

# Anglesey's Mona Lifting example of engineering excellence

Mona Lifting designs, manufactures, installs and commissions all forms of lifting equipment and general engineering fabrications. They operate in a number of engineering sectors, including nuclear.

At the end of 2017 they were awarded a prestigious contract to install their lifting system at the CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) Institute in Switzerland.

Mona Lifting take part in the Fit 4 Nuclear supply chain programme, supported by the Welsh Government and run by the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre. The programme is a unique service to help UK manufacturing companies get ready to bid for work in the civil nuclear supply chain.

The company have also received support from the Welsh Government to move to their current larger premises, and have the largest facilities of their kind in the area.

The First Minister said:

“It’s been good to see the excellent and steady progress made by Mona Lifting in growing its skilled workforce and in developing new markets, especially in nuclear.

“Gaining a contract with CERN is a tremendous achievement and it’s great to see a company from Anglesey able to compete successfully with the very best in the world.

“Wylfa Newydd is likely to be the largest private sector investment in the whole of Wales and we want to see Welsh suppliers make the most of this opportunity. Mona Lifting are an example of how this can be done and I’m very pleased they are sharing their expertise with others through the Fit 4 Nuclear programme.”

Steve Jones, Managing Director at Mona Lifting said:

“We appreciate Carwyn Jones taking the time to visit us at Mona Lifting. It’s been a massive effort from all involved within the company to get us where we are today. The assistance that we have received from the Welsh Government, especially at local level has been invaluable in our development.

“The next couple of years are going to bring challenges , with the decommissioning of the existing Wylfa site and waiting for the construction of Wylfa Newydd. With these challenges also comes opportunities in the nuclear and power generation sectors, not only

at Wylfa but throughout the UK. We have over the years worked at several nuclear sites, Sellafield, Berkeley, Oldbury, Wylfa and Trawsfynydd and in doing so have built up a large amount of knowledge and experience which hopefully will put us in a good position once the larger projects start to materialise.

“We are also members of the Wales Nuclear Forum. Some of the benefits is that the group get to discuss their experiences, sharing of information and collaborative working. I would fully encourage others to become members.”

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## Marketing partnership agreement with Qatar Airways will raise Wales' profile globally

The Qatar Airways service is Cardiff Airport's first route into the Middle East, with 150 onward connections from Doha. Links to and from Australia, New Zealand, China, India and Japan will be the most significant markets for Wales' tourism and business priorities.

The two year agreement will see extensive activity in key markets to raise the awareness of routes into Cardiff Airport. This will include consumer marketing activity and travel trade engagement in the key markets of Australia, China, India and Japan.

The announcement comes as Visit Wales, Qatar Airways and Cardiff Airport are on a travel trade mission in Australia and New Zealand to raise awareness of the new routes and what Wales has to offer visitors from Australia. During the past week, the team have met with more than 300 travel trade representatives in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth and Auckland including appointments with influential travel trade representatives such as Flight Centre, Helloworld and Tempo Holidays.

The focus has been on promoting our world-class products, activities, events and experiences during Year of the Sea 2018 – as well as The Wales Way – the new family of three national scenic touring routes which cross the country's most epic landscapes as a way of showcasing Wales' fascinating history, coastlines and attractions – and give overseas visitors the confidence and information to explore more of Wales.

Tourism Minister, Lord Elis-Thomas, said:

“It's extremely good news that we've been able to work with Qatar

Airways on this significant marketing partnership agreement. The new route provides an unprecedented opportunity to enhance global tourism and trade links and showcase Wales internationally. The majority of international visitors to Wales visit as part of a UK-wide tour. This new route into Cardiff provides an additional UK entry point from Asia-Pacific markets.

“Our joint marketing agreement with Qatar Airways means that this is the first time for Wales to have an active consumer campaign in these markets and more activity will follow at key booking times over the next year. This will increase Wales’ visibility in these markets both with consumers and with the travel trade and we look forward to developing and maintaining relationships as we work to increase awareness of Wales and what we have to offer – and welcoming more international visitors to Wales.”

Economy Secretary, Ken Secretary said:

“The launch of direct flights between Doha and Cardiff later this year offers huge opportunities for us to grow our economic links, not only with Qatar but also with a host of other significant markets including Australia, New Zealand, China, India and Japan.

“We know that Wales is a great place to live, visit and do business, but as we all work to negotiate the challenges and opportunities of Brexit , it is more important than ever that this message is being heard loud and clear across the globe. I welcome this Marketing Partnership Agreement which is one of many ways in which we are working to increase Wales’ visibility and grow our share of overseas markets.”

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker said;

“We are very excited to commence direct flights between Cardiff and Doha from 1st May this year, opening Wales to a global network of over 150 destinations. Cardiff offers not only a unique gateway directly into the heart of Wales but also expands our footprint in the UK offering visitors an even greater choice of destinations when planning their trip. We look forward to working with the Welsh Government to showcase all that Wales has to offer to our overseas passengers.”

Roger Lewis, Chairman of Cardiff Airport said,

“The opportunities that this new route offers Wales are going to be transformational for both business and passengers.

“Cardiff Airport is immensely proud to serve the people of Wales.”

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## Wales secures €90m of EU research funding to drive innovation

The Horizon 2020 Annual Report 2017, which was published last week, shows Welsh businesses have attracted more than €16m of funding and Wales continues to achieve a higher proportion of private sector participations than the rest of the UK.

Professor Drakeford said:

“Horizon 2020 provides real opportunities for businesses and organisations to be at the cutting edge of research and innovation.

“Our white paper Securing Wales Future and policy paper Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit emphasised the importance of Horizon 2020 to Wales and that it will continue to receive Welsh participation after Brexit.

“Horizon 2020 creates valued partnerships, which lead to direct economic benefits and has helped put Wales at the forefront of science and innovation.”

In the last year, Welsh organisations have won more than €30m of Horizon 2020 funding to drive forward ground-breaking projects with partners across Europe.

Cowbridge-based company Cymru Coal Ltd has benefited from Horizon 2020 funding, securing €1.3m to participate in the €7m IMP@CT project. It is part of a consortium led by the University of Exeter and involving organisations from France, Finland and Germany. Cymru Coal is sharing its significant expertise in mining and related machinery to create viable new methods of excavating small and complex deposits of metal.

Gareth Thomas, Cymru Coal’s managing director, said:

“We are delighted a small Welsh company is playing such a crucial part in providing the expertise needed to deliver a bespoke piece of equipment to the Horizon 2020 IMP@CT project. It’s rewarding to work as part of a team of partners with such varying areas of expertise.

“This project has enhanced our knowledge and understanding of hard rock mining. We are very appreciative of this opportunity and look forward to the potential benefits it can bring to Cymru Coal, the project partners and the countries of Europe and beyond.”

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## **Business rates support for high streets extended**

The scheme, which is unique to Wales, will provide additional support to around 13,000 small and medium-sized high street businesses across the country, including shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs and wine bars.

The Welsh Government-funded scheme, which was originally set up for 2017-18 only, will provide eligible businesses with a reduction of up to £750 from their non-domestic rates bills.

Professor Drakeford said:

“This additional support, which extends the high street rates relief scheme into 2018-19, together with our decision to put the £100m small business rates relief scheme on a permanent footing from April ensures ratepayers across Wales are receiving support to pay their bills.

“Targeting support to high street retailers will help those businesses, which are affected by the current economic conditions and competition from online and out-of-town providers.”

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## **Almost £7.6m to revitalise town centres across Wales**

The Minister will visit a boutique hotel and also a bunkhouse in the town to learn how these projects benefitted from the funding.

The Welsh Government’s £20m Town Centre Loans Fund is helping to bring underused sites in town centres back to life. Once loans are repaid, the money is used again to fund new loans.

Caernarfon has benefitted from over £700,000 of Town Centre Loans, £250,00 of which has been used to help redevelop the Grade II listed building Tŷ Castell into a boutique hotel and restaurant. £60,000 was used to completely renovate a second property, Tŷ Glyndŵr, to create a bunkhouse, bar and café.

Rebecca Evans said:

“The Town Centre Loan Fund brings empty and derelict sites in town centres back into use. It supports activities that increase footfall on our high streets, tackle empty sites and help businesses to grow and prosper. Once loans are repaid, the money is used again to fund new loans.”

Projects to benefit from the £7.595m announced today include:

- In Gwynedd, a loan of £500,000 will be used to extend the regeneration programme in Caernarfon and Bangor town centres, and to also extend the regeneration work into Bethesda;
- In Rhondda Cynon Taf, £975,000 will be used to help redevelop buildings in Aberdare and Pontypridd town centres;
- and Swansea will benefit from £2,000,000 to regenerate sites across the city centre.