

£105m boost to provide more joined-up care closer to home

Housing and Regeneration Minister, Rebecca Evans and Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies made the announcement during a visit to an Extra Care housing and care scheme being built in Maesteg.

The Integrated Care Fund, set up to support the integration of health, social care and housing, will receive a £75m boost over three years, in a bid to create more large-scale housing which integrates social care as well as other innovative approaches to the integration of health and social care. This capital funding is in addition to the £50m revenue element of the Fund announced in April this year.

The fund will support the aims of “A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care” – which recognises the significant role appropriate housing can play in moving health and social services closer to communities.

The fund will help improve long term planning and increase the focus on how homes can make a difference to health.

Appropriate housing can support people to maintain their independence and can provide the right environment for people leaving hospital – reducing delays in discharging patients. It can also support older people, people with dementia or learning disabilities, or complex needs, and enable social services to provide them with more effective care. All of this can help the NHS and social services operate more effectively.

Rebecca Evans and Huw Irranca-Davies visited the site of Maesteg Extra Care Scheme, a development of bungalows, extra care apartments and residential care bedrooms and a range of communal facilities including dining room, lounge, laundry room, salon, activity rooms and communal gardens. The scheme is due to be completed in November this year and will provide housing for older and vulnerable people in the local area.

Rebecca Evans said:

“This significant funding boost is aimed at helping those who need it to receive the right support, whether they are older people with complex needs and long term conditions, people with learning disabilities, children with complex health needs, or carers.

“We recognise how important housing can be to health. Housing can make a real difference in the lives of people – helping older people stay independent and out of care homes or hospital, for example.

“A three year programme will allow health boards, councils, housing associations and other bodies to plan carefully and manage larger projects to meet the needs of people locally. I am looking forward to seeing many more projects like this one come to fruition.”

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“This significant increase in funding will help to deliver more projects that help people to live the lives they want to lead, while meeting their healthcare, or social care needs.

“Crucially, it will also help ensure that people can be discharged to appropriate support when they no longer need a hospital bed, freeing up NHS resources.

“Not all the funding will be about delivering housing-based projects, but we will continue to focus on providing seamless services, care closer to home, and helping people to live independent lives.”

Woodland and Trees Strategy for Wales Launched

[‘Woodlands for Wales’](#) includes plans for both large and small scale woodlands with both conifer and broad-leaved tree species. It recognises the importance of increasing the number of trees in the wider countryside and in urban environments.

The strategy has been updated to take into account new legislation and policies since the previous strategy was published in 2009.

Provided they are managed carefully and sustainably, woodlands provide shelter for livestock, reduce noise pollution, slow down flood waters and improve air, soil and water quality. They are havens for biodiversity, provide recreational opportunities and are a means for improving general health and well-being. Timber and non-timber products from our woodlands are also vital renewable resources which aid the sustainability of key Welsh industries.

The Strategy will be a practical document which gives guidance on the kinds of trees and woodlands needed in Wales. It will help ensure woodland managers

can deliver sustainable management for all natural resources in their day to day work. Among ongoing work by the Welsh Government is a review of the Woodland Opportunities Map, which identifies areas for potential tree planting.

There are also plans for more forestry training opportunities, including a new project which aims to create up to 30 new apprentice positions in the Valleys Taskforce area during 2019.

The Minister for Environment said:

“This is a bold strategy which reflects the diversity of opportunity our woodlands and trees offer and the essential part they play in our lives. I am determined that people who want to plant trees have certainty about the kind of woodland we need and the places where trees can be planted. In the right place, it should be straightforward to plant the right tree.

We need more woodlands and trees to help us manage all our natural resources sustainably, which will contribute to our long term goal of becoming a more circular economy.”

Roger Cooper, Chair of the Woodland Strategy Advisory Panel, said:

“Woodlands and trees play a vital role in Wales and bring a wide range of benefits for our environment, our economy and our own health and well-being. I welcome the updated ‘Woodlands for Wales’, which supports woodland expansion, responsible woodland management and is a strategy which can be taken forward with confidence.”

[More than 3000 new Welsh jobs created following inward investment](#)

The latest statistics from the UK Department of International Trade show that in the 2017-18 financial year, overseas companies created 3107 new jobs in Wales – an increase of more than 20% on the previous year’s figures.

Meanwhile the number of overseas jobs safeguarded stood at 1515 taking the total number of overseas jobs supported to 4622.

The new jobs were the result of 57 foreign direct investment projects based in Wales , with 53 of these supported by the Welsh Government. Of these 57 projects, 30 came from companies based in Europe, 15 came from companies based in North America, nine came from Asia Pacific and three came from the Middle East.

In addition Wales attracted 80 projects from other parts of the UK and benefitted from 14 multi sited projects that were part of wider UK investments.

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“These latest figures, and the 20% increase in new jobs created in Wales by overseas companies, shows that Wales continues to have a strong record in attracting inward investment. This success is providing a real boost to our economy and translating into thousands of new and safeguarded jobs in communities right across Wales.

“Inward investment, alongside growth of indigenous business remains a key driver of our economy and our Economic Action Plan sets out how we will continue to maximise opportunities to bring further investment and jobs here to Wales.

“Over the last year we are a proud to have welcomed Spanish company CAF to Wales, who will build our first modern train manufacturing facility, creating 300 new jobs in the process. Meanwhile following Welsh Government support for companies such as Dubai based Hotpack Packaging, KK Fine Foods and life sciences firm Ipsen are creating hundreds of jobs in North Wales.

“These sorts of wins can have huge impact on our economy and we will continue working hard to build on our success.”

The statistics also show that the total number of Welsh Government supported jobs fell significantly when compared with the previous year. The Economy Secretary explained that the 2016-17 job supported figure was unusually high. This was because it had included the safeguarding of nearly 7000 jobs at Tata that were secured following a package of Welsh government support.

From Aberdare to Swansea and a magical Merlin, eminent paintings accepted for

the nation

The Glynn Vivian has also acquired two dramatic pastels which were accepted in lieu from the estate of his widow, Eleonore Marie Herman.

Albert Irvin was a prolific abstract artist. After a spell in the RAF as a navigator during World War 2, he returned to his passion for art and began a career spanning over 50 years. He became well known for his use of exuberant colours and energetic brushstrokes in his vibrant pieces.

The acquisition of Merlin 1987 is a welcome addition to Amgueddfa Cymru's impressive collection of abstract art. The Museum already has one of the UKs most important collections of modern and contemporary art, but until now this did not include work from Albert Irvin. The vivid and bold painting will feature in changing displays of twentieth century British art in the Museum's modern galleries, as well as temporary exhibitions from the collections in the Museum's new wing for contemporary art which opened in 2011.

Andrew Renton, Keeper of Art at Amgueddfa Cymru, said:

"We are delighted to now represent Albert Irvin in our collections and Merlin will join the Museum's outstanding collection of post-war abstract painting. We are very grateful to the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme which is one of the most important ways of developing Wales' national collection and ensuring our audiences have access to the very best art."

The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea was also successful in its bid for another painting by Albert Irvin from the same offer – Aberdare 1988. This wonderfully colourful piece will sit alongside modern painting and sculpture by Hepworth, Nicholson and Nash. The allocation of 'Aberdare 1988' enhances the Glynn Vivian's dynamic exhibitions already on offer to the public. It will be displayed as part of a rolling programme of exhibitions.

The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery has also been successful in securing a further allocation through the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme. Two pastels which represent rare scenes of village life in Ystradgynlais, Swansea Valley during the 1940's by artist Josef Herman have found a permanent home there.

Josef Herman was born in Warsaw in 1911. As a Polish Jewish Émigré he fled Nazi Europe to escape anti-Semitism and arrived in Britain in 1940 where he settled in Glasgow. In 1944 he visited Ystradgynlais on holiday – and made it his home until 1955, he said. 'I stayed here (in Ystradgynlais) because I found all I required. I arrived here a stranger for a fortnight; the fortnight became 11 years'. He became a big part of the local community and he was fondly nicknamed 'Joe Bach'.

Herman is perhaps best remembered for his dramatic observations of the coal mining industry and communities in South Wales during the post war period,

The two pastels complement the Glynn Vivian's existing holdings of his work and its wider collection also includes work by many important artists in Wales who were Herman's contemporaries, providing a unique history of Welsh art in the 20th century.

Prior to the acceptance and permanent allocation of the Herman pastels to the Glynn Vivian Gallery, they had been on loan and have been exhibited in the main gallery since May 2017. The pastels are currently not on display but the public can make applications to see them in the accessible stores. A planned programme of exhibitions will see the Josef Herman works reinstalled in the gallery in due course.

Jenni Spencer-Davies, Curator at the Glynn Vivian said:

"We are delighted to welcome these important works into the Gallery's collection. Josef Herman and his wife, Nini, often visited our gallery, and two beautiful pastels are testament to his love for painting working people, especially miners and those close to the land. It is therefore very meaningful that these works will now be enjoyed by our communities in Swansea.

"I first met Albert Irvin, in 1990, when we presented a major exhibition of his work which had been curated by the Serpentine Gallery in London. I recall Bert talking about his visit to Aberdare, so it is very special to for us to be gifted this wonderful large-scale abstract work, entitled Aberdare (1988), inspired by his visit to Wales. This was the period when the artist had reached his prime, and following the exhibition, he visited Wales often, lecturing with incredible passion on his love of colour and the processes in his paintings."

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

"It's a pleasure to accept these important works for the nation and I'm delighted that they will further enhance the excellent collections that already exist at both Amgueddfa Cymru and the Glynn Vivian. The Acceptance in Lieu Scheme has been of significant benefit to the people of Wales. A diverse range of collections, objects and archives have been acquired in recent years by Amgueddfa Cymru , local authorities and the National Trust in Wales. These items will be preserved and enjoyed in to prosperity by all."

Edward Harley, Chairman, Acceptance in Lieu Panel. Said:

"Josef Herman made a great impact on the art of South Wales during his 11 years in Ystradgynlais. These two pastels make a significant and appropriate addition to the Glynn Vivian's collection and will

help tell the story of European refugees living in Britain during the Second World War. It is also fantastic to see the first work by Albert Irvin enter the Welsh national collection where it will join a rich holding of 20th century British art. It is an immense pleasure to see the Acceptance in Lieu scheme used to secure such important works for the nation."

"New online PGCE can make Wales a world leader" – Kirsty Williams

The addition of this new alternative route into teaching, announced today by Education Secretary Kirsty Williams, is the latest in a series of reforms designed to revolutionise the way ITE is provided in Wales. These also include new full-time ITE programmes.

The new part-time PGCE would provide a high quality alternative to full-time study and remove the need for students to travel just to attend their chosen course.

Students could instead interact with their lecturers and fellow students online, just as they would in the soon-to-be accredited full-time ITE programmes. This would remove any barriers that might be caused by their location or distance from a university.

In addition to the new PGCE, the Education Secretary also announced a new Employment Based Route (EBR), which would see a student teacher employed by a school from the outset. This would be targeted to help regional consortia address teaching shortages in schools region by region.

Both the part-time PGCE and EBR would enable student teachers to maintain their current commitments, including employment and income, whilst studying to be a teacher.

The students would also be able to take advantage of opportunities afforded by Wales' new student finance arrangements. From the 2018-19 academic year, all Welsh students – whether studying undergraduate full or part time – will receive support for their living costs equivalent to the UK national living wage.

Announcing the changes today, Kirsty Williams said:

"An education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and our new curriculum cannot be delivered without a well-supported, aspirational teaching profession.

“The new part-time PGCE has the potential to completely transform the way Initial Teacher Education in Wales is delivered, complementing our equally high quality full-time ITE programmes.

“New students who may previously never have considered a career in teaching or been put off by costs or their location will have access to an academic qualification and programme that is of the very highest standard while also being flexible and easily accessible.

“It’s by harnessing technology in this way that we’ll attract highly-talented, experienced people with the higher level skills needed by both the teaching profession and our wider economy.

“I am confident that along with the step change in our soon to be accredited full-time ITE programmes the new part-time PGCE and EBR, together with new Professional Standards for teaching and accreditation criteria for initial teacher education, will allow us to raise standards across the board and make Wales a world-leader.”

The Education Secretary also confirmed today that an HE provider, or partnership of providers, will be procured to deliver the proposals by working with schools and education consortia across Wales.