



## How can the Regional Engagement Team help you?

The Swansea Bay Regional Engagement Team (SBRET) is one of four teams set up in Wales to help ensure EU funding proposals meet existing and future opportunities and investments at regional levels.

The SBRET work across the counties of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea, and across all sectors in the region to ensure the effective participation and success of EU funded investments. SBRET supports the region in the delivery of its **economic regeneration strategy** to improve the prospects of our communities, businesses and economy.

If you are considering applying for EU funding, contact us for guidance on how your project can support regional priorities, to make links to other projects and benefit from case studies and examples of best practice.

If you are already delivering an EU funded project, we would be keen to hear about how your projects is progressing. We could also look to feature some of your good news stories in the next newsletter.

## Swansea Bay RET hosts Information Workshop

The Swansea Bay Regional Engagement Team organised an information workshop for the Swansea Bay Employability Group. The Group consists of representatives from Local Authorities, Further and Higher Education Institutions and various other organisations interested in the employability agenda.

The workshop provided an update on the Welsh Government's all Wales Employability Programme (Working Wales), which will provide a cross-Welsh Government approach to employability including the development of new activity and looking at the potential alignment of existing regional employability activity.

Members of the Group also received information on the Work and Health Programme, presented by Remploy Cymru, who will deliver tailored community-based support for people with disability or health conditions and the long-term unemployed to help them develop skills and enter work. The programme will accept referrals from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017.



Investing in people  
European Social Fund

To celebrate 60 years of the European Social Fund, WEFO launched a competition to recognise the success of individuals whose lives have been transformed thanks to EU Funding in Wales.

The winners were announced by the Finance Secretary, Mark Drakeford, at an awards ceremony on 30 November. Look out for our next newsletter where we catch up with some of them.

## Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit

The latest in a series of **Securing Wales' Future** papers setting out Welsh Government's vision for Wales once we have left the EU has been launched.

The publication of the policy paper **Regional Investment in Wales after Brexit** represents the first step in the process of designing a new approach to regional economic development in Wales.

## Regional Employment and Skills Plan unveiled to the Region



In October the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership South West and Mid Wales hosted the 'Our Skills, Our Future: Collaboration is Key' event, attended by over 140 delegates at the Village Hotel Swansea, where the Regional Employment and Skills Plan was formally launched by Julie James AM, Minister for Skills and Science.

The event was an opportunity for industry, education providers, public sector bodies and policy-makers to hear about the most significant challenges and opportunities for the region drawing on the findings from the Skills Plan 2017.

An excellent array of speakers contributed to the successful afternoon. Paul Greenwood, RLSP Chair opened the event with a welcome, setting out the RLSP's achievements over the last year including becoming an employer led partnership, the creation of 7 industry sector groups, engagement with over 300 employers and a high level of engagement with learners. Businesses present were encouraged to promote the importance of engaging with the partnership and to support the work being undertaken. Industry chairs were given the opportunity to outline their respective priorities as outlined in the Skills Plan. These chairs will continue to work alongside the RLSP team and board to address the recommendations set out for the next year.

The afternoon's speakers focused on key challenges highlighted within the plan. Dr Victoria Winckler delivered a lively and engaging presentation on Brexit and what it could mean for our region. Eluned Morgan AM introduced the new 'Rural Wales Time to Meet the Challenge 2025' plan, which highlights the distinctive challenges that the rural economy faces and the importance of the plan in relation to this. Delegates were also given an insight into the transformational Swansea Bay City Deal. Speaking at the event Cllr Emyln Dole, Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council emphasized that the City Deal is the biggest investment to come into South West Wales and is expected to give the region an uplift in its GVA of £1.8billion and will generate almost 10,000 new jobs over the next 15 years. Furthermore, the talk highlighted the 11 projects of the proposal with one being the Skills and Talent initiative led by the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership. The project will ensure that the current and future workforce has the necessary skills to deliver the City Deal proposals.

The key note speech from the Minister for Skills and Science Julie James AM focused on the importance of apprenticeships, skills at all levels and collaboration. She concluded her speech by officially launching the Regional Employment and Skills Plan 2017.

**For more information about the event, pictures, presentations and to view the Employment and Skills Plan click [here](#)**

## Successful Industry-academia collaboration to develop clean, reliable and affordable wave power technology

Demand-led by industry, the multi-University partnership ASTUTE 2020 is working together with the Welsh manufacturing industry to embed advanced and sustainable technologies.

Over the last year, the EU-backed ASTUTE 2020 team at Swansea University has been collaborating with successful Swansea-based start-up Marine Power Systems Ltd. (MPS) on their clean, reliable and affordable wave power technology, the WaveSub. ASTUTE 2020's technical experts and MPS have generated suitable computational models and performed finite element analysis on the float structure of the WaveSub. As a result of this collaboration and further investment from Welsh Government, MPS have now reached a significant milestone and unveiled a 1:4 scale WaveSub prototype on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

*“With the prestigious skills and facilities available from ASTUTE 2020 at the new Swansea University Bay Campus, as well as its philosophy of innovation and advancement, we have full assurance that the research being produced by ASTUTE 2020 will confirm that our design for a power take off float is fully fit for purpose.”* Dr Gareth Stockman, Chief Executive Officer, Marine Power Systems Ltd.

ASTUTE 2020's true industry-academia collaborations provide companies with unique access to:

- World-class academic experts across a University partnership
- Highly qualified researchers and technical experts,
- State-of-the-art research facilities and experimental equipment
- Intelligent systems, advanced techniques and bespoke software

Thereby encouraging stimulation of ideas and facilitating the adoption of change through research, development and innovation.

ASTUTE 2020 can support manufacturing companies across a variety of sectors, such as aerospace, automotive, energy generation, oil and gas, medical devices, electronics, foods, etc., stimulating growth by applying advanced engineering technologies to manufacturing challenges driving cutting-edge research and innovation. ASTUTE 2020 collaborations inspire manufacturing companies to improve and streamline their manufacturing processes, manufactured products and supply chain, generating sustainable, higher value goods and services and bringing them to a global market.

The ASTUTE 2020 operation is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government and the participating Higher Education Institutions.

Click [here](#) for more information on ASTUTE 2020



## High aspirations achieved through Communities for Work programme

Communities for Work (C4W) is a voluntary programme to help those adults furthest away from the labour market into employment. C4W is a Welsh Government programme tackling poverty through sustainable employment in the 52 Communities First Clusters, funded through European Structural Funds.

Kalumn is 26 years old and was first referred to the C4W programme during an outreach exercise via Gwalia Registered Social Landlords. He was facing a number of barriers that prevented him from entering the labour market; he was, until recently, homeless, and he is also an ex-offender. In addition, he has suffered from several mental health issues, including anxiety and depression. Consequently, when he first signed up with the programme Kalumn lacked confidence in approaching potential employers.

After meeting with the Adult Employment Mentor, Kalumn revealed that he wanted to work in construction and that he had past experience in bricklaying, carpentry and plastering. As a result, she enrolled him onto a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) via ACT training. He attended the course and performed very well. As a result of this, the Adult Employment Mentor managed to acquire an interview for Kalumn with Lloyd & Gravell for a two week work placement opportunity. He was very successful in his interview and was offered the two week placement on the basis that he passed his test and attained the CSCS qualification.

He began his placement with Lloyd & Gravell in August 2016 and managed to quickly make a good impression. After only a short period of time, Lloyd & Gravell offered him an interview for a paid position. He attended his interview and was offered a minimum of a 6 month contract for full-time paid employment. This was a huge achievement for Kalumn, given that he lacked confidence and faced so many barriers when he first enrolled onto the programme. Kalumn successfully left the C4W programme in August 2016.

Since then, Kalumn's life has improved immensely. He still works for Lloyd and Gravell and has even taken a pay cut to train professionally as a plasterer. He was able to find his own place to live, has a partner and they welcomed their new baby son into the world in November.



*“I can't believe how my life has changed,” Kalumn said. “I had nothing and now I have a job, a home, a partner and a son. It's amazing. I can't believe it.”*



## Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP)

This programme is funded by the European Union's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and by the Welsh Government.

The following RDP scheme windows for funding are now open:

### Co-operative Forest Planning Scheme

Encouraging planning for the creation of broadleaved and conifer woodland, and contribute to the delivery of the objectives of the Environmental and Rural Affairs Monitoring and Modelling Programme (ERAMMP).

By providing financial support for a range of activities that will support this goal and therefore:

- improve the management of our natural resources
- contribute to the well-being of our rural communities.

The Co-operative Forest Planning Scheme aims to support proposals seeking to facilitate, develop or establish new collaborations and activities and to help potential new collaborations develop project proposals.

**For more information click [here](#)**

### Co-operation and Supply Chain Development

The Co-operation and Supply Chain Development scheme (C&SCDS) is designed to help make new things happen. It will provide support for a broad range of matters and for all aspects of a project, from the initial stages through to delivery and into dissemination and evaluation. The scheme cannot support joint activities which are already taking place but can support an existing group in undertaking a new joint project.

The scheme aims to support the development of new products, practices, processes and technologies in the agriculture, forestry and food sectors,

**For more information click [here](#)**

### Rural Business Investment Scheme - FOOD

The Rural Business Investment Scheme - FOOD (RBISF) is a capital investments scheme to support projects that offer clear and quantifiable benefits to the food and drink industry in Wales. The scheme is open to existing and start up micro & small food and drink processor's and manufacturers throughout Wales.

This is a capital investment scheme for food and drink processing or manufacturing activities currently not eligible under the Food Business Investment Scheme.

The maximum grant for an individual investment project is 40% of the total eligible cost with a maximum of £50,000 for any individual investment project.

**More information can be found [here](#)**

## Find out more about your local RDP LEADER Programmes

Funded through the Rural Development Plan for Wales (2014-2020), the LEADER programme is designed to get local people, businesses and communities involved in delivering sustainable, yet innovative solutions to address some of the economic, social and environmental challenges facing rural areas. In the

A key focus of the LEADER programme is innovation, enabling rural communities to trial and test new ideas and new ways of working for the benefit of the rural economy. The type of activities that the LEADER programme will support include:

- Pilot projects - small scale and time limited activities aimed at testing out a concept or to try an innovative technique
- Feasibility studies to undertake research into finding new solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges facing rural areas
- The pre-commercialisation of new products and processes
- Facilitation and mentoring support to organisations, businesses and groups to help develop their skills and expertise

Activities supported under LEADER must be linked to one of the following 5 themes:

- \* Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources;
- \* Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains;
- \* Exploring new ways of providing non statutory local services;
- \* Renewable energy at community level;
- \* Exploitation of digital technology

For a flavour of the types of LEADER projects funded across Wales check out the Wales Rural Network [website](#).

**Local Action Groups across the region are administering LEADER funding – if you have an innovative idea that fits into one of the themes please contact your local LEADER team:**

Pembrokeshire

Carmarthenshire

Swansea

Neath Port Talbot



## Arwain Sir Benfro supports £32,063.00 of funding for - LEAF Project

Arwain Sir Benfro - the Local Action Group (LAG) for Pembrokeshire, administered by PLANED - have recently provided funding to Tir Coed. This is funded through the LEADER programme, which is part of the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014 – 2020, Funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.



The LEAF (Learning to Enable Achievement and Fulfilment) Project is designed to enable deep-rooted change in each participant's life, offering bespoke progression that works with the skills and aspirations of the individual. This project empowers individuals to help themselves to become independent.

Amongst the services LEAF offers across Pembrokeshire are intensive week training programmes, activity days, mentoring support into work

placements, mentoring into self-employment, an Agored Cymru workbook to be developed and piloted and cross-county learning by piloting different partnerships in Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire.

Via a woodland environment and learning experiences tailored to specific groups; self-esteem will be boosted and individuals given real practical and transferable skills, by these actions, society will ultimately be strengthened.

Work undertaken by volunteers will improve the aesthetic value of the landscape, important to people and supportive to wildlife, and will foster more community pride and enjoyment of the locality.



*Working with communities, delivering for Pembrokeshire*



*Cydweithio gyda chymunedau, cyflawni dros Sir Benfro*

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## Erasmus+

### 2018 Erasmus+ funding call now open

€2.7 billion of European funding available for education, training, youth and sport projects - more than ever before.

For deadlines, programme guide and more information click [here](#)

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## HORIZON 2020

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020) – in addition to the private investment that this money will attract. It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

On 27 October 2017, the European Commission presented the final Work Programme for Horizon 2020, covering the budgetary years 2018, 2019 and 2020 and representing an investment of around €30 billion.

For more information click [here](#)

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## Creative Europe

The Creative Europe programme aims to support the European audiovisual, cultural and creative sector.

The different funding schemes encourage the audiovisual, cultural and creative players to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills needed in the digital age.

For more information and open calls click [here](#)

### Contact Us

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