

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates announces £3m for Yr Egin

Following consideration of a business case from the University of Wales Trinity St David, the Economy Secretary has agreed to allocate £3m of capital funding to support Yr Egin – a project that will see an innovative hub for the Creative Industries being established in Carmarthen.

Speaking about his decision, Ken Skates said:

“Having considered the overall potential economic, cultural and educational benefits of this project I am pleased to announce that the Welsh Government will be investing £3m in 2017/18 to support Yr Egin.

“The investment will help to deliver the infrastructure needed to support the University’s vision of a cluster of creative businesses in Carmarthen.

“This in turn will help to inject new life into the local economy, bring additional and high quality jobs to Carmarthen and enhance Wales’ growing reputation as an enabler of talent, imagination and productivity.

“It also supports our wider commitment to promoting Welsh as a living and vibrant language and will help cement links between academia and creative businesses.

“Our support for Yr Egin will help Carmarthen to capitalise and build on S4C’s decision to locate its headquarters there and will help provide space and networking opportunities for other businesses, the University, students and entrepreneurs.”

The Welsh Government’s £3m investment will support the construction of a new building to provide accommodation for companies, incubator space to develop new businesses in the creative and digital sectors as well as and event space, an open auditorium, and production and edit suites that can be used by both companies and the University.

People across Wales could benefit from

change to care home charging

The Welsh Government's five year plan, 'Taking Wales Forward', committed to more than doubling the capital limit used in charging for residential social care, from £24,000 to £50,000. If the regulations presented are passed by the Assembly, the limit will move to £30,000 from 10th April this year – increasing in phases up to £50,000 thereafter.

Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, is today encouraging individuals who may benefit from the change, or their families, to contact their local authority.

Rebecca Evans said:

“People who need residential care and who have capital over a certain amount are required to use this to pay for the full cost of their stay.

“This Government is committed to supporting older people, and those requiring care, which is why our five year plan 'Taking Wales Forward', pledged to significantly increase this capital limit. This frees up more of people's money for them to use as they wish.

“From 10th April people who require residential care and have capital up to the new amount of £30,000, will not have to use this to pay for their care. Instead their local authority will be responsible for funding their care, only charging a contribution based on a person's available income.

“As people who pay for the full cost of their residential care usually have private arrangements in place with their care home, local authorities will often be unaware of how much capital individuals have. I am therefore encouraging anybody who thinks they, or a family member, may benefit from the change to contact their local authority.

“People do not need to wait until the 10th April to do this. Individuals can contact their local authority now, to check whether they might benefit and prepare everything ready for the change in April.”

[£1 million St David's Day fund for children who have experienced care](#)

Funding will be made available to eligible young people aged between 16 and 25 and either still in local authority care or care leavers to help them progress towards independence.

In 2015/16 there were 5662 looked after children in Wales and 702 care leavers.

Carl Sargeant said:

“Typically, outcomes for children in care or care leavers are less positive than for those young people who live at home with a parent or parents. We are committed to improving the life chances of children who have experienced care, so they have the opportunity to flourish and realise their potential.

“Local authorities, as corporate parents are expected to help the young people in their care move towards independence in a similar way to parents who have children living at home. Providing appropriate support and guidance to a young person early in their journey towards independence helps to maximise life chances.

“I hope this fund will offer timely support to care leavers and go some way in helping them achieve their ambitions and make a successful transition to adulthood and independent living. We will work with the Children's Commissioner and young people who have experienced care to discuss how the fund will work. I welcome Sally Holland's Spotlight report on looked after children which will also help inform our decision.”

[Wales to host the GE Maintenance and Repair facility for GE9X](#)

The announcement, which follows the First Minister's meeting with GE executives in Washington DC, is accompanied by £20m of GE investment, that includes £5m from the Welsh Government.

The maintenance and repair of the GE9X will safeguard over 400 jobs at GE Aviation Wales. This news comes in addition to the site's 2016/2017

recruitment activity to support growth relative to its current engine programmes.

The new facility will provide the technical lead and support to GE9X partners across the globe and place Wales at the cutting edge of the latest and greatest jet engine technology.

The First Minister welcomed news that the Nantgarw facility will lead the company's global 'Entry into Service' readiness programme, describing the move as hugely significant in securing the future of the Nantgarw facility for the next generation and ensuring the site is at the forefront of important technology applications.

He said:

"I am delighted Welsh Government is supporting this very significant investment in one of our flagship operations. GE Aviation Wales is the largest aircraft engine maintenance facilities in the world and today's announcement ensures it will maintain its position as the global centre of excellence for wide bodied jet engines that will now also include GE's latest engine, the GE9X.

"As an Anchor company, GE Aviation is of huge strategic importance to the Welsh economy with a world class reputation and extensive experience and capability. It's tremendously good news that this investment will strengthen its long-term sustainability, preserve the scale of the facility and ensure its on-going competitiveness.

"The aviation MRO facility has been in Nantgarw for 77 years and only recently celebrated its 25th anniversary of GE ownership so it is great news that the 9X will ensure GE Aviation remains at the forefront of the engine repair and overhaul sector for many years to come."

The First Minister added that when he was in the States last year he had discussions about GE Aviation Wales' selection as the global technical lead on the GE9X as well as potential new recruitment.

GE Aviation Wales Managing Director La-Chun Lindsay said:

"This is a great day for Wales and particularly for our communities across the Valleys. We've won this great accolade because we worked together as one 'Team GE Aviation Wales' on solving our site's biggest problems and challenges. The key objectives now are for the site to sustain its cost competitiveness and to continue improving on customer delivery for both engine overhaul and component repair. I want all our customers to hear this great news and be delighted if their GE9X engines are coming to GE Aviation Wales for servicing.

“Over many years we’ve enjoyed a great relationship with the Welsh Government and their grant offer was also a key differentiator in ensuring Wales as the MRO shop and technical lead for the GE9X. We have a great history of support from our partners in the Welsh Government and at every stage of this process we have worked in lock step to secure the GE9X.

“More than 85% of our employees from the surrounding area and are thus firmly rooted in our local community. I’m so pleased that securing the GE9X means that future generations will have the chance to fulfil their dreams of working at GE Aviation Wales and will have the same fantastic opportunities that have existed throughout the site’s proud history.”

GE Aviation Wales has been selected based on its wealth of technical expertise and its track record of continuous improvement. By focusing on increased utilisation and productivity despite its 77 year old infrastructure, GE Aviation Wales is now cost competitive with several brand-new overhaul sites. The upshot of continued focus on increased utilisation and delivery is a projected increase in volume to the site enabling new recruitment.

Major research study has the potential to transform the health of the nation

The largest research study of its kind ever to have been undertaken in Wales, HealthWise Wales hopes to recruit 260,000 people aged 16 and older. People who volunteer to take part in the project are asked a series of questions which will help researchers to better understand the health of the people of Wales. The information collected will also be used to help the NHS plan for the future.

Minister Rebecca Evans said:

“The research can help us understand how to find better treatments, improve health and social services, and increase the health and wellbeing of the people of Wales. The more people who get involved, the more powerful the results will be so I encourage everybody across Wales to take part.”

The Minister was speaking as new TV, radio, train and newspaper adverts are rolled out across Wales today. The adverts feature real Welsh people who have signed up and are encouraging others to do the same.

Helen O'Sullivan from Wrexham registered to help others overcome illness, Warwick Leek from Rhondda Cynon Taf signed up to help raise awareness of mental health issues, while Sara Crowley from Aberdare volunteered to take part to help improve treatments for diabetes.

Helen, who has experience of cancer, said:

"I read about HealthWise Wales online and, for me, it's about trying to inspire other people. I feel so lucky, and have received great care from the NHS. I registered because I wanted to pro-actively help other women deal with their health issues."

Professor Shantini Paranjothy from Cardiff University, Scientific Lead for the project, said:

"I am delighted to lead this project which has great potential to increase the public's understanding and involvement in health and social care research in Wales. Everyone living in Wales aged 16 and over can get involved with HealthWise Wales. I've signed up because I wanted to contribute my information to make a difference to the population's health and wellbeing."