

Multi-million pound investment to develop Urdd residential centres

The £5.5 million will enable Glan-llyn to develop a brand new Educational Centre and upgrade the Water Sports Training Centre, and Llangrannog will be able to implement the plans to transform key infrastructure.

Today 56% of all Welsh schools attend Urdd centres on residential courses, and of those who visited over the past 3 years, 26% came from the 20% most deprived communities in Wales.

More second language Welsh schools visit the centres than first language Welsh schools, which demonstrates their value as an access point to the Welsh language, and that it is alive and relevant.

Confirming Welsh Government's investment in the scheme, the Education Secretary said:

"It's my pleasure to announce this funding, under the 21st Century Schools Programme, for the development of Urdd facilities in Glan-llyn and Llangrannog. Modernising education infrastructure plays a key part in raising standards and delivering on our National Mission. The Urdd plays a vital role in providing yearlong learning opportunities for young people in Wales. They also make a vital contribution to creating children who are social and healthy, and use the Welsh language outside of school. I look forward to seeing these developments and how they will help to improve the Urdd experience for future children."

Siân Lewis, Urdd Chief Executive said:

"I would like to thank the Education Secretary for supporting our vision for developing Glan-llyn and Llangrannog to be pioneering, modern centres which support 'learning outside the classroom'. This concept enables children and young people to learn, develop personally and socially, and through Urdd centres this will all be achieved whilst at the same time increasing their confidence in their use of the Welsh language. Thanks to this substantial matching investment from Welsh Government, the Urdd will be able to improve facilities and resources, create new jobs in rural Wales, upgrade infrastructure and create a fantastic environment in which to encourage effective learning throughout the year for future generations of Welsh children and young people."

The £2.75m capital investment is part of the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Education Programme and has been agreed as part of the two-year

Budget agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru.

Urdd research shows that schools and educational establishments across Wales have already seen a significant increase in the wellbeing of children and young people as a result of visiting the centres, as well as having a positive effect on their use and preception of the Welsh language.

With 47,000 annual visitors and a turnover of £5.2 million, Llangrannog and Glan-llyn currently employ 160 staff between them. This funding will ensure new employment opportunities to include 12 new apprenticeships. It is anticipated that the increase in visitors at the centres will result in an additional £1.3m in turnover for Urdd Gobaith Cymru.