

# STEM investment brings state-of-the-art college labs to Anglesey

Brand new laboratories have been unveiled at Coleg Menai's campus in Llangefni, as part of a £1.9m project to improve science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) facilities for college students.

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai has secured over £1.2 million pounds from Welsh Government's '21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme' towards an ambitious project to upgrade 10 laboratories across three of its campuses.

£386,000 has also been invested by Magnox and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) in the LabSTEM project to modernise facilities at Llangefni, Dolgellau, Pwllheli. The remainder of the funding package has been provided by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.

Three science laboratories at the campus in Llangefni have been refurbished and upgraded with the latest technology. This is in addition to the three laboratories already completed at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor's campuses, and a further laboratory will also be created on the Marian Mawr campus in Dolgellau to accommodate robotics and electrical engineering facilities.

The aim of LabSTEM is to enhance the learning environment and improve the learner experience, attract a greater number of 16 year-olds – in particular girls – to study Science and Engineering, and extend the curriculum offer in STEM subjects such as Mechanical/Electrical Engineering and Robotics/Electronics.

As well as providing college learners with the world-class facilities, the project will also form part of the STEM development landscape in North West Wales by providing locations for activities arranged by other organisations and contributing to a co-ordinated sub-regional STEM initiative.

Speaking at the official opening of the Llangefni laboratories, Aled Jones-Griffith, Coleg Menai and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor Principal, explained why the project is so important,

"LabSTEM will provide our learners with sector-leading learning environments and opportunities that will enhance their learning. This will bring huge benefits to learners, employers and the wider economy.

"The demand for young people who have studied STEM subjects at Level 3 and above, be that academic or vocational, is growing and expected to grow further. It's been quoted that 75% of all jobs in the UK over the next decade will require STEM knowledge and skills."

He added, "The requirement for STEM employees is just as strong here in North Wales, and while planned large scale developments at Wylfa Newydd have

stalled, a significant number of other energy-related developments are progressing or are in the planning stages within the region.

“This modernisation project will ensure that all our STEM learners have the latest, high quality, facilities to support their studies and equip them with the skills they need to develop successful careers in the region.”

“We are extremely grateful to the Welsh Government, Magnox and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) for their significant investments in the project, and to all our partners in the sector for supporting our vision.”

Jeremy Miles, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language, said,

“It’s important we invest in training for local people which leads to high-quality job opportunities, while producing a skilled workforce for north Wales’s key industries.”

“I’m really pleased to support the development of this new facility, which will enable more local people to study science and technology subjects in their local community here in north Wales.”

Jamie Reed, NDA Director of Socio-Economics said,

“The NDA Group invests around £15m per year in those communities where we are progressing our nuclear decommissioning mission, leveraging millions more in the process.

“To date our work has seen the delivery of new schools, jobs, skills, and training facilities in the communities in which we operate. NDA and Magnox are committed to encouraging and developing education and skills, and creating opportunities for sustainable employment.

“This fantastic development aims to make STEM subjects attractive to all and encourage greater diversity across the workforce. As part of a range of initiatives in North Wales aiming for high value employment, this is an important contribution towards ensuring future generations can continue to access secure jobs in the region.”

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## **Renewal of Yorkshire and North East Net Limitation Order to protect at-risk fish stocks**

The Environment Agency is recommending continued protection for salmon and sea trout in tidal waters from Berwick on Tweed to the mouth of the Humber estuary, following a month-long consultation which took place this spring.

The decision sets out a recommendation to introduce a new ten-year Net Limitation Order (NLO) to replace the existing one when it expires in December this year. It is based on scientific evidence around the impact of the net fishery, alongside consultation responses, and aims to balance the needs of conservation with those of the local economy.

If approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the new NLO will allow those who already have a licence to continue to fish for trout but no new licences will be granted. This will ensure the net fishery reduces in size and increases the necessary protections for fish stocks, without economically impacting existing licensees or coastal communities.

Net fishing for salmon will remain illegal due to the vulnerability of the species to exploitation by commercial net fisheries. Salmon and sea trout net fishing in the region has been limited in some way since the 1960's and licenced since 1865. In the years since the first regional Net Limitation Order began in 1992, populations of salmon and sea trout have improved in some areas but remain vulnerable and at risk in others.

Evidence also shows an international decline in wild Atlantic salmon populations with the latest stock assessment report, from the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales, showing that 37 of the 42 salmon rivers (88%) in England now categorised as being 'at risk' or 'probably at risk'. Sea trout stocks are also dropping in a number of areas and are under pressure from fishing exploitation as salmon stocks decline.

Salmon and sea trout populations are threatened by changes to their environment throughout their lifecycle caused by climate change and other human activities. The Environment Agency is looking at every stage of the species' journey so that steps can be taken to increase their chances of survival. This includes making river systems more accessible by removing barriers to migration, improving water quality and reducing the exploitation of salmon and sea trout by both net and rod fisheries.

**Jon Shelley, Environment Agency Senior Fisheries Specialist, said:**

"The decline in the numbers of both salmon and sea trout is of great concern and we are determined to protect the future of these important species.

"Having carefully considered the available evidence, this action will help as many fish as possible return to waters across Yorkshire and the North East over time, without impacting those whose livelihoods currently rely on it.

"Every fish returned safely to our rivers could lead to improved numbers of adult salmon and sea trout spawning, helping to contribute to a reversal in the current decline of salmon and sea trout."

The consultation report, a copy of the proposed new NLO, Environment Agency responses to all the issues raised during this year's earlier consultation and information on ways to respond to the advertisement can be found [here](#)

Anyone wishing to respond to the advertisement may do so by email or by writing to Defra not later than 25 November 2022.

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## [Big boost for UK economy as subsidy control system comes into force from January](#)

- New UK subsidy regime comes fully into force on 4 January 2023
- regime will enable public authorities to deliver subsidies that are tailored to local needs and to drive economic growth
- new flexible approach to subsidies available due to the unique opportunity presented by Brexit

The new system to regulate subsidies to business will come into force from 4 January, Business Minister Dean Russell announced today (Thursday 20 October), providing a big boost for businesses and further impetus behind the government's plans to supercharge economic growth.

Under the new rules, the devolved administrations and local authorities will be able to deliver subsidies that are tailored to local needs, with the new regime providing the flexibility needed to ensure that support quickly gets to where it is most needed.

Public authorities will be able to support viable businesses across their region quickly and simply, delivering good value for the British taxpayer while ensuring Britain's businesses can help deliver economic growth.

The introduction of the new rules from January marks a major move away from the prescriptive EU aid regime that could stymie elected governments in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh from delivering funds to businesses that needed it.

### **Business Minister Dean Russell said:**

Our subsidy control regime is built to meet the needs of modern Britain, freeing UK authorities from the restrictive shackles of European bureaucracy and longwinded approval processes.

Our new rules are robust yet flexible, empowering public authorities to deliver money quickly, fairly and simply, to businesses that need it the most.

Under the EU system, all subsidies except those under a 'Block Exemption

Regulation' had to undergo a lengthy bureaucratic process of being notified to and approved by the European Commission in advance, delaying vital funds from reaching viable businesses in good time.

The implementation of this regime comes after a full, extensive consultation on the proposed approach, with views gathered from stakeholders across the UK.

The new rules will help bolster the government's plans to drive a vibrant free market economy, by banning unlimited government guarantees to businesses as well as subsidies granted to 'ailing or insolvent' enterprises where there is no credible restructuring plan.

The UK's new regime will also contribute to meeting the UK's international commitments on subsidy control, including its international commitments at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and in Free Trade Agreements.

BEIS is holding a series of events for public authorities to explain the main features and principles of the new regime.

In-person events are being held in:

Multiple [online events](#) are taking place too.

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## [Report by OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights: UK response, October 2022](#)

Mr Chair, I wish to thank the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Mr Mecacci, for his presentation. Matteo – your comprehensive comments remind us of the importance of ODIHR's work across all OSCE participating States in implementing our human dimension commitments. Thank you to you and your team for all you work on this, especially during this particularly challenging time, and for continuing to deliver on your mandate effectively and impartially.

As we are all aware, the OSCE has faced new challenges since Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and I commend ODIHR's work in addressing these. Firstly, Director Mecacci, I welcomed your steadfast joint-statements responding to [the sham "referenda" in temporarily controlled territories of Ukraine](#) and [the attempted illegal annexation of Ukrainian territory](#) that followed.

Secondly, as you mentioned, ODIHR's Monitoring Initiative has provided important [interim reporting](#) into violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights in the course of Russia's invasion

of Ukraine. We await the publication of the second report. Such monitoring and reporting are key to understanding the full scale of violations and abuses of international law.

Thirdly, the UK welcomes ODIHR's support to national and international human rights accountability processes and mechanisms – such as the provision of expert monitoring and reporting, and the facilitation of prosecution and investigation platforms.

Additionally, ODIHR has continued its critical work on the integration of migrants, anti-discrimination and hate crimes and human trafficking across the OSCE region – including the facilitation of practical training to those working on the ground in Ukraine – such as the recent course for civil society and frontline responders on addressing human trafficking.

This year, much of our time in this forum has rightly been used to discuss Russia's illegal war in Ukraine, but I wanted to take a moment to also highlight the important work of ODIHR in other parts of the OSCE region.

I'd like to thank the Polish Chair, Director Mecacci and all those who contributed to the success of this year's [Human Dimension Conference in Warsaw](#) which brought together over one thousand participants from international organisations, government and civil society from across the OSCE to assess our Human Dimension commitments. The plenary sessions, round tables and side events brought with them thought-provoking discussion and concrete recommendations – demonstrating the huge value of such a platform. I'd like to echo the Director's regret that consensus could not be reached on the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and share in his hope that this achievable next year.

Throughout 2022, ODIHR has continued assisting participating States through the provision of needs assessments and election observation missions, with 14 missions across the OSCE region.

We continue to support ODIHR's election observation methodology, which recognises an election is a process and considers the key elements of participating States' electoral systems, including the effectiveness and impartiality of the election administration, the legislative framework, the nature of campaigns (including the media environment), and the protection of fundamental civil and political rights. We continue to believe that strengthening our democratic institutions and practices is a continuous process, and ODIHR's clear recommendations to each country help all of us improve our electoral processes. They also provide a useful starting point to inform ODIHR's needs assessments for future election observation missions, helping ensure each of our individual democracies can be supported appropriately, and in a way that builds on past successes and addresses previous failings.

Director Mecacci, this year has demonstrated more than ever the huge importance of approaching security comprehensively – incorporating the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension and the human dimension. This year the actions of the Russian Federation and

Belarusian regime have demonstrated the link between internal oppression and external aggression. This was clearly outlined in the most recent [Moscow Mechanism report in the case of Russia](#). We must learn from this and fund the crucial work of ODIHR accordingly. Any effort to restore peace in the OSCE region must be comprehensive and must include work in the human dimension.

Let us recognise now what we recognised half a century ago, security across the OSCE region can only be sustained when human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy are guaranteed for all within it.

Thank you.

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## [Minister Keegan reaffirms important UK-Egypt ties on first visit to Cairo](#)

Press release

Ahead of COP27 and on her first official visit to Egypt, UK Minister for Africa, Gillian Keegan, reaffirmed UK-Egypt partnership and thanked Egypt for its leadership on the climate change agenda.



Minister Keegan met with Foreign Minister and COP President Sameh Shoukry to discuss how the UK and Egypt can work together to secure the best outcome in the upcoming climate negotiations. The Minister also discussed a number of regional files with the Foreign Minister, thanking Egypt for its role in seeking stability across the Middle East & North Africa.

As part of Cairo Water Week, the Minister delivered opening remarks at an event hosted by the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA), and met British business people in Egypt to discuss the significant opportunities that exist for UK investment and expansion in Egypt, particularly in the renewables and green sectors. She also met with Egyptian Energy Minister Dr Mohamed Shaker, discussing how UK firms can best invest in Egypt's booming renewables and green technology market, including solar, wind, and green

hydrogen.

Speaking after the visit, Gillian Keegan said:

In less than a month, Egypt will host the world's leaders for the United Nations climate conference, COP27, and it is essential that the negotiations are a success. After meeting with my Egyptian counterparts, I am heartened by the effort, the energy, and the enthusiasm shown by the Egyptian government in its preparations.

I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with young Egyptian leaders, both those working on climate, and young entrepreneurs. I was struck by the dynamism and the passion on display. We owe it to these young people, and to future generations, to make real progress in a month's time.

Whilst in Cairo, I also met the family of Alaa Abd El-Fattah to express the UK's sympathy and our commitment to his case. Mr El-Fattah is a dual Egyptian-British national: gaining consular access and ultimately securing his release is a priority for the UK. I raised our strong concerns about his ongoing detention with Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry.

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