

Scheme to help young people across south west Wales gets EU funding boost

The Cynnydd project, which is led by Pembrokeshire County Council, and also operates across Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, has been awarded an additional £11.5 million from the European Social Fund.

The project works with Careers Wales, FE colleges and private and third sector companies, to help young people into work via training and work experience opportunities, while providing one-to-one mentoring, coaching and counselling to improve life skills and self-esteem.

Jeremy Miles today announced that Cynnydd, which was launched in September 2016, will now run until December 2022 thanks to the extra EU funding. This means a further 3,200 young people will benefit from support and opportunities created by the project over the next three years, and 7,500 in total.

Jeremy Miles said:

“We’ve already seen how successful Cynnydd has been in working with young people in the area to remove some of the barriers to them completing education and training programmes which can contribute to the reduction in young people in Wales who are NEET. This is so important, not only to the local economy, but to the sustainability of our communities, especially in parts of rural Wales.

“Wales is still benefiting substantially from EU funds and I’m delighted this investment will be supporting the futures of so many young people in South West Wales.”

Cllr David Lloyd, Pembrokeshire County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education, said he was delighted to welcome the additional funding:

“We’re passionate about continuing our hard work towards the elimination of NEETS. No-one should leave school with nowhere to go.”

In the last decade, EU-funded projects have created 45,000 new jobs and 13,000 new businesses across Wales, while also helping more than 85,000 people into employment.

Welsh Government's Wales for Africa Grant now open

There is approximately £150,000 available in this round. We are seeking applications looking to deliver mutually beneficial projects between Africa and Wales that support the themes of Health, Lifelong Education, Sustainable Livelihoods and Environment and Climate Change.

Following on from the success of 2018/2019 round which saw 29 projects being funded, Welsh Government would like to encourage applications for the 2019/2020 round. This round of funding is for the main grants between £5000 – £15,000 and will be launched on the 04 March, with a closing date of April 28.

There will also be an opportunity to apply for small grants between £500 – £5,000 in the autumn.

Announcing this year's funding, the Minister for International Relations and Welsh Language Eluned Morgan said:

“Our Wales for Africa grants programme transforms the lives of tens of thousands of people from across this beautiful and diverse continent every year. I encourage community groups and organisations to bid for a share of this funding and work with us.

I'm proud that through projects like these we can continue to build relationships between Wales and Africa, not only improving lives in Africa, but also bringing benefits to Wales by allowing volunteers to exchange skills and have life-changing experiences.”

Ruth Marks, WCVA Chief Executive, said:

“WCVA is delighted to be working with Welsh Government to deliver the Wales for Africa Scheme.

“It makes a real difference to people's lives by granting funding to projects that improve health, education and our environment.

“In the 2018/19 round awards were made to a wide range of innovative projects that are making a positive difference in Africa and Wales. We look forward to receiving further applications for 2019/20.”

[More information on the Welsh Government Wales for Africa grant scheme](#) on the WCVA website.

High quality business units set for Nelson

The project, which is being backed by £1.3m from the European Regional Development Fund, is part of a wider masterplan for mixed use regeneration of the Ty Du site and will look to develop units suitable for a range of business needs. The new units are expected to be completed by autumn 2020.

Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, Lee Waters said:

“Today’s announcement is good news for Nelson and the region more widely.

Through genuine collaboration between Welsh and Local Government, this substantial site will be given the facilities needed to deliver on its economic potential and provide the infrastructure and services needed to attract businesses and jobs to the area.

Sought after business units of this kind form an important element of our Valleys Taskforce, which looks to keep, attract and nurture jobs and prosperity in the wider Valleys region. Alongside my focus in supporting and growing the foundational economy, keeping supply chains local, and facilitating better jobs closer to home – it’s an important part of a necessary multi-faceted approach to tackling the issues of the past and securing lasting economic change”.

Deputy Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economy, Cllr Sean Morgan said:

“The Ty Du site in Nelson has been earmarked for industrial development for many years, so the news that this regeneration scheme is taking a significant step forward is very good news indeed for the area. The development will bring high quality business units and new homes to this key strategic site, which is well connected to local infrastructure.

This announcement is yet another vote of confidence in Caerphilly county borough as being a great place to do business”.

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Shoppers recognise the quality of Welsh produce and prefer to buy Welsh – research reveals

Welsh shoppers recognise the quality of food and drink from Wales and would prefer to buy Welsh if possible, according to new research which will be showcased at the TasteWales event later this month.

Headline figures from an initial survey investigating the “Value of Welshness” revealed:

- 85% of Welsh shoppers think food and drink from Wales is Great Quality and 80% think it is Great Tasting
- Eight out of ten shoppers would always buy Welsh if the price was right and 44% would pay more
- Shoppers outside Wales believe Wales is known for good quality food and drink and would like to support the sector; and
- 29% of shoppers outside Wales would like to see more Welsh food and drink produce in their shops

Responding to the new figures, the Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs Minister, Lesley Griffiths, said as we prepare to leave the European Union we must use every opportunity to showcase our quality food and drink produce at home and on a global scale.

On 21st and 22nd March, over 100 Welsh food and drink producers will meet over 150 buyers – a third of whom are international – at the BlasCymru/ TasteWales event at the Celtic Manor in Newport. In 2017, the last TasteWales event generated £16 million of new contracts for Welsh food and drink businesses.

The Minister said:

“Our food and drink industry is world renowned and a real Welsh success story. We know people increasingly want to find out more about where their food is from and want to buy Welsh as seen in the figures published today.

“In only 29 days’ time, we face the prospect of a disorderly exit from the European Union. With the current economic uncertainty created by the turmoil in Westminster it is more important than ever to build on the sector’s success and seize every opportunity available to showcase our quality Welsh food and drink at home and

on a global stage.

“Already this year, we have been working with the industry to promote Welsh food and drink abroad at Gulfood in Dubai – the world’s largest annual food trade fair. At the end of the month, the Celtic Manor will once again play host to our biannual TasteWales. Events such as these have helped support the spectacular growth in the sector and are invaluable especially at this challenging time.

“Working with the sector, we must promote the Welsh brand as much as possible and do all we can to ensure our food and drink producers are able to thrive post-Brexit.”

In celebration of St David’s Day, commuters at London Paddington have this week been greeted by a Welsh choir and had the opportunity to sample quality Welsh food and drink. On the day itself, Welsh food and drink will also be showcased at London Borough Market and at Manchester Piccadilly station, where the Minister will meet with producers promoting their products to commuters.

The Minister added:

“It has become something of a tradition showcasing the very best of Welsh food and drink at London Paddington station on St David’s Day. This year commuters at Manchester Piccadilly will also be able to join the celebrations and sample a range of award winning products from Welsh Whisky, Black Bomber cheese, Bara Brith – and even take away some edible chocolate postcards. I look forward to visiting today and speaking to some of the producers to hear how events such as this are helping their businesses grow.”

One of the producers showcasing their products at both London Paddington and at this year’s Taste Wales event is Aberfalls Distillery.

James Wright, MD at Aber Falls Whisky Distillery:

“We’re delighted to be representing our home country in London this week, in celebration of St David’s Day. There is a thriving new wave of Welsh fare and this is a great opportunity for producers from the region to access a new audience and marketplace, which in turn may lead to even greater future possibilities for the sector.

“Furthermore, with Brexit approaching, we need to continue being ambitious for Wales, creating a strong and vibrant economy, long-term. With Wales’ reputation and provenance, we have a strong

platform for further growth that will benefit everyone.”

[Extra funding for Care & Repair to help people live independently](#)

Julie James said:

“A number of Care & Repair agencies are working with NHS Wales to deliver a winter pressures pilot, which will see a Care & Repair case worker joining hospital ward rounds to identify patients who could benefit from home adaptations and create rapid solutions.

“This extra funding will enable Care & Repair agencies to support people to leave hospital and return to a safe home. Care & Repair agencies deliver a range of small adaptations to a person’s home which can help to reduce pressure on our hospital services.

“These could include levelling concrete floors or repairing stairs, installing hand rails or telephone extensions – whatever might help prevent falls and maintain a person’s independence in their own home.

“The right housing can help people to maintain their independence and provide the right environment for people leaving hospital – reducing delays in discharging patients. This can relieve pressure on emergency departments, which is particularly important during the winter months to alleviate pressure on the NHS while also helping people to live for longer in their own homes.”

Chris Jones, Chief Executive of Care & Repair Cymru said:

“We are absolutely delighted with this additional funding from Welsh Government, which will help us carry out home improvements and adaptations which support older people to be discharged from hospital more quickly. Our Hospital to Home service enables us to speak to patients and hospital staff earlier about whether a patient’s home is safe, warm and accessible, and where improvements and adaptations are needed, to plan these quicker so that discharge from hospital isn’t delayed by an inappropriate home to return to.

“You could say that we are the property doctor for the NHS. Once a patient is medically fit to leave hospital, we make sure that the place they go home to is also fit for them to live in and provide

additional support once they are at home which reduces the chances of them being re-admitted to hospital”.