

Professional Teaching Awards searching for best in class

Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams, announced today that the search for Wales' best Teaching Professionals for the third Professional Teaching Awards Cymru has begun.

The announcement was made as the Education Secretary visited last year's Teacher of the Year winner, Lorraine Dalton from Ysgol Esgob Morgan.

Pupils, colleagues and parents from across Wales are encouraged to nominate teaching professionals from across the country that they believe have made a real difference to the education of others in Wales.

Last year, the Professional Teaching Awards Cymru saw an increase of 20% in number of nominations, with 9 winners announced out of a total of 24 finalists on the night. Categories for nominations included Headteacher of the Year, Inspiring use of Welsh Language and Promoting Wellbeing and Inclusion and Relationships with the Community, with Youth Work in Schools being added as a category from 2019.

Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, said:

"I am very happy to announce that the Professional Teaching Awards Cymru will return for the third time. Over the last two years, we've celebrated some fantastic education professionals from across Wales, all of which have shown passion and dedication to the education of others."

"Teachers are at the heart of Wales, setting paving stones for the next generation. We have a duty to raise standards of education in Wales to make sure that young people are reaching their full potential.

"In order to celebrate the achievements of those who go above and beyond for their pupils, we have brought back the Professional Teaching Awards Cymru for another year. Nominations are now open, and we would love everyone to take the time to put forward an outstanding teaching professional to recognise their achievements as one of the best in Wales."

Lorraine Dalton from Ysgol Esgob Morgan in St. Asaph won the 'Teacher of the Year award' in 2018 for her unwavering passion and commitment, and the tremendous impact she has had on her school, where she started her teaching career 20 years ago.

She said, "When I won I was so surprised. I kept saying when I was shortlisted that it is just a job, but thinking about it, it's more than a job, it's a way of life. The children are at the heart of

what I do.

“When I brought the award back to the school, the kids were over the moon. It was overwhelming to see how happy everyone was and just seeing that makes it all worthwhile. Since winning I’ve done as I always do, teaching and loving every second – just this time with a nice shiny trophy on my desk as well!”

Nominations are open until 30 November, with the winners being revealed at an exclusive Awards ceremony in May 2019.

[Welsh Government ‘Keeping Faith’ in Vox Pictures for series 2](#)

The first series was the highest viewed drama on BBC Wales in over 20 years. After achieving over 15 million views on iPlayer it was bought by the BBC Network and has just finished a hugely successful run with BBC One nationwide.

Series Two will follow on from where the first left off and will see Faith (Eve Myles) attempt to re-build her life after the dramatic conclusion of Series One. The series will consist of six hour long episodes with the majority of filming will take place on location in Laugharne (standing in for the fictional town of Abercoran) and showcasing some of Wales’ finest coastline . Filming will also take place at Dragon Studios.

Like the first series it will be filmed in both Welsh and English with S4C broadcasting in Welsh before it is shown on the BBC.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“We have been working extremely hard to attract high-end TV and film productions to Wales, and to ensure we maximise the associated economic benefits. The last two years have been the Welsh Government’s busiest yet for supporting TV and film with high profile productions such as Journey’s End, Requiem, Britannia, Kiri and of course Keeping Faith all cementing Wales’ reputation as a five star place to film.

We have seen a steep increase in the number of Welsh Government assisted productions filmed in Wales, and a consequential rise in the amount of money injected into our economy as a result. Indeed for every £1 the Welsh Government invests into TV and Film

production we are seeing at least £8 being spent within the Welsh Economy.

I expect that the second series of this hugely successful drama will serve to attract even more high quality production to Wales.”

[£119m EU funding secured to progress South Wales Metro](#)

Work is underway to transform the current Core Valley Lines rail network as part of the South Wales Metro Phase 2 programme, which will provide a faster and more frequent service for the heads of the valleys stations and a direct connection to Cardiff Bay.

The investment will go towards improving infrastructure to accommodate the doubling of the number of trains to the heads of the valleys stations from two per hour to four. It will also be used to modernise stations to further improve rail users’ journeys.

The First Minister said:

“The South Wales Metro is an important part of our ambition as a government to improve public transport and better connect our Valleys communities and people to employment opportunities.

“Today’s confirmation of £119million EU funding means we can proceed with investment in infrastructure work on the valleys lines to make faster and more efficient journeys a reality for the thousands of rail users who use these routes daily.”

Today’s funding announcement includes:

- £21.1million for the Merthyr line for track doubling between Merthyr Tydfil and Pentrebach, and between Merthyr Vale and Quakers Yard. New platforms will be constructed to accommodate the track doubling, with an improved interchange at Merthyr Tydfil station, new ramped access at Pentrebach and a new platform and footbridge at Quakers Yard.
- £27.4million for the Treherbert line to allow sufficient infrastructure works along the full length of the line, including track doubling from north of Ynyswen to the south of Treorchy and north of Llwynypia to south of Dinas. The scheme also includes new platforms.
- £23.7million for the Aberdare line for track doubling, new platform construction and other infrastructure work to allow the service to be increased to four trains per hour along the full length of the line from

Abercynon to Aberdare. Track doubling will take place between Aberdare and Cwmbach, Fernhill and Penrhiwceiber, and north of Abercynon. The scheme includes a new platform, new step-free access and new waiting rooms at Aberdare, and an enhanced interchange at Abercynon.

- £19.5million for the Rhymney line to undertake track doubling south of Rhymney, north of Tir Phil and around Bargoed. The funding will also be used for other infrastructure work to allow the service to be increased to four trains per hour and provide new platforms, including step-free access and a new waiting room at Rhymney.
- £27.3million will also be allocated to the Taff's Well Depot scheme for land purchase, road build and rail access, providing serviced land for a new high quality depot facility which will improve Metro service reliability and enable the maintenance of the modern vehicles.

Welcoming today's announcement, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates, said:

"I'm pleased we are able to confirm this significant amount of EU funding for the South Wales Metro. This, along with the start of the new Wales and Borders rail contract later this month, marks considerable progress towards our plans for a modern, efficient and forward looking rail service."

Ken Skates, who is also a member of the Valleys Taskforce, which was established to improve connectivity and encourage economic growth in the South Wales Valleys, also said,

"We've listened to passengers concerns and put their needs at the centre of our plans around the new rail contract and South Wales Metro. Today's funding will be used to provide faster services, with modern facilities, and provide better connection throughout the Valleys."

The Welsh Government is also applying for a further £40million plus in EU funding to support Metro infrastructure enhancements, which it hopes will be secured by the end of 2018.

Work on South Wales Metro Phase 2 is expected to be completed by 2023.

[**Minister visits Llanberis to view the**](#)

£1.6million flood alleviation scheme after approving grant funding

Environment Minister Hannah Blythyn announced the funding during a visit to the area to see the work already underway through the scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding to 96 properties in the area.

The funding will be provided to Gwynedd Council through the Welsh Government's flood risk management grant to support with the cost of construction of a flood alleviation scheme in Llanberis.

It comes after a history of flooding in the area. Llanberis experiences higher than average rainfall, with surrounding steep catchments resulting in flash flood run-off flowing quickly towards the village.

In 2012 most of the properties in the high street were flooded, whilst past reports show flooding numerous residential and commercial properties.

The works to be carried out to reduce the risk of flooding to properties in the village will include:

- reconstruction of the existing bridge to increase flow capacity
- removal of weir
- increase height of flood walls downstream.

Once complete, the works will reduce the risk of flooding to 96 properties, including 57 homes, as well as a public highway maintaining transportation links.

Businesses in the village, including the local Siemens factory, which is a large employer in the area, will also benefit from reduced flood risk.

The Welsh Government has approved 85% grant funding towards the cost of construction for the Llanberis flood alleviation scheme, providing grant funding of £1,382,177. Gwynedd Council will cover the rest of the cost of the £1,626,091 scheme.

During a visit to see the progress of works in Llanberis on Thursday, Environment Minister Hannah Blythyn said:

“The Welsh Government is committed to supporting Local Authorities with the cost of implementing appropriate flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes.

“We know about the devastating economic, physical and mental impacts flooding can have. We are therefore committed to continuing our investment in flood risk management across Wales to benefit homes and businesses.

“After the disruption caused by the last major flooding in the area in 2012, I am pleased to announce £1.3m grant funding for the scheme and to see the work is being undertaken to prevent such damage from being wrought again in future.”

Gwynedd Councillor Gareth Griffith, Cabinet Member for Flood Risk said:

“Over the past two years, Gwynedd Council engineers have been working on a detailed business case to secure Welsh Government funding to develop a specific long-term solution by replacing the current arch bridge (Pont Ddol) and increasing wall heights along Afon Goch.

“We were delighted that the Welsh Government confirmed Llanberis in their capital programme for 2018, and work recently got underway on the new bridge with the entire project expected to be completed next summer. We appreciate the patience of the local community while this vital scheme to protect the village is being constructed.”

Ken Skates to lead aerospace trade mission to Toulouse

With the backdrop of Brexit, this trade mission provides the Welsh based companies with a timely opportunity to network with senior representatives of key potential clients at a number of receptions and events, including the prestigious ADS Toulouse Annual Event. It will also be opportunity to discuss future opportunities and challenges for the sector with the Economy Secretary and to visit the Airbus Final Assembly Line and gather information on the French commercial aircraft sector.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“The aerospace sector is absolutely vital to Wales. Our reputation, and that of our skilled workforce, in this growing international sector is one which is the envy of economies across the World, and we are a Government which is determined to do everything possible to create and maintain the right conditions to ensure it remains so.

Brexit, and the way it is being handled by the UK Government, brings with it unquestionable uncertainty and questions for the sector, both here, in Europe and further afield. The timing of this

important trade mission could therefore could not be better, allowing Welsh companies to strengthen existing ties and build on our strong, mutually beneficial relationship with partners from across Europe.

The ADS Toulouse Annual Event, one of Europe's flagship aerospace networking events, is of particular importance in this regard. With over 250 senior representatives from across Britain, France and beyond in attendance, it's also an unmistakable opportunity to reinforce the very clear message from Welsh Government that Brexit mustn't change the relationship our aerospace industry and others enjoys with Europe.

The quality and number of companies on this trade mission is testament to the strength of the industry in Wales and I'm delighted to be in Toulouse with them today to ensure Welsh Government does everything it can to ensure the sector continues to grow and prosper."

Thirteen Wales based companies are participating in the Trade mission programme:

1. Arcunam Information Security
2. Consort Precision Diamond
3. Cydweithio
4. Derichebourg Atis aéronautique
5. Electroimpact
6. Gardner Aerospace
7. Global Tooling Solutions
8. Hexigone Inhibitors
9. LMg Solutions
10. STG Aerospace
11. Trittech Group
12. Wall Colmony
13. Zip-Clip