

[£2.6m to help rough sleepers and increase the capacity of emergency night provision](#)

This funding has been allocated to projects which tackle rough sleeping, youth homelessness, mental health and homelessness as well as supporting people to find housing in the private rented sector.

Of the £2.6 million, Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham local authorities have also benefited from capital funding to increase the capacity of emergency night provision for rough sleepers. The Cabinet Secretary's announcement coincides with homelessness figures for April to June 2017 which, based on information from 21 of the 22 local authorities across Wales, highlight that homelessness was prevented, for at least six months, for 63 per cent of households threatened with homelessness.

The new figures show; of the 2,652 households assessed as being homeless during April to June 2017, 39 per cent were helped by local authorities to secure accommodation that was likely to last for 6 months.

Communities Secretary, Carl Sargeant said:

“The latest quarterly figures show the legislation we introduced in 2015 is continuing to help more people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

“Providing people with a safe, warm and secure home remains a key priority and I acknowledge there is more we can do; particularly for rough sleepers and those groups who are struggling to get the help they need. This £2.6 million will increase the capacity to support those most in need of our help.”

[Lesley Griffiths high on ambition for clean energy](#)

Electricity generation from renewables in Wales has trebled since 2010, and last year provided 32% of the electricity we use. The Cabinet Secretary said she believes Wales can be at the forefront of global efforts to decarbonise and today announced challenging new targets for renewable energy production.

She told Assembly Members she wanted Wales to generate 70 per cent of its electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“Wales must be able to compete in global low carbon markets, particularly now we face a future outside the EU. The ability to meet our needs from clean energy is the foundation for a prosperous low carbon economy.

“This is why I am today announcing targets to focus action across the country and to capture the benefits for Wales.

“Firstly, I am setting a target of Wales generating 70 per cent of its electricity consumption from renewable energy by 2030.

“Secondly, I am setting a target for one Gigawatt of renewable electricity capacity in Wales to be locally owned by 2030.

“Finally, by 2020 I expect new renewable energy projects to have at least an element of local ownership.

“I believe these are stretching but realistic targets which will help us to decarbonise our energy system, reduce long-term costs and deliver greater benefits to Wales.”

The Cabinet Secretary said the Welsh Government needed to take action to support delivery of these targets but is also looking to UK Government to deliver on areas not devolved to Wales. The UK needs to support technologies to the point where they can compete in the market.

She said:

“The rapid changes of UK Government policy have decimated large parts of the renewable sector in Wales and developments potentially valuable to Wales have been stopped in their tracks by UK Ministers. The bulk of UK Government renewables investment is now going to offshore wind projects outside Wales. This investment is paid for by Welsh bill payers, amongst others.

“There is a need for the bulk of energy supply to come from the most affordable technologies, if the costs are to be found from energy bills. These technologies therefore need a route to market if we are to meet our ambitious targets and deliver the most benefit to Welsh bill payers. That is why I have called repeatedly on UK Government to stop the ideological exclusion of onshore wind and solar from the Contracts for Difference process.”

Welsh Government is doing its share. We have made around €100m of EU

Structural Funds available for investment in marine energy.

Enhanced TB eradication measures coming into force

In June, the Cabinet Secretary published an enhanced TB Eradication Programme, which committed to taking a regionalised approach to eliminating the disease in Wales.

From Sunday, Low, Intermediate and High TB Areas will be established in Wales, and are based on bovine TB incidence levels.

Enhanced measures will be applied in each TB Area, depending on local disease risks and drivers. This approach is designed protect cattle in the Low TB Area and drive down the disease in the Intermediate and High TB Areas.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“We have worked closely with the industry to develop these new enhanced measures and together we can achieve our goal of a TB free Wales.

“I cannot stress enough the importance of the work to clear up long-standing TB breakdowns, some of which have been under restrictions for 10 years or more. On average, the cost of testing in these herds and compensation of cattle slaughtered, is almost £200,000 per herd. Clearing up infection in these herds will offer significant savings to the taxpayer and farm businesses.

“We will be closely monitoring the impacts of all these measures and aim to be in a position to review the boundaries of the TB Areas once we have the full calendar year dataset for 2018.

“We have already made significant progress towards eradicating TB in Wales. The number of new incidents has fallen by over 40% since its peak in 2009; the lowest level in twelve years. Currently 95% of herds in Wales are TB free and I would like to thank the farming industry and veterinary profession and other stakeholders for their continued cooperation and engagement as our Programme develops and progresses.”

Alongside these enhancements the annual TB herd testing regime continues across Wales. We have almost eight years of annual testing data in Wales and this sustained high level of active surveillance provides indisputable assurance of the true TB status of cattle herds in Wales.

The TB Eradication Programme and Delivery Plan are available on the Welsh Government [website](#).

[Carwyn Connect heads to Brecon](#)

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 Theatr Brycheiniog in Brecon (Canal Wharf, Brecon, LD3 7EW).

People are encouraged to register their interest in attending the free events online at the following link: [Eventbrite](#)

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 2 years, I have travelled the length and breadth of Wales to hear the views of local communities and answer people’s questions.

“I am pleased to announce the next event will take place in Brecon. I would like to see as many people as possible at Theatr Brycheiniog, 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, please come along.

“A wide variety of topics have come up in previous events. You can ask me anything from questions about local issues such as schools or hospitals, to big issues like Brexit or government policy.

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

Minister discovers why there's more to Green Man Festival than meets the eye

During a visit to the Welsh Government supported event last month, the Minister met with event organisers and saw first hand how the festival is supporting science and skills development through the various creative projects it runs.

While there, in addition to exploring Einstein's Garden – an interactive learning environment that aims to promote science and innovation in an engaging way to event-goers – Julie James met with individuals involved with the festival's Merthyr Project.

Established by Green Man seven years ago, the Merthyr Project is a personal growth and development programme supported by the College Merthyr Tydfil to help people from the area develop their skills and enhance their employability opportunities.

Part intervention, part training and part social development, the project is part of a wider range of work experience and training opportunities Green Man supports throughout the year.

The project culminates with those involved having an opportunity to put their new found skills and experience to good use at the annual festival.

During her visit and joined by Green Man's Director and Owner, Fiona Stewart, and Nicola Ebdon who is a Film lecturer from the College Merthyr Tydfil, the Minister met with Ben Willshee (19), Ryan Speck (21), and Rebecca Hopkins (22); three apprentices who took part in this year's project and helped to support the successful delivery of the sell out and award winning festival.

Both Ben and Ryan are currently studying for their foundation degrees in Film at College Merthyr Tydfil and have recently started their second years.

Rebecca studied the same course and has just completed her third year at the Cardiff campus topping-up to a full Bachelor's degree. Her experience over the last three years on the Merthyr Project helped her to secure a place at University of South Wales, where she has just started a post graduate Public Relations Master's degree.

All three have credited the project with helping to build their confidence, understanding of the industry and gain valuable skills and training.

Explaining how the programme works, Fiona said:

“The Merthyr Project consists of two parts, with the first phase focussing on job application skills. It gives those involved a taster of the sort of production roles and responsibilities available across the creative industries before getting them to

complete a CV and go through an application process where mentoring and feedback is provided.

“The second phase focusses on immersive and sometimes challenging experiences, including skills training and equipment handling. Those involved get to experience first hand film production and editing, stage set-up and what it takes to successfully deliver a festival.

“The project’s aims are wide ranging but skills training and personal growth sits at the heart of it. Building core and transferable skills such as confidence, resilience and interpersonal skills are as important as the wider industry specific training individuals receive. It is an intense experience, requiring dedication and commitment from everyone involved but the benefits offered can be incredibly rewarding.

“Green Man is a genuine community and we all work together to help each other. Ultimately, this project aims to provide an opportunity to those in greatest need of support to access the industry and develop their social skills so they can adapt and be more resilient and successful. We are forward looking about the skills we want to develop with our apprentices to make sure that they will still be relevant in a few years time. There is no point teaching people things that won’t help them or be relevant in the real world.”

Explaining how the project has helped him, Ben said:

“It is an amazing opportunity on a different scale. We all work together like a team, helping and supporting each other to learn and develop because we want to bring the talent out in each other. Sometimes all it takes is a simple comment like ‘you’ve done a good job’, that can be very validating. The project has helped to build my confidence.”

Commenting on her visit, Julie James said:

“From its interactive areas to encourage more people to explore science, to its skills and training projects which provide young people with an opportunity to develop their core skills, Green Man is not your average festival and this visit certainly showed why there is more to it than meets the eye.

“It was great to hear more about the Merthyr Project, especially from those who have benefitted from it directly. Listening to Ben, Ryan and Rebecca speak so passionately and confidently about their time on the project and then demonstrating to me some of the practical skills they have learnt was really inspiring.

“As the largest contemporary music and arts festival in Wales, I am pleased the Welsh Government has been able to support Green Man’s growth and I look forward to seeing what 2018’s event has to offer, both on and off the stage.”