

Mumbles one step closer to improved flood defences thanks to £700k Welsh Government funding

The Welsh Government funding of £682,500 will contribute 75% towards the cost of carrying out detailed design work for a coastal defence scheme to reduce the flood and coastal erosion risk to Mumbles.

Under the Council's preferred option the coastal defences will be enhanced and the promenade widened, potentially providing recreation, tourism and health benefits, as well as reducing risk to homes and businesses.

The appraisal identifies that, once construction work is complete, 124 properties will benefit immediately, rising to 147 in 2118, taking into account climate change and associated sea level rise.

Hannah Blythyn said:

"It is one of our key priorities as a Government to reduce the risk of flooding caused by rising sea levels and climate change. This funding towards the cost of the design phase is bringing Mumbles one step closer to a significant coastal protection scheme which will make a difference to residents and visitors alike.

"We are working with coastal local authorities around Wales towards investment of up to £150 million to reduce the risks we face from sea-level rise and climate change. This complements a further £151 million capital investment in flood risk management over the lifetime of this Government."

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Environment Services, Cllr Mark Thomas, said:

"We are delighted that our Welsh Government partners have approved a substantial funding contribution towards this exciting project. It means we can now move forward to develop a detailed design for the scheme.

"Not only will it protect properties at risk of flooding near the seafront and tackle coastal erosion for generations to come, it is also an opportunity to widen and improve sections of the promenade at the same time for the enjoyment of residents and visitors."

Review Group calls for views on teachers' pay and conditions

Last year, Education Secretary Kirsty Williams announced an Independent Task and Finish Group would be set up to review current arrangements for teachers pay and conditions and consider where and how the system could be improved.

The overall aim of the group is to understand how the pay and conditions structure contributes towards a highly motivated teaching profession and a high quality education system.

The Task and Finish Group will be chaired by Professor Mick Waters who will be assisted by Professor Melanie Jones and Sir Alasdair Macdonald.

The group will report back with recommendations by the autumn.

Kirsty Williams said:

“Taking over responsibility for teachers' pay and conditions is an incredibly important step for Wales and our education system. The English system is no longer appropriate, relevant or to the advantage of the profession here.

“Right from the offset, we want to make sure that we have a system based on the values of equity and excellence and a commitment to inclusive, public service education. This is fundamental to supporting and strengthening the teaching profession.

“I have every confidence that our Independent Panel of experts will provide the insight and expertise needed to deliver a system that can support our teachers and raise standards for all.

“It's essential, however, that we involve teachers as part of this process and listen to their views on how we can make the new system a success.

“That's why we're calling on everyone with an interest, both within and outside the profession, to tell us what they think of the current system, how it could be improved and how we can create a system that is specifically targeted towards the needs of Wales and the profession here.”

To submit your views, please visit

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/independent-review-school-teachers-pay-and-conditions-wales>

Works by one of Britain's finest wildlife artist amongst collections being protected in Wales

The Collingwood and Charles Tunnicliffe archives are joined by Colwyn Foulkes Architectural Drawings: the Forgotten Buildings – Banks, Churches, Charities, Children's Homes and Cinemas in being safeguarded for future. They will be preserved at Cardiff University, Oriel Môn and by the Conwy Archive Service respectively.

This forms part of a Welsh Government/NMCT partnership allocation of almost £35,000 to conserve items currently held under restricted access because of their fragile condition, making them much more accessible to students, researchers and local users.

Culture Minister, Lord Elis-Thomas said:

“Since 2008, this partnership has opened up access to, and rediscovered, some truly amazing collections. This year is no exception with some unique, truly remarkable works by some of Britain's most cherished and respected individuals and groups.

“I am grateful to the NMCT Trustees for their continued support of archive conservation projects in Wales and I'm very pleased Welsh Government have again been able to support preserving such historical and cultural gems.”

Once the items are in a stable condition they can be studied, handled and safely digitised before being made available online to a wider audience.

Lord Egremont, Chairman of NMCT, added:

“We are delighted to have been able to support the conservation of three very varied and enormously important collections thanks to our continuing and successful partnership with the Welsh Government's Museums, Archives and Libraries Division.”

“Families First is supporting 1000s of Welsh families to improve their lives” – Huw Irranca-Davies

Families First is an early intervention and prevention programme, aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people and families. It is designed to reduce the numbers of families developing more complex needs and requiring more intensive and costly interventions at a later date.

Families First is part of a wide package of measures the Welsh Government has put in place to support parents and families.

The most recent data available show that between April 2015 and March 2017:

- 77% – 12,665 – of parents have benefited from a parenting intervention.
- 80% – 12,567 – of parents improved their ability to support their child’s learning and development needs.
- 78% – 43,111 – of families improved their emotional/mental well-being.
- 73% – 23,395 – of families have reported improved family dynamics.

Later today, the Minister will visit a Families First project in Bangor to see for himself the work they do to support families.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“The Welsh Government has made a firm commitment to making a real difference to our youngest children, with a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people through early intervention and prevention.

“Families First puts a team of highly specialised staff around the family, and encourages families to be involved in the identification of issues and the resolution of those issues, recognising the strengths and resources within the family.

“I’m delighted to see literally tens of thousands of families have received targeted support from our Families First teams right across Wales, which in many cases, has proved to be absolutely life-changing.”

Plan launched to improve respiratory health in Wales

It sets out the Welsh Government's vision for respiratory services in Wales and identifies the actions the NHS in Wales will take in response. The plan will focus on delivering care that best impacts on patient experience and outcome and tackling variation in the quality of care.

The plan outlines work to improve smoking cessation services, better diagnose chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and reduce variation in prescribing. Health boards have all committed to:

- appointing a flu jab champion
- ensuring carbon monoxide monitoring and referral is routine smokers attending a respiratory outpatient appointment
- offering patients and parents asthma action plans for better self care
- improve access to exercise-based programmes for people with chronic respiratory conditions.

In 2015, around 15% of adults in Wales were being treated for a respiratory condition and respiratory diseases caused more than 16% of all deaths in Wales. Asthma UK estimates there are around 59,000 children with asthma in Wales, 9.5% of the total.

The Health Secretary has published the plan following a visit to Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil to meet the winner of the prestigious Royal College of Nursing Nurse of the Year award 2017, Louise Walby.

Louise has worked as a Respiratory Nurse Facilitator in a part of the Welsh valleys with one of the worst mortality figures in Britain for chronic lung disease. She was recognised for her work in improving the patient experience and management of COPD, and her work is now being used as an example of best practice across Wales.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said;

"I was delighted to speak to Louise again, following her great achievement at the RCN Awards last year. I am in no doubt that the people of Merthyr Tydfil will benefit from such a dedicated health professional for years to come.

"Improving the respiratory health of the people of Wales is a major challenge for healthcare services. With this plan, we hope to improve the quality of life for many patients with acute or chronic respiratory diseases.

"This plan will support health boards to provide more consistent services across Wales and to deliver services reaching national standards of care for respiratory disease."

Head of Wales, British Lung Foundation Joseph Carter said;

“We now need health boards to respond positively and deliver the plan locally to improve the lives of their citizens.

“We are delighted that the Welsh Government is continuing to provide leadership with a new extended Respiratory Health Delivery Plan.

“The plan recognises the need to invest in pulmonary rehabilitation, NERS and self-management in order to keep people with lung conditions active, informed and out of hospital.