

You're not too old to go for gold: 'OlympAGE Games' helps keep older people healthy and active

The Minister for Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies, will attend the launch of the games, saying that it's vital older people keep healthy and active as part of efforts to help maintain their independence and reduce social isolation.

The 'OlympAGE Games' which will see older people and disabled people competing in Rio-inspired team-based competitive activities.

Older people and disabled people are less likely to meet the recommended levels of physical activity than the general population.

There is a clear link between physical activity and improved mental health and well-being; increasing levels of physical activity can improve both quality and length of life.

Speaking ahead of the games, Social Care Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

"It's great to see events like the OlympAGE games taking place. It's a fun way of encouraging older and disabled people to stay active.

"As well as fostering better physical health, this initiative helps improve the mental well-being of those involved by supporting them to be more socially active. It's also great to see students from Bridgend College helping those taking part in the games, bringing the generations together.

"So my message to older people across Wales is – take part in physical activities that you like and are interested in, and show people you're not too old to go for gold!"

Minister congratulates super-recycler school

Blaengwrach Primary, located in Neath-Port Talbot, was one of two Welsh schools that saw 100% of their pupils take part in a UK-wide home recycling challenge during the summer holidays.

Developed by Recycle for Wales and Wastebuster, the [Home Recycling Challenge](#) aimed to educate pupils about what can be recycled in their homes and the benefits of recycling.

The challenge was figure-headed by Welsh TV presenter Gethin Jones and children's TV presenter Maddie Moate along with recycling expert Captain Busta, Wastebuster's popular mascot. Pupils were given a take-home worksheet to find out what can be recycled from around the home by using the [Recycling Locator](#) and schools were ranked by the percentage of pupils that returned the completed worksheet.

In total, 59 Welsh schools registered to undertake activity. The winning school was selected at random from the twelve schools across the UK that had 100 per cent of their pupils submit worksheets.

The Minister said:

"Wales leads the rest of the UK with a 64% recycling rate and it's fantastic to see young people demonstrate so much enthusiasm towards recycling. If we are going to achieve our ambition of a 70% recycling rate by 2025 it is vital our future generations are on board.

"Congratulations to the pupils of Blaengwrach Primary School for taking part in the home recycling challenge and for becoming the recycling expert in their home. They have certainly earned the title of "super-recyclers". I hope all of our Welsh participants found this an exciting challenge."

Mrs Sam Sharp, Headteacher of Blaengwrach Primary added:

"Ensuring pupils are aware of the part they can play in recycling and sustainability is very important. We have a very proactive eco committee that monitors our waste, our meter readings and supports initiatives to inform the local community as well as the pupils of the importance of being eco friendly. We're very proud of the work they do and the strength of pupil voice in the school."

Carl Nichols, Head of WRAP Cymru, said:

"It's fantastic to see the Minister supporting Recycle for Wales' Home Recycling Challenge. Wales ranks third in the world at recycling, with more and more of us recycling in the country – and we'd like to be top of the leader board! By engaging school children with recycling, they can in turn inspire their families and help them to understand how best to recycle at home."

Minister sets out priorities for employability and skills

She told delegates:

“I am very excited about this brief and I am committed to delivering a strong employability and skills agenda. The Cross-Welsh Government work on employability is particularly exciting as we maximise opportunities to work together in order to make a real difference to people’s lives.

“The Welsh Government clearly has a key role in supporting the employability of people across Wales and we should be proud of the fact that we have seen significant improvements in the employment rate in Wales over recent years. But we still have work to do to support those who are economically inactive, and those in insecure employment.

“Employability is not just about jobs and skills. It is about getting every aspect of Government policy – education, health, housing and communities – working together to support people into sustainable jobs.

“In order to support long-term prosperity, we need to do things differently and, to do different things. Employability and Skills has been identified as one of our key priorities to help us build the highly skilled and productive workforce of the future.

“I am determined to ensure we focus on building the skills employers need to flourish, skills people need to gain meaningful employment to support themselves and skills that will equip people to meet the challenges of the future.”

Final exam results do not yet show full picture, says Education Secretary

Responding to the publication of today’s [final examination results for](#)

[2016/17](#), Kirsty Williams said:

“It is our national mission that every child, no matter their background, has the opportunity to succeed. Our Pupil Development Grant, which provides extra support for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, is a vital part of our plans and we’re already seeing the benefits.

“It’s important to have data which you can compare like-for-like, year-on-year, to see where performance issues need to be addressed. But today’s final exam results do not yet provide us with that kind of comparison.

“We have introduced a number of changes to the examination system in Wales over the past year. There have been two new Maths GCSEs, new linear English and Welsh Language GCSEs, and schools are moving away from science BTEC which was failing to properly equip our young people.

“All these changes are linked to raising standards and all were necessary but they mean we’re now essentially dealing with two different sets of data.

“Evidence shows that the Pupil Development Grant is making a difference in breaking the link between poverty and attainment that has dogged our education system. That’s why, earlier this year, I announced plans to extend the grant and why I will continue to do everything within my power to make sure we’re reaching the learners that need this invaluable support.”

[Plans for 19 new health and care centres across Wales announced by Vaughan Gething](#)

Funding of up to £68 million has been identified for the centres. Construction will be subject to the agreement of successful business cases from the local health boards, and the expectation is that all schemes will be delivered by 2021.

This is the biggest targeted investment in primary and community care infrastructure by Welsh Government.

The pipeline of facilities is intended to improve access to a range of health and social care services closer to people's homes. The provision of a new generation of integrated health and care centres is a key commitment in Taking Wales Forward.

The pipeline of projects seeks to invest in a number of ways, and includes the refurbishment and redevelopment of existing sites, as well as a number of new build developments.

A key theme of the pipeline is integration and health boards are looking to work with a range of delivery partners, including local authorities, housing associations and the third sector, to bring together a range of public services into community hubs.

The schemes include the following :

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board

Penclawdd Health Centre
Murton Community Clinic
Bridgend Town Centre Primary Care Centre
Swansea Wellness Centre

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Tredegar Health and Wellbeing Centre
Newport East Resource Centre

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Central Denbighshire Clinic / Hospital Redevelopment
Waunfawr Primary Care Centre

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Maelfa Health Centre Hub
Cogan Hub Development
Pentyrch Surgery

Cwm Taf University Health Board

Tonypandy Health Centre
Dewi Sant Phase 2 development
Mountain Ash Primary Care Centre

Hywel Dda University Health Board

Aberaeron Integrated Care Centre
Fishguard Health Centre
Cross Hands Integrated Care Centre

Powys Teaching Health Board

Machynlleth – reconfiguration and extension to create a primary and community care hub

Llanfair Caereinion Primary Care Centre

Vaughan Gething said:

“People in the 21st Century expect to be treated in modern, advanced health care centres that deliver a wide range of services all under one roof. We agree and by targeting investment in this way it is hoped that opportunities for delivering service change can be delivered upon.

“We’re funding the future of healthcare in Wales and the pipeline of projects I’m announcing today will make a significant difference to the care people receive closer to home in their communities.”