

# Welsh Secretary celebrates 40 years of S4C

News story

The broadcaster has been a pillar for Wales and the Welsh language for the last four decades



Secretary of State David TC Davies has congratulated broadcaster S4C on its 40th anniversary.

Since 1982 S4C has entertained and served viewers throughout Wales and beyond. The channel celebrated its 40th birthday on 1 November.

The UK government continues to support S4C. Earlier this year the channel secured an improved funding deal which included £7.5m in new money each year to support its digital services.

Secretary of State for Wales David TC Davies said:

Congratulations to S4C on 40 years of broadcasting. The channel has educated and entertained generations of audiences and plays a crucial role in the creative industries in Wales.

As a government we continue to support S4C so it can create and broadcast the highest-quality content to audiences in Wales and across the world.

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# Merseyrail to manage fines using the Single Justice Procedure

Anyone responding to a Single Justice Procedure (SJP) notice from Merseyrail, for an offence such as travelling without a valid ticket, can now enter their plea online.

If the defendant pleads guilty, their case can be managed without a court hearing. These cases are managed using Common Platform, our criminal case management system which supports SJP. This means defendants' cases can be resolved quickly, fairly and more efficiently.

As with all SJP cases, defendants can still choose to have their case heard in a court. They can also submit a plea on paper, rather than electronically.

Each Merseyrail case will be considered in the same way and the same penalties apply.

The rail provider is the first outside London to use Common Platform for prosecuting cases online.

## **Benefits to Merseyrail operations**

Suzanne Grant, Commercial Director at Merseyrail, said:

I'm really pleased that we're the first regional train provider to use Common Platform to progress these types of cases.

Whilst the majority of passengers travelling on our network purchase a ticket, this new platform will allow us to deal with the small number that fail to do so promptly and efficiently.

It will benefit both Merseyrail and our customers. For our staff, it means less paperwork. For our customers, they'll be able to make a plea online and have their case resolved far more speedily, rather than it hanging over them for a month or more.

Working with HMCTS, we've rigorously trialled the new system, which delivered greater efficiencies and faster processes all round, so we're confident it'll be a huge asset to how we operate.

## **About the SJP**

The SJP is part of the [Single Justice Service](#). This service supports magistrates' courts to deal with minor offences more efficiently, while still ensuring rigorous, open and fair justice.

A single magistrate, supported by a legal adviser, can decide adult, minor, non-imprisonable and victimless offences, such as fare evasion. People who plead guilty can resolve their case without going to court. This minimises delays and allows more court time for other cases.

It's already used to process SJP cases for other non-police prosecutors, including:

- Transport for London
- TV Licensing
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

## Future plans

We're planning to onboard more non-police prosecutors on to Common Platform.

## More information

[Find out more about Common Platform](#), the case management system supporting SJP.

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## New Geovation Accelerator Programme participants announced

### News story

Six firms with exciting ideas for using location and property data have been chosen as the latest to benefit from the award-winning Geovation Accelerator Programme.



Image credit: kitzcorner/Shutterstock.com

Geovation is an initiative for PropTech (property technology) and GeoTech

(geospatial technology) start-up entrepreneurs to use location and property data in innovative ways, sponsored by HM Land Registry and Ordnance Survey. By coming up with solutions to existing problems or filling a gap in the market, these start-ups create products and services which benefit society and stimulate economic growth.

To date, 150 GeoTech and PropTech start-ups have been supported and more than 1,500 jobs created.

The PropTech start-ups are:

- [Pantera Solutions](#) – Transforming forecasting and strategy planning for commercial real estate.
- [Blocktype](#) – Helping developers and planners understand the development potential of land.
- [EverKnock](#) – A virtual concierge to manage your home move.

The GeoTech start-ups are:

- Wateraware Collective – Creating a living map of water quality data across the UK.
- [Civitem](#) – Advanced analytics for climate resilience planning in agriculture.
- [RouteZero](#) – RouteZero decarbonises business travel by 55% using digital tools.

Andrew Trigg, Chief Geospatial and Data Officer at HM Land Registry, commented:

By offering our data, grant funding and mentoring to the new participants over the next 12 months, we're fostering the next generation of data-led entrepreneurs, and we're excited to see how they go on to transform the property industry and beyond.

The Geovation Accelerator Programme offers 12 months bespoke support to help early-stage founders grow their business. Start-ups receive up to £20,000 in grant funding and the equivalent of over £100,000 in support during the programme including workshops, coaching and access to data from Ordnance Survey and HM Land Registry.

For more information visit [Accelerator – Geovation](#)

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# Thousands in last year of life to have disability benefits fast-tracked

Press release

More people nearing the end of their lives will receive vital, fast-tracked financial support, thanks to legislation passed last week.



- Fast-tracked access to Personal Independent Payments (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) will be extended to people who are in their final year of life.

Thousands more people nearing the end of their life will have fast-tracked access to financial support through the benefits system, thanks to landmark legislation passed last week.

In one of his first major legislative acts as monarch, King Charles III has granted Royal Assent to the Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Bill.

This means that people who are thought to be in the final year of their life will be able to receive fast-tracked access to certain benefits, six months earlier than they were able to previously.

This will apply to Personal Independent Payments (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA).

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Mel Stride MP said:

It's hugely important that people in the last year of their life are treated with dignity and receive the financial support they need and deserve quickly.

Extending this support confirms our commitment to alleviating the pressures faced by those who are nearing the end of their lives,

and their families.

The Special Rules changes to PIP, DLA and AA will come into effect as soon as practical and follow the same changes made to Universal Credit (UC) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) earlier this year.

Those who are eligible will not be required to attend a medical assessment, and in the majority of cases they will receive the highest rate of benefits.

### **Further Information**

- Special Rules for End of Life (SREL) were previously referred to as Special Rules for Terminal Illness (SRTI)

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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## **[Trade Secretary's speech at the Green Trade & Investment Expo](#)**

Welcome to the Green Trade and Investment Expo.

Let's talk about Blyth. Blyth is a coastal town 16 miles from here. Coal mining was its lifeblood.

But when Blyth's last colliery closed three decades ago, around 1,700 jobs disappeared. Some people thought that the town would be left behind.

It is true that the past years have been difficult and challenges still exist.

Yesterday I took some of you to see how the town is becoming one of the country's most important bases for clean energy.

It's home to the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult, where the biggest turbine blades in the world are put through their paces.

Another company called JDR is transforming the site of Blyth's old coal fired power station into a next generation offshore cable factory.

So, a town once powered by coal is now powered by wind. And all this is creating hundreds of jobs.

Blyth illustrates the promise of the clean energy revolution.

And the Government want to see this story of opportunity, growth and revitalised communities replicated across the UK, because at the end of the day what we are about is helping people live better lives.

That's where my department comes in. We believe that green trade and investment will be the future-proofing force that will help us create a better tomorrow, and I'll give you three reasons why:

First, we know that growing our green industries is crucial to reaching net zero.

Some people raise awareness of climate change by throwing soup at paintings in museums or gluing themselves to the road. That's not really my style.

We in this room know that we can only tackle climate change by using free trade and investment to accelerate green technological progress. And we must do this in a way that does not impoverish the UK.

Second, to protect our energy security we need to grow our own industries.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made it quite clear that relying on authoritarian regimes can make it tougher to heat our homes.

Our trade relationships will help secure our energy supply. But it's long-term investment in nuclear and renewables that will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and keep down consumer costs.

And third, as we are seeing in Blyth, green trade and investment acts as a future-proof by creating those jobs of tomorrow.

The jobs that will drive economic growth and keep communities alive.

And this economic angle is the subject I want to focus on today.

Like many governments around the world, we're dealing with low growth. We need to find our way through it. Because we owe it to our children and grandchildren to build a better, more prosperous future.

A lot of this growth will come from the ideas being developed by green industries. We know firms that innovate, expand faster than those that don't. And the UK is quickly becoming the green creativity capital of the world.

Let me give you some examples:

Imagine being suspended on ropes 40 metres above the North Sea, balanced on wind turbine blade. That's not just nerve-wracking, it's also risky. But until recently that was the only way for wind power firms to identify and fix a technical fault.

That's now changing after an engineer called Chris Cieslak first designed a

robot in his garage.

His invention, BladeBUG, means a person no longer always has to climb onto the blade to identify a fault. And in some cases, BladeBUG can fix the fault too. This improves safety and boosts efficiency by keeping turbines turning. That's an idea that could not only benefit our own wind energy industry but those of other countries too.

Steamology is a company developing zero-emission hydrogen steam engines from its workshop in Salisbury. An innovation that will prevent rail and lorry operators having to scrap valuable existing vehicles if they decarbonise – saving them money and avoiding waste.

And it's becoming safer for people to work in our offshore energy industry, thanks to innovations from Zelim, a company based in Edinburgh.

When someone falls into the sea, every second counts, and Zelim's AI-powered technology spots and tracks people in the water, and then its unmanned boat rescues them.

All these businesses have been supported by our Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult in Blyth.

There are so many other brilliant ideas like ones you've just heard about.

The challenge now is how to capitalise on them.

And we'll do that through attracting the investment that will get these innovations off the ground and help businesses to export. Because this is a virtuous circle: Innovation needs investment to flourish, investment leads to exports, exports create growth and new jobs, and more innovation.

And if we get our strategy right, the impact could be transformational on places like Blyth and the rest of the country.

Our analysis shows that by the end of this decade, our green industries could create up to £170 billion of export sales.

And according to figures from the Office for National Statistics, by 2050 we could generate 1.4 million green jobs across the UK. That's one for every person in Birmingham.

As the Prime Minister said last week, green jobs are the jobs of the future.

But if we get our strategy wrong, we risk being left on the backfoot as other countries seize the advantage.

So we need to act now and act fast. Here's how:

First, we're focused on building our green industrial base.

Right now, we're creating a pipeline of brilliant opportunities for investors. In our British Energy Security and Net Zero Strategies we set out



plans to drive £100 billion worth of private sector investment into green industries, including offshore wind by 2030.

As you've already heard this morning, we've given ourselves an ambition of up to 50GW of offshore wind capacity by that same date – more than enough to power every home in the UK.

Those of you who visited Teesside yesterday will see how we're supporting development of technology like carbon capture and storage, as well as low-carbon hydrogen. And we're doing some pioneering work in nuclear.

But it's not enough to create these opportunities, we need to tell investors about them too.

So last year we launched our Investment Atlas, which showcases all the UK has to offer...

From supporting North East Scotland to becoming a global centre for low carbon hydrogen, to building an electric vehicle charging network powered by solar energy.

We're bringing together people, businesses and ideas at events like this and at the Global Investment Summit we held last year.

The Office of Investment, run by my department, has also helped to land billions of investment in clean technology.

It's also recently supported the Qatar Investment Authority to inject £85 million into Rolls Royce's Small Modular Nuclear Reactors – each of which could power a city the size of Leeds.

And the UK's Freeports, which I know are of particular interest to many of you here today, are fast becoming hubs for trade, investment and innovation.

We're also building a pro ambition, pro enterprise environment in this country – a place where businesses can thrive and enjoy the stability and certainty for which we're known around the world.

With every idea, with every ambitious plan and with every transformed town, we are proving to global investors that the path to a green and prosperous future starts here in the UK.

I'm proud that my department is helping the world wake up to that message.

In just two years, DIT has helped to secure nearly £20 billion of green investment globally, creating 11,300 jobs.

And businesses here today, from Spain to South Korea, like SeAH Wind, JDR, Smulders and Siemens Gamesa, are among those backing Britain and changing lives.

Apart from growing our green industrial base, we also want to grow our exports.

There are some fantastic businesses in this room that are already selling to the world, and I know there are more who want to join them.

One of my biggest priorities as Secretary of State is to help you do that, so my department has set itself a goal of accelerating towards a trillion pounds worth of exports a year earlier than forecast.

We know that many businesses that could export don't, so our Export Strategy sets out our roadmap for getting you there.

We're also very aware that firms need money to grow. And my colleagues at UK Export Finance will help you get the loans and guarantees you need.

Outside this building you'll see the first hydrogen-powered double decker bus in the world, manufactured by Wrightbus, a company from Ballymena in Northern Ireland.

Thanks to a guarantee from UK Export Finance, Wrightbus has been able to access a £26 million facility from Barclays bank.

This will mean it can export its vehicles around the world, while supporting green jobs at home. And I was very impressed when I spoke to the team today – I hope to see more of this around the country.

So we're sitting at what was two centuries ago the epicentre of the industrial revolution.

Just a mile from here Robert and George Stephenson built some of the world's first locomotives from their workshop on South Street – the SpaceX of the 1820s. I hear it's now a gig venue for those of you who like that sort of thing – it's not really me, but what you will see here today is that the talent for finding innovative solutions is very much alive and kicking in the North East as it was then, and not just the North East, but the UK.

So, I hope the investors among you will learn what this country's green industries have to offer. And the businesses will discover how my department can open new markets for you. I look forward to working with you all.

Thank you.