

World's first semiconductor cluster comes to Wales thanks to Welsh Government

Originally built for LG Semiconductors, the Celtic Lakes development at Imperial Park in Newport was sold by the Welsh Government to City Deal Councils for a £38m make over.

As one of the premier business locations in South East Wales, its use as a compound semiconductor wafer foundry is a key part of the Welsh Government's strategy to build the world's first semiconductor cluster – bringing high end jobs, investment and skills to Wales.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“It is hugely encouraging that Welsh Government's initial £12m investment in developing the cluster back in 2015 has been the catalyst for today's announcement that IQE plans to expand into the City Deal's new facilities. Not only is it extremely exciting news for the Welsh economy, securing additional jobs and investment, but it further cements Wales as a world leader in this state of the art technology.

“With the world's first compound semiconductor cluster located here in South East Wales, we are punching well above our weight in developing technology which not only plays an increasingly vital role in the way we live our lives today but will drive innovation which will shape the world we live in tomorrow.”

The foundry will support the development of a compound Semiconductor Industrial cluster in the region, with the potential to:

- lever £375m of private sector investment,
- create up to 2,000 high skilled jobs,
- return the investment for use on other regional schemes, and
- create hundreds more jobs in the wider supply chain cluster

Compound semiconductors are more complex than silicon technology and offer lower power consumption, higher operating speeds and temperatures, light-emitting and detecting properties. These properties are opening up significant markets in the automotive, health and security sector not least in helping deliver 5G smart phones, the Internet of Things, tele-health and autonomous vehicles.

Dr Drew Nelson, Chief Executive of IQE plc said:

“Compound semiconductors are rapidly defining 21 century technologies and Wales is uniquely positioned to be centre stage of this global, high-tech industry sector.

“This dedicated compound semiconductor facility between Cardiff and Newport will act as a key component of the burgeoning cluster that is already cementing Wales’ reputation for technology leadership.

“The initiative is a shining example of what can be achieved through collaboration. The Welsh and UK governments, along with the ten councils that form the Cardiff Capital Region, have worked closely with academic institutes and industry to build an innovation infrastructure that will support and nurture the region as a true global player in new and emerging technologies.

“The facility will become the base for a number of compound semiconductor related activities, including IQE, where we expect to rapidly expand our production capacity to meet increasing demand for our technology.”

[New school guide for parents with adopted children launched](#)

Created by Adoption UK Cymru, ‘Getting it right for every child: A parent’s guide to working with schools’, sets out the top things parents of adopted children should look for when choosing a school, how to work with staff at the school and gives advice on how attachment issues can have an impact on a child’s progress through the education system.

The guide, funded by the Welsh Government, is based on recommendations from internationally renowned experts on trauma and attachment.

Written by Ann Bell, who is an adoptive parent and Director of Adoption UK in Wales, the content is based on contributions from other adopters, adopted children and young people, teachers and those responsible for looked after and adopted children in local authorities.

Education Secretary Kirsty Williams said:

“We know that adopted children often need extra support when it comes to their education and this new guide aims to help parents make the right choices for their child as they navigate the school system. Learning can only take place if children feel safe and that often does not come naturally for children who have had bad

experiences with adults in their early years.

“We want to make sure children and young people who have been adopted have the same opportunity as other children to reach their full potential in life.”

Communities and Children Secretary Carl Sargeant said:

“Adoptive parents provide the stable family environment children need while supporting them through their education.

“This guide is designed to give those parents extra advice to help them to access the right support in school when they need it. Without that support, children and young people will continue to face barriers in achieving their true potential.”

Author of the guide, Ann Bell, said:

“As adopters, we provide stable homes and nurturing environments for some of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and whilst parenting in such circumstances is hugely rewarding, it also presents difficult challenges, no more so than when our children enter the education system.

“I’ve written this booklet to provide the reassurance and guidance that parents need to help them choose the right school for their children, ask the right questions, and find the right support and help when they need it most. Adoptive parents are their children’s single most powerful advocate, and I hope that this informative guide provides power to their elbow.”

[Childcare Pilot projects underway](#)

Five pilot projects are underway in parts of Swansea, Flintshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, while a sixth will be joint project in Gwynedd and Anglesey. They will test all aspects of the new Childcare Offer for Wales to ensure it will be accessible to parents and sustainable in the long-term once rolled out.

The offer will provide 30 hours a week of government funded early education and childcare for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds in Wales, for up to 48 weeks of the year. The current free early education provided by Foundation Phase will form part of this offer.

Communities and Children Secretary, Carl Sargeant said:

“Parents, particularly women tell us problems in securing affordable childcare is one of the biggest obstacles to seeking paid employment. This is why providing 30 hours of government funded childcare to working parents of 3 and 4 year olds for 48 weeks a year, is one of the key priorities for this government.

“Affordable, available and accessible childcare will enable parents to work, supporting our drive to increase economic growth, tackle poverty and reduce inequalities. It will also provide opportunities and long-term benefits for our children and improve their life chances.

“This is a very important commitment so we are determined to get it right. This is why we are testing the offer very carefully and why these pilot schemes will be so valuable in helping us understand how best to make it work for parents, providers and children.”

[Landfill Disposals Tax \(Wales\) Bill receives Royal Assent](#)

Landfill disposals tax will replace the current landfill tax in Wales when it is devolved in April 2018. The revenue raised will help fund public services in Wales.

At an official sealing ceremony, the Landfill Disposals Tax (Wales) Bill became an Act of the Assembly. It is the final of three Acts to establish tax arrangements in Wales.

A Bill receives Royal Assent when Letters Patent under the Welsh Seal signed with Her Majesty's hand signifying her Assent are notified to the Clerk of the Assembly.

The First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones applied the Welsh Seal to the Letters Patent at the sealing ceremony, which was also attended by Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“This Act is another important step in our devolution journey as we prepare for the introduction of tax powers in April 2018.

“Next year will see the further maturing of devolution as we take

on responsibility for raising a proportion of our budget to spend on public services in Wales.

“Landfill disposals tax and land transaction tax will be the first Welsh taxes for almost 800 years. Wales is at the forefront of waste policy and landfill disposals tax is an important element in achieving our ambitious goal of a zero waste Wales.”

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said

“This Act has been developed through a collaborative approach and with cross-party support.

“There is a clear public interest in ensuring the new tax systems we are creating for April 2018 are recognisable to those who will have to operate them on a daily basis. There will be similar processes and an approach to tax rates which will provide stability and reassurance to businesses.

“This Act is designed to be up to date, simple and clear to apply, reflecting established practices and will be relevant to Wales.

“However, a key difference between the existing landfill tax and landfill disposals tax is that our Act enables tax to be charged on unauthorised disposals of waste in order to provide a financial deterrent against undertaking this activity. Unauthorised disposals of waste blight our communities; they are a potential source of tax evasion and place legitimate waste businesses at a disadvantage.

“This activity is unacceptable; I want to encourage individuals to take their waste to a registered landfill site and pay a fair share of tax which contributes to the funding of our public services in Wales.”

The Welsh Government is also establishing a Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme, which will support local projects which promote or improve the social or environmental wellbeing of communities affected by the disposal of waste to landfill.

Professor Drakeford added:

“I would like to thank all those who have helped us shape this Act and look forward to continuing to work with them as it is implemented.”

Joint Statement from the Welsh Government, Flintshire County Council and Flintshire Town Council on Next steps for Flint Castle – Year of Legends Art Installations

However, work on Flint Castle and the foreshore masterplan will continue, with the pursuit of an alternative major art installation as a potential component of the investment.

As part of the review, Welsh Government officials met with Flintshire County Council, Flint Town Council and a number of local groups and partners to discuss the future development of the historic Flint Castle and Flint foreshore. Welsh Government made it clear that it was committed to significant investment in Flint Castle and to delivering a masterplan for Flint foreshore and Castle in full consultation with local stakeholders.

Whilst there was some support for the current proposed sculpture from stakeholders locally, it was recognised that any decisions on major public art installations would need to be taken in conjunction with the wider masterplan work. Consequently, it was agreed to stop work on the current sculpture and instead focus on using some of the allocated funding to deliver the masterplan, which sets out a vision for a shared multi-use visitor and mixed use centre to support tourism, walking and cycling, and key local organisations including the RNLI and rugby and football clubs.

Economy and Infrastructure Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“We acknowledge that the proposal for the Iron Ring sculpture has been divisive and, following extremely constructive and productive meetings with local stakeholders, have taken the decision not to proceed with the proposed design. Instead, we will use the investment allocated for the artwork to help deliver the wider masterplan for the foreshore, taking in the views of local people. This will include developing a range of capital investments for the area and holding a number of events and activities to increase the understanding of the history of the Castle and the significance of the foreshore. Alongside Flintshire County Council and Flint Town Council, we see development of the masterplan as a high priority.”

Councillor Ian Roberts from Flintshire County Council said:

“We welcome this investment in the Castle and foreshore and the commitment to retain current resources for Flint. Our recent meeting with the Welsh Government was extremely positive and I feel confident that future partnership working will ensure a favourable outcome for the town of Flint which will enhance the historic Castle with its links to Richard II and Shakespeare, the foreshore and the improvement work which has been carried out in the town centre over recent years. We will continue to actively pursue proposals for major public art installations as part of the foreshore masterplan delivery.”