

[Carwyn Connect heads to Penygraig](#)

The Carwyn Connect event will give local people the opportunity to meet the First Minister and ask him questions on any issues which affect them or their local community.

The session will take place between 6pm and 7.30pm at the Soar Centre on Cross Street, Penygraig, Rhondda Cynon Taff, CF40 1LD.

The First Minister has also announced that over the coming weeks he will be holding further Carwyn Connect events in Connah's Quay on Thursday 30 March and Barry on Monday 3 April.

People are encouraged to register their interest in attending the free events online. [Register your interest](#).

Questions can be asked in a number of ways – they can be submitted when people arrive at the venue when doors open at 5.30pm; in advance via email on cabinetcommunications@wales.gsi.gov.uk or via Twitter using @fmwales with the hashtag #carwynconnect.

First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones said:

“Over the past year, I have travelled across the country to hear the views of local communities and answer the burning questions of the people of Wales.

“I am pleased to announce the next event will take place in Penygraig. I want to see as many people as possible at the event, so if you have a question for me, want to raise issues affecting your community or have a great idea to make your home town a better place to live, come along to the event.

“A wide variety of topics have come up in previous events – from questions about really local issues, to discussions about broad Government policy.

“This is your chance to meet and speak with me in person. I’m really looking forward to meeting you all.”

[Welsh Government funding helps children get a Flying Start](#)

The funding, which has been awarded for this financial year (2016-17), will support a wide range of projects from the full refurbishments of several Flying Start buildings to replacing kitchen cupboards and broken fencing.

Flying Start supports families living in some of the most disadvantaged

communities across Wales. It offers twelve and a half hours of high quality childcare a week for 2-3 year olds; support for the development of children's speech, language and communication; parenting support; and an enhanced health visitor service.

Announcing the funding the Cabinet Secretary said:

"Giving children the best possible start in life is a top priority for the Welsh Government. Flying Start is a key early intervention programme, helping to improve children's life chances and reducing the need for later remedial action. It is a useful tool in tackling adverse childhood experiences which can have a long-lasting impact on young people throughout their lives.

"This is why we provide over £70 million a year in revenue funding to Local Authorities to deliver the scheme and why we have already provided £3m of capital funding this year alone to ensure the children have the best possible facilities. This extra £800,000 will ensure more children have a stimulating and exciting environment in which to play and learn."

[EU funding to extend financial services graduate programme in Wales](#)

The funding will extend the Wales Financial Services Graduate Programme to 2019 and support a career development programme involving some of Wales' leading financial services companies such as Admiral, Atradius, GM Financial and Principality.

The programme is offering graduate placement opportunities in areas including underwriting, investment management, product development and accounting alongside a fully-funded Masters degree in Financial Services Management.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

"This is an excellent programme that is strengthening a key industry while helping to retain ambitious young people in Wales and attract talent to our financial sector.

"I'm delighted that a further £1m of EU funding is supporting this extension and helping to fund more opportunities for young people to develop successful and rewarding careers in Wales. This is another example which demonstrates how important EU funding is to Wales and reaffirms our case for replacement funding from UK

sources after 2020 to help boost the Welsh economy.”

The extension to the programme has also been funded by a £1.4m investment from the participating companies within the Welsh financial services industry.

Sandra Busby, Managing Director of the Welsh Financial Services Forum which leads the Programme said:

“Wales competes against the rest of the world for the top talent in the financial and professional services field and the Welsh Financial Services Graduate Programme has been a key tool in retaining and attracting graduates to Wales, giving them a real taste of how they can build a rewarding career in this field.

“Graduates from Wales and across the globe are undertaking this programme, gaining on-the-job experience at leading organisations while studying towards an MSc in Financial Services Management and then progressing to permanent roles within the sector here in Wales. This has given real evidence that the scheme works and it’s a bold and progressive statement for the Welsh economy that it’s being extended for a further two years thanks to additional EU funding.”

[Important archive of the Somerset family, Barons Raglan accepted for the nation](#)

The family archive has been accepted for the nation by the Welsh Ministers in lieu of inheritance tax.

The archive includes the military and personal correspondence of FitzRoy Somerset, 1st Baron Raglan (1788 -1855) who died near Sevastopol in the Crimea. FitzRoy Somerset was one of the most distinguished British military commanders of the 19th Century. He served for over four decades as the aide-de-camp and military secretary to the 1st Duke of Wellington.

The archive provides very significant detail as to Somerset’s relationship with Wellington immediately after Waterloo. The collection also contains extensive family correspondence and papers illustrating the influence and interests of a prominent family during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Welcoming the news, Ken Skates said:

“I am delighted that this collection will be permanently housed at Gwent Archives. It is a superb addition to their collections, providing a wonderfully rich resource for the study of an enormously significant period in British military history. It also provide fascinating insights into the life of the Somerset family over several generations.”

Tony Hopkins, County Archivist at Gwent Archives said:

“This is an outstanding collection and we are privileged to be entrusted with it. The Raglan archive is without doubt a collection of national and international importance and a huge boost to the cultural resources of the area. The people of Gwent can take great pride in it.”

The Acceptance in Lieu (AIL) scheme enables taxpayers to transfer works of art and important heritage items, such as the Raglan Archive, into public ownership in full or part payment of their inheritance tax. In Wales, these items must be approved by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, who is advised by the Acceptance in Lieu UK Panel.

The panel consists of independent experts, who seek specialist advice on the object offered. The Panel operates on behalf of the Welsh Government in Wales and often co-ordinates with the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division.

The AIL Panel Chairman, Edward Harley said:

“The Acceptance in Lieu scheme continues to secure exceptional art and cultural objects for the nation. I’m delighted that this fascinating archive, which documents the military careers and achievements of the first Lord Raglan and the first Duke of Wellington in connection with the Peninsular War, the Napoleonic Wars and the Crimean War, will be permanently retained at Gwent Archives.”

[More GP surgeries in Wales are open for longer](#)

New figures show that more GP practices in Wales are open between 8.00am and 6.30pm in the week and more appointments are being made available to patients early in the morning and later in the day.

Wednesday 22 February 2017

In 2016:

- 85% of GP practices were open for daily core hours or within an hour of them, an increase from 60% in 2011
- Only 3% of GP practices were closed for half a day on one or more week days, a decrease compared to 4% in 2015
- 84% of practices offered appointments at any time between 17:00 and 18:30 every week day, compared to 79% in 2015
- The percentage of practices offering appointments before 8:30 on at least two weekdays increased from 16% in 2015 to 19% in 2016.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“We know that access to primary care services is extremely important to people. In Taking Wales Forward, our programme for government, we committed to continuing to improve access to GP surgeries, and these figures demonstrate we are delivering this. These figures also show that more appointments are available for people at more convenient times. I am pleased to see that the trend of improvement has been continued for 2016.

“I want to say thank you to our GPs and their teams who are working hard to extend their opening hours in Wales. They are also working with other health professionals to ensure that people receive their care from the right person. This might mean seeing a pharmacist, physiotherapist or a nurse. This will allow GPs to focus their time and expertise on people with complex care needs. We will continue to work collaboratively with GPs and other professions to improve access and patient experience.”