

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."

£9.5 million EU investment will help Wales move towards a low carbon economy

The £14.4 million GSCS (generation storage consumption supply) scheme, will receive £9 million of EU funding.

It will use cutting-edge battery technology to generate and store electricity from renewable and low carbon sources, which will then be distributed to local businesses at a discounted rate.

GSCS will provide revenue-saving opportunities at sites in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.

The £0.9 million community solar energy storage scheme in Swansea – Swansea Community Solar Storage with Direct Local Supply – will receive £600,000 of EU funds to supply electricity to up to 300 local consumers.

Based at Wales' first community-owned solar farm, the innovative scheme aims to create a larger local community energy model to support many more communities across Wales.

Speaking at the event in Cardiff, Professor Drakeford said:

“This investment is another positive example of how the Welsh Government is supporting innovative projects using EU funding and highlights the importance of securing replacement funding for Wales from the UK Government when we leave the EU.

“We are committed to creating a sustainable low-carbon energy economy in Wales and aim to generate 70% of our energy from renewable sources by 2030.

“These two projects will play an important role by supporting local businesses and communities to use renewable energy and help us achieve this goal together.”

Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“As a government we are committed to accelerating the transition of our energy system in Wales, particularly through the increased use of renewable energy. Our priorities are to increase energy efficiency, reduce our reliance on energy generated from fossil fuels and to actively manage the transition to a low carbon economy to benefit Wales.”

Iestyn Morgan, lead director from the Infinite Renewables Group, said:

“GSCS is an exciting new initiative, which will deliver energy cost savings to the business community. It supports the Welsh Government’s commitment to create a sustainable low-carbon economy by moving towards a smart energy future that combines local clean energy, storage and micro grids.”

Ant Flanagan, from Gower Power Solar Storage, said:

“The holy grail of community energy is enabling local energy consumers to benefit directly from renewable energy generation and storage assets – not only by sharing profits but also by reducing bills.

“This EU investment will enable us to carry out a market leading pilot. We are looking forward to working with great partners to make savings to national transmission costs and put money back into local people’s pockets, while also delivering wider community benefit programmes.”

Appointments to Snowdonia and Brecon Beacons National Park Authorities

The newly appointed members are:

- Sue Holden, Christopher Coppock and Grenville Ham – appointed to the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority from 23 August 2018 to 31 May 2022
- Elinor Gwynn and Neil Martinson – appointed to the Snowdonia National Park Authority from 1 July 2018 to 31 May 2022

The Minister has also confirmed the re-appointment of three members:

- Ceri Stradling – re-appointed to the Snowdonia National Park Authority from 1 February 2018 to 31 May 2022
- Gwyneth Hayward – re-appointed to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority from 1 February 2018 to 31 May 2019
- Ted Sangster – re-appointed to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority from 1 April 2018 to 31 May 2019

Members of the National Park Authorities are paid £3,625.00 per annum reflecting a time commitment of 4 days per month.

These appointments have been made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Hannah Blythyn said:

“Our National Parks are very special to the people of Wales and the thousands of people who visit them each year.

The five new appointments will bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the management of our National Park Authorities. I look forward to the members’ continued contribution in their effective stewardship.”

The National Park Authorities were established under the provision of the Environment Act 1995. The National Park Authorities have two statutory purposes under the Environment Act 1995:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities [of the Park] by the public.

As well as seeking to fulfil their two statutory purposes the National Park Authorities have a duty to foster the economic and social well being of their local communities.

The National Park Authorities (Wales) Order 1995 states responsibility for appointing the board of the National Park Authorities is shared between the constituent Local Authorities and the Welsh Ministers. Schedule 2 of the Order states that:

- The Board of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority must be 24 members in total, with the number of Members appointed by Local Authorities being 16 and the number appointed by Welsh Ministers being 8.
- The Board of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority must be 18 Members in total with the number of Members appointed by Local Authorities being 12 and the number appointed by Welsh Ministers being 6.
- The Board of the Snowdonia National Park Authority must be 18 Members in total with the number of Members appointed by Local Authorities being 12 and the number appointed by Welsh Ministers being 6.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for the political activity of appointees (if any declared) to be published.

Sue Holden has declared she has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. She does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Christopher Coppock has declared he has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. He does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Grenville Ham has declared that he was a candidate for the Green Party for the 2016 Welsh Assembly elections and 2017 General Election and held the position as Wales Green Party Spokesperson. He is an elected Town Councillor in Brecon. He does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Elinor Gwynn has declared she has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. She does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Neil Martinson has declared that he has canvassed on behalf of the Labour Party or helped at elections during the past five years. He does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Ceri Stradling has declared he has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. He currently holds two other Ministerial Appointments – he is the Deputy Chair of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, and an independent member of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

Gwyneth Hayward has declared she has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. She does not currently hold any other Ministerial Appointments.

Ted Sangster has declared he has not undertaken any political activity in the past five years. He currently holds another Ministerial Appointment – he is a member of the Haven Waterway Enterprise Zone Advisory Board.

[Active travel links, electric car charging facilities and road improvement projects to benefit from £78million transport funding](#)

Transport Secretary Ken Skates has announced £78million of additional funding for local transport projects in Wales as part of the Local Transport Fund.

The funding, which has been given the green light by Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford, will be broken down into £26million instalments over the three financial years from 2018/19 onwards.

All 22 local authorities in Wales who made bids for funding to the Welsh

Government, with a total of 82 applications totalling £34million, will receive an allocation from the additional in-year funding.

More than 60 projects will either be partially or fully funded during the remainder of 2018/19, with these schemes also providing an additional £7.2million in match funding.

Welsh Government has worked with local authorities to ensure schemes provide good value for money and meet transport and economic priorities.

Projects that will benefit from the Local Transport Fund via the additional allocations in 2018-19 include the A4119 Corridor Improvement Phase 2D (Strategic Bus Priority and Interchange) in Cardiff with £554,000, Cross Hands Link Road in Carmarthenshire with £1,685,000 and the Deeside Industrial Park Walking and Cycling Links with £1,008,000.

Projects across Wales that will benefit from additional funding include:

- Cardiff, Active Travel to schools, £742,000
- Torfaen, Direct Active Travel link to Croesyceiliog Comprehensive School, £102,900
- Rhondda Cynon Taff, Active Travel Package, £640,000
- Pembrokeshire, Installation of electric car charging facilities, £168,000
- Cardiff, on street cycle hire, £796,000
- Swansea, Fabian Way Corridor (Baldwin's Bridge), £1,800,000
- Powys, Quality Bus Provision, £1,550,000
- Monmouthshire, Abergavenny town centre walking and cycling improvements third phase, £435,000
- Newport, Newport City Centre Sustainable Transport Study, £25,000
- Flintshire, B5129 Queensferry to Denbighshire border – Bus priority and traffic management measures – £107,500
- Isle of Anglesey, Gaerwen Park & Share, £59,000
- Wrexham, Active Travel Improvements, £7,000
- Gwynedd, Llanbedr Access Road, £1,374,000
- Denbighshire, Llangollen 2020 – Pedestrian Improvement Scheme, £20,000

Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

“I'm delighted that a host of transport projects across Wales will be allocated funding from the Local Transport Fund.

“These schemes have the potential to make a massive difference to people's everyday lives, with improvements to transport networks, infrastructure and cycle lanes making it easier to choose active and sustainable travel.

“These projects support our ambitions to provide a modern and connected transport infrastructure, whilst further boosting our efforts to encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

“This funding could also prove a shot in the arm to the Welsh

economy by making it easier for people to travel for both business and leisure.”