days.

“Working with the health board, we are exploring how the model could be replicated as an alternative model of primary care provision for the wider community.”

Major Roger Batt, Salvation Army Divisional Commander for NW England & North Wales:

“I am so pleased that First Minister, Mark Drakeford has come along today to Wrexham Salvation Army to see for himself what a vital service the care hub is providing to people experiencing homelessness in and around the town.

“The fact that visitors who may have primarily just dropped in to the church to get a hot meal and a change of clothes can also get to see a GP, go to the harm reduction surgery or get advice on benefits while they’re here is just brilliant.

“The care hub is really helping to reconnect people to the support they need to overcome homelessness and I am full of admiration for everyone involved in the partnership for making it such a success.”

Minister for Environment urges fishers to prepare for no-deal Brexit

From 29 March 2019, in the event of a ‘no deal’, most fish and fish products will require a catch certificate for import or export between the UK and EU. This also applies to fishers who land fish directly into EU ports.

Catch certificates prove fish have been caught in line with established conservation and management measures. All non-EU countries are required to present catch certificates when trading with the EU.

The Welsh Government is holding a series of Brexit and Fisheries roadshow events over the coming week. The events are aimed at helping the industry prepare for Brexit, share information and provide support about what documents and certificates are needed in a post-Brexit world.

The Minister for the Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs said:

“Let me be clear, I believe the best outcome for the fishing industry is a deal. A no deal would have a devastating impact on the sector and must be avoided at all costs.

“However we need to plan ahead for all eventualities and our fishers need to be prepared for a no-deal Brexit. That is why they need to be aware of the processes they need to undertake to be able to transition smoothly to doing business outside of the EU.

“As a Government, we are doing all we can to support the sector prepare for Brexit and the challenges it brings. Our forthcoming roadshow events will help the fishing industry know what they need to do to prepare and help put them in a position to adapt to the changing markets. I urge all fishers to come along and find out more.”

A new IT system to process and issue export catch certificates, and other supporting documentation, is being developed to help streamline the process. Exporters will receive full instructions on how to register and use the new system before the UK leave the EU. Import catch certificates will continue to be processed through the current paper-based system.

In addition to documents required under IUU regulations, fish importers and exporters will also need to follow additional steps to comply with health and customs regulations, in the event of a ‘no deal’ EU Exit.

Fishers and fishing businesses can stay up to date with the latest advice on EU Exit on GOV.UK

To inform fishers of the new processes and address any questions, the Welsh Government is running a series of consultation events throughout January. Dates and venues are below.

16th January – Caernarfon, Celtic Royal Hotel, LL55 1AY

17th January – Holyhead, Standing Stones Pub, LL65 2UQ

22nd January – Milford Haven, Pembrokehire Yacht Club, SA73 3RS.

23rd January – New Quay, Black Lion Hotel, SA45 9PT.

24th January – Barmouth, Merioneth Yacht Club, LL42 1HB.

30th January – Saundersfoot, Saundersfoot Sailing Club, SA69 9HE.

31st January – Bury Port, Bury Port Yacht club, SA16 0ER.

No-Deal Brexit disastrous for North Wales – First Minister

He will be addressing the Deeside Business Forum's Brexit Business conference at Theatr Clwyd.

Ahead of the event Mark Drakeford said:

"We are at a critical point in the Brexit process and the message from the Welsh Government is clear, a no-deal Brexit is wholly unacceptable and must be ruled out as an option.

"Manufacturing is of critical importance to Deeside. Airbus alone employs 6,000 people, Toyota 600 and their suppliers thousands more. As Airbus and many others have made clear, a no deal outcome – which would seriously disrupt supply chains – would be disastrous.

"It is clear that a no-deal Brexit would be hugely damaging on North Wales, and must be avoided at all costs.

"But we also need a deal which gives business the long-term certainty it needs. Not one, like the UK Government's that only postpones, not removes the threat of the cliff-edge.

"The root of the problem isn't the EU but the refusal of the UK Government to commit to continued participation in the Single Market and Customs Union, a form of Brexit the EU would have preferred if it had not been for the Prime Minister's red lines.

"Our message to the UK Government is clear, rub out the red lines, go back to the drawing board in terms of the long-term relationship and provide the certainty business needs."

Housing investment in West Rhyl moves forward

Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister Hannah Blythyn announced the Targeted Regeneration Investment funding for the project, being delivered by

Denbighshire County Council with Pennaf Housing Group.

The first phase of the project will involve:

- the renovation of a property on Crescent Road into three affordable housing apartments for the over 55s
- two properties at on Water Street will be renovated to create six affordable housing apartments
- eight properties on Aquarium street will be renovated to create homes available under the Low Cost Home Ownership scheme
- a site on John Street will be redeveloped to create 15 accessible apartments suitable for older residents.

Hannah Blythyn said:

“This investment will create 32 affordable homes, revitalising old properties and will help to contribute to wider regeneration work going on locally. They will also contribute towards our commitment to build 20,000 affordable homes during this Assembly term.

“At the beginning of January we announced £2.5m of regeneration investment to support Denbighshire Council to buy and redevelop the Queens Buildings in Rhyl, which together with this investment is part of a much wider regeneration programme. I look forward to seeing this work develop, including these fantastic new homes in the area.”

The Welsh Government’s flagship Targeted Regeneration Investment programme is providing £100m of capital funding across Wales over three years to support regeneration projects in town centres and neighbouring areas.

This funding is supported by estimated further investment of at least £60 million from other organisations and businesses, providing an overall boost of £160 million to communities all over Wales. This is part of the Welsh Government’s regeneration strategy, which will invest £800m between 2014 and 2023. This includes around £250m from the Welsh Government supported by more than £550m from other organisations and businesses.

Cllr Tony Thomas, Denbighshire’s lead member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment, said:

“This funding will enable the Council and Pennaf to undertake further improvements to housing in the West Rhyl Regeneration Area and build on the success of the earlier property acquisition programme undertaken by the Council and the investment in new homes which was recently recognised as the best regeneration project of its size in the UK-wide Inside Housing awards. It will also contribute towards the delivery our Corporate Plan priority to provide affordable homes in the county.”

Ethical Code of Practice reaches 150 milestone

The Minister will speak at an event in Wrexham to mark the milestone, which has been reached less than two years after the Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains was first launched in March 2017.

The code asks public, private and third sector organisations to commit to a series of actions which are designed to tackle illegal and unfair employment and working practices.

All organisations receiving funding from Welsh Government, either directly or via grants or contracts, are expected to sign up to the code.

Ken Skates said:

“We need to make Wales a more equal nation, where everyone has access to fair work that pays a living wage and where all workers can develop their skills and careers.

“This ambition is at the heart of our Economic Action Plan, and it is why we developed our economic contract. This makes it very clear that businesses must demonstrate their commitment to fair work if they want to access Welsh Government funding.

“The code helps address this, and it’s a pleasure to celebrate this milestone at the event today.

“The code covers a spectrum of practices – from criminal, through unlawful, unethical and on to the positive practice of paying the Living Wales.

“The Economic Action Plan, our Code of Practice, and our ambition to be a Fair Work Nation – all contribute to the same objectives of promoting fair work, eliminating unlawful practice, and allowing our best employers to compete for contracts and customers on a level playing field.

“This is about providing our families and communities with access to secure work, a decent standard of living and prospects for the future.

“Moving forward I’m keen to build on this strong foundation and use our Economic Contract to encourage a greater number of firms in Wales to sign up to the code.”