

EU funds boost for new Bridgend business development

The EU funding will support the redevelopment of the Innovation Centre at Bridgend Science Park and the construction of a new enterprise centre at the Village Farm Industrial Estate.

The project will create more than 2,500m² of business premises, which will accommodate around 35 start-up and early-years businesses and more than 100 jobs. It builds on Bridgend's success in growing the number of new businesses in recent years.

In total the project will cost around £3.5 million, with £2.3m of EU funding and a further £1.2m from Bridgend County Borough Council.

Finance Secretary, Mark Drakeford, said:

“This is excellent news for the business community in Bridgend. This investment will provide the quality infrastructure which new businesses need to thrive. Combined with the work we are doing with businesses to understand the challenges they face and the opportunities they have for growth and innovation, it will create more jobs and grow prosperity for the area.”

Councillor Charles Smith, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education at Bridgend County Borough Council, said:

“The modern enterprise hub will greatly benefit small-to-medium sized businesses, helping to meet growing demand for new premises, whilst strengthening the local economy.”

Last chance to have a say on A55 Junctions 15 and 16 improvement plans

The consultation, which looks at options to remove the roundabouts at junctions 15 and 16, began on Monday 4 June and comes to an end on Monday 28 August.

There are nine options begin considered, five for Junction 15 and four for junction 16.

The proposals will improve safety for road users along the A55, and for people using the route to travel to and from Dwygyfylchi, Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan. They will also strengthen the road's resilience, result in better journey times and seek to improve active travel routes in the area.

Public Consultation Exhibitions were held in June in Dwygyfylchi, Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan for people to see the options being considered in detail and the timescales involved.

Economy and Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

"The Welsh Government is investing hundreds of millions of pounds into improving transport infrastructure in North Wales and the A55 Junction 15 and 16 improvement scheme is a significant part of our plans.

"People's views on the options being considered are a vital part of the decision process and I encourage everyone with an interest to share their opinion before the consultation closes on 28 August."

[Housing and Regeneration Minister visits Wrexham homelessness project](#)

The Wrexham Community Care Hub, based at the Salvation Army Centre brings together a number of services including GP services, mental health, substance misuse services, housing and homelessness services under one roof.

Rebecca Evans said:

"It was good to see the team's approach of 'everyone in the room,' with open access services meeting a range of needs in one place.

"The team is focused on meeting the immediate needs of people who are homeless, and doing so in a friendly environment which builds trust between the agencies involved and the people receiving the services. Providing these services from the same location means they can operate more efficiently and cost-effectively too."

Dr Karen Sankey, Clinical Lead at the Hub, said:

"The success of the model is based on the fact that all service providers attending the Hub share a desire to make a difference and

support these people who are often living in crisis. We provide a safe, non-threatening and friendly space where individuals can get access to the most appropriate support for them in a timely fashion, in addition to being a place where positive relationships are formed.”

Rebecca Evans said:

“We want to see more joined-up services being delivered by housing, health, employment and support services, focused on the needs of homeless people and people who are sleeping rough in order to help them move to suitable accommodation.

“Anyone who is concerned about someone they see sleeping rough can use the Streetlink app to inform local authorities and outreach services who can then offer help.”

[Adult gender identity services available in Wales this autumn](#)

The new Welsh Gender Team will start seeing patients at the end of October, allowing transgender people to access the care they need closer to home.

Currently, all patients who present with gender dysphoria are referred to the London Gender Identity Clinic, where they are assessed and provided with a treatment plan.

Patients in the Cardiff and Vale area who have experienced difficulty in accessing the medicines that have been recommended for them by the London Clinic will be able to access their prescriptions via a specialist GP from next month. This development is targeted towards the area of most need, with most patients waiting for hormone replacement living in the Cardiff area.

Work is continuing with Health Boards and the General Practitioners Committee to develop a fully integrated gender identity service in Wales.

The Health Secretary said:

“Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in demand for transgender health services in Wales. As part of our commitment to improve health and wellbeing for all, we have invested £500,000 annually to improve gender identity services in Wales.

“Today’s announcement is a positive step towards the fully integrated service I expect to be in place next year. A specialist team in Wales will reduce both the distance of travel and, over time, the waiting times people in Wales currently experience.”

The All Wales Gender Identity Partnership Group has been actively involved in designing the new referral pathway for patients who present with gender dysphoria.

Essential A55 improvement work after no daytime lane closures commitment achieved

During that period, dating back to April 2017, all routine work involving lane closures has taken place overnight. Daytime lane closures have only been necessary in the immediate aftermath of serious collisions.

Today’s announcement comes as essential improvement works are needed on the Kneeshaw Lupton underbridge near Junction 23 Llanddulas.

The works, on the westbound carriageway only, will begin on 17 September which will be 532 days after the last routine daytime lane closures on the A55 between Junction 11 and the English border.

It will see all surfacing removed, waterproofing of the bridge deck and the replacement of bridge joints.

This work requires a full closure of the westbound carriageway in the area with a contraflow in place which will see a single traffic lane in each direction 24/7 for up to five weeks. The waterproofing needs to be laid in reasonable weather conditions which is why it has been programmed to take place during this period. All work will be completed by midday on 18 October at the very latest, which is before the beginning of the half term holidays.

Due to the nature of the engineering works and to ensure safety, 1.5 metre high boards will be installed with work taking place on the other side of these.

Similar works on the eastbound carriageway are set to take place later next year.

Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

“I have been absolutely committed to ensuring there have been no

routine daytime lane closures on the A55 from the English border to Junction 11 from April 2017 until September 2018 and I am delighted we have delivered exactly that.

“During that period, resurfacing long lengths of the A55, repairs and maintenance, including to the route’s tunnels, have all been carried out overnight resulting in very little disruption to traffic.

“I want to thank officials, contractors and all those involved in planning these works who continue to work tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of this key route.

“We have also been carrying out night time works on the Kneeshaw Lupton underbridge near Llanddulas to keep in use the temporary repairs we have previously put in place on the structure. We do however need to carry out permanent repairs as the bridge deck itself is now showing signs of distress. I have to reiterate this is essential work which must take place.

“I fully understand that roadworks during the daytime can cause disruption, but they need to be carried out on all major roads to ensure the safety of the travelling public and strengthen a route’s resilience. These are matters on which I will not compromise. We have also taken action to offset the impact for the travelling public by ensuring work on the eastbound carriageway can be delayed until next year.

“I ask the travelling public for their patience whilst this work is carried out and it will be on a 24 hours a day, seven days a week basis at pace so it can be completed as quickly as possible.”

Updates of the essential improvement work will be available on the Traffic Wales website and twitter page (@TrafficWalesN).