



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.

Preparing Wales to leave the EU



The UK and EU have agreed a further extension to the UK leaving the EU. The UK will now leave the EU on 31st January 2020, but could leave earlier if both the UK and the EU approve and sign the withdrawal agreement.

The Welsh Government are preparing for both an agreed exit and a no deal exit from the EU, taking action to protect the interests of Wales and its people.

This [website](#) sets out advice for citizens, organisations and sectors across Wales about the steps that need to be taken to prepare to leave the EU and will be updated regularly.

The [No deal action plan](#) sets out the Welsh Government's view of the potential implications of a no deal Brexit. It explains the actions taken to reduce their impact as far as possible.

In the event of leaving the EU without a deal or transition period, there would be no change in the existing arrangements for beneficiaries of current EU-funded projects.

This applies to all aspects of managing the projects including the submission and payment of claims, verification checks and, importantly, retention of relevant records. For Further information see:

[No deal Brexit and EU funded projects](#)

WEFO Annual Event



Bookings are now open for WEFO's annual event in Cardiff on 28th November, 9:30am –1:00pm. The Welsh Government's Brexit Minister, Jeremy Miles AM, will address the event this year as our keynote speaker. Other sessions include a panel discussion involving representatives from a range of sectors which will be chaired by Huw Irranca-Davies AM in his capacity as Chair of the Programme Monitoring Committee for EU Structural Funds and the Regional Investment in Wales Steering Group.

Email wefo-communications@gov.wales to book your place

Regional Performance Data

The table below gives headline figures of the performance of ESI funded operations across the Swansea Bay Region. You can find out more information on how Wales is benefiting from EU funds [here](#).

Performance Indicator	Figures for the South West Region
Enterprises Assisted ¹	1,996
Enterprises Created ²	414
Jobs Created ³	3,601
Participants Assisted	50,229
Participants Supported into Employment	4,297
Participants Gaining Qualifications	19,185
Participants in education / training	724

Source: WEFO, 31/08/2019

¹ Aggregate of the Enterprises receiving non-financial support indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

² Aggregate of the New enterprises supported indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

³ Aggregate of the Employment increase in supported enterprises indicators under the ERDF Operational Programmes

Leading Businesswomen Help Launch Major New Skills Plan

West Wales-based Kathryn Austin, a senior owner of Pizza Hut in the UK, and Catrin Jones, a co-director the award-winning Crwst café and bakery in Cardigan, were both keynote speakers at the launch of the Regional Employment and Skills Plan for South West and Mid Wales. Hundreds of businesses attended the launch event, which was held at the Ffos Las Racecourse in Carmarthenshire on Thursday October 24.

Developed by the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) for South West and Mid Wales for the next three years, the new employment and skills plan has been informed by extensive consultation with the business community. Views were sought on the skills employers currently need, as well as the skills they'll need in coming years thanks to major investments like the £1.3 billion Swansea Bay City Deal and the Mid-Wales Growth Deal. The report has found that learning pathways and workplace readiness should be improved for priority sectors including digital, creative industries, energy, advanced manufacturing, engineering, construction, health and social care, financial services, leisure, tourism and hospitality.

The new plan was officially launched by Llanelli AM Lee Waters, the Welsh Government's Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport. Its findings will now help inform Welsh Government decisions on funding for further education and work-based learning.

Mr. Waters said: "We are living in challenging and uncertain times, which is why having clear regional priorities in place is absolutely vital to our future prosperity. As a government, we want to see a regionally-focused model of economic development which will encourage growth throughout Wales.

"Regional Skills Partnerships are crucial in achieving this, and plans such as the one launched will help identify the areas and talent we need to develop over the coming years to grow our economy."



Jane Lewis, RLSP Manager for South West and Mid Wales, said: "We enormously appreciate the contributions of everyone in attendance at the launch event, including Kathryn and Catrin, who are both inspirational role models for businesspeople and entrepreneurs. "Informed by feedback from close to a thousand businesses, industry cluster groups and partner organisations, this plan will help the Welsh Government deliver a post-16 learning environment that meets the needs of learners, industry and providers. "Guiding the work of the Regional

Learning and Skills Partnership for the next three years, the plan is also aimed at improving the economic well-being of South West and Mid Wales, while retaining our young talent through the creation of high-quality job opportunities

close to home. "But as well as meeting the needs of businesses now, we've also mapped out what their skills requirements are likely to be in coming years due to factors like further demand for digital skills, coupled with the growth of sectors including the creative industries and major forthcoming investments like the Swansea Bay City Deal and Mid-Wales Growth Deal. "It's vital that learning, apprenticeships and work-based placements align to the needs of local industry both now and in future to ensure our young people have the skills they'll need to succeed in the priority sectors we've identified. "This is also why a **Skills and Talent initiative** forms part of the Swansea Bay City Deal to enable pathways into employment opportunities the investment programme will generate."



Over 200 businesses were represented at the launch event. Business Wales and the Department for Work and Pensions were among the exhibitors, with workshops led by Jisc, Red Rock International and the National Training Federation for Wales. Also present at the event were four young apprentice tradespeople from Coleg Sir Gar, Gower College Swansea and Pembrokeshire College who recently competed at the World Skills Championship in Kazan, Russia.

Mrs Lewis said: "There is so much innovation happening across South West and Mid Wales, with examples including a regional Homes as Power Stations project forming part of the Swansea Bay City Deal, the development of hydrogen powered cars in Powys, the growth of the marine energy sector in Pembrokeshire, and research at Aberystwyth University into the viability of seaweed as a renewable energy source. "These are just a few examples of many hugely positive developments are that are either under way or in the pipeline, but the new employment and skills plan is a key vehicle in supporting this innovation to ensure these changes create more prosperous local communities."

Visit www.rlp.org.uk for more information or contact the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership on 01554 742431.

Swansea Bay City Deal



Swansea Digital Indoor Arena

An £18 million funding boost will very soon arrive to kick-start the £1.3 billion Swansea Bay City Deal programme of investment in South West Wales. The UK Government and Welsh Government have now issued draft terms and conditions attached to the release of the first phase of City Deal funding, which is based on the approval of the Yr Egin and Swansea City and Waterfront Digital District projects.

This funding could be released in coming weeks, subject to City Deal partner organisations approving the draft terms and conditions. Phase one of the Yr Egin project is already up and running at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Carmarthen campus, with a second phase of the development soon planned.

In Swansea, the City Deal project includes a digital indoor arena, a digital village for tech businesses, and a box village and innovation precinct development for start-up businesses.

The City Deal's Joint Committee has also approved the £60 million Pembroke Dock Marine project for submission to the UK Government and Welsh Government for final sign-off. Led by the private sector and supported by Pembrokeshire County Council, Pembroke Dock Marine is expected to be worth over 1,800 jobs and £73.5 million a year to the Swansea Bay City Region's economy. Aimed at placing Pembrokeshire at the heart of global marine energy innovation, the project is made up of several elements. These include infrastructure improvements at Pembroke Port, a Marine Energy Test Area, the Pembrokeshire Demonstration Zone, and a Marine Energy Engineering Centre of Excellence.

A first phase of the Marine Energy Test Area was opened for business in September, 2019. Other City Deal projects due for submission to Joint Committee for consideration before Christmas include a revised Wellness Village development planned for Llanelli, as well as a re-modelled suite of Neath Port Talbot projects that focus on innovation, zero-carbon fuel and the future of steel.

Funded by the UK Government, the Welsh Government, the public sector and the private sector, the Swansea Bay City Deal is being led by Carmarthenshire Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Pembrokeshire Council and Swansea Council, in partnership with Swansea University, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea Bay University Health Board and Hywel Dda University Health Board. The investment programme is worth £1.8 billion and over 9,000 jobs to the Swansea Bay City Region in coming years.

A number of pan-region projects also form part of the City Deal. These include a digital infrastructure project to boost digital connectivity in all parts of South West Wales, and a Skills and Talent Initiative that will put pathways in place to enable local people to access the high-quality jobs being created.

Helping to tackle fuel poverty while meeting the need for more housing, a Homes as Power Stations project is also planned throughout the Swansea Bay City Region as a whole.

Visit www.swanseabaycitydeal.wales for more information.

You can also keep up to date with City Deal news by following @SBCityDeal on Twitter and Facebook.

Swansea Business secures £12 million EU funds for wave power project

More than £12 million of EU funding will be invested in a major scheme to generate clean energy from ocean waves



The funding will support the next stage of Swansea-based Marine Power Systems' project to create and launch an underwater device capable of generating clean, affordable and reliable energy in Wales and around the world.

The WaveSub device is the invention of Swansea University graduates Dr Gareth Stockman and Dr Graham Foster, who founded Marine Power Systems in 2008.

Drawing on patented technology developed by the company, the device operates under the surface of the sea by capturing the high power density of ocean waves.

Following successful testing of a quarter-scale WaveSub, today's investment will allow the company to develop a full-scale prototype, paving the way for the device to be launched on the market.

The Welsh Government has been working with Marine Power Systems to support the development of this technology and the WaveSub concept.

Announcing the £12.8 million EU funding during a visit to the company today, First Minister Mark Drakeford said:

"We want Wales to be a leading player in the marine energy sector. This means supporting Welsh developers like Marine Power Systems; continuing to attract developers from around the world to Wales and exporting our knowledge, technology and services globally.

WaveSub is a pioneering project and today's investment allows the company to take a major step towards these goals. This is excellent news for the marine energy industry in Wales."

In addition to EU funding, the next stage of the WaveSub project will also be funded through a £5.5 million investment opportunity, to be raised by Marine Power Systems over the coming months.

Read more [here](#)

The Plaza re-development



The aim of the Plaza redevelopment is to bring the derelict former cinema back into economic use by providing a facility that will create jobs, encourage economic growth and contribute to the tackling poverty agenda.

Richard Burton was a regular visitor to the cinema which opened in 1940 and closed in 1999.

In 2017, Michael Sheen produced a BBC Radio Four documentary on the Plaza entitled Port Talbot Paradiso with contributions from the likes of actor, writer and panel show host Rob Brydon and opera singer Rebecca Evans

The building is located in Port Talbot town centre, adjacent to excellent public transport links via the newly refurbished Parkway Station and the new Integrated Transport Hub.

The facility will provide flexible business incubator facilities; office / meeting / training rooms; multi-purpose areas for community use; a café / training kitchen facility; and flexible space for community use e.g. social enterprises.

This scheme has received approval in principle from the Welsh Government's Building for the Future Programme, which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

Read more [here](#)

£6.6 million EU Funding to Support Gower College Swansea Employability Programme

Gwell Swyddi
Gwell Dyfodol

Better Jobs
Better Futures

5 new projects, part of the 'Better Jobs, Better Futures' programme, will be delivered by Gower College Swansea, in partnership with local employers.

The programme is targeted at people who are unemployed, under-employed or in lower paid jobs, and will offer a range of individualised support including coaching, mentoring, work placements, and opportunities to achieve qualifications.

The Better Jobs, Better Futures projects will aim to boost career prospects and skill levels for more than 3000 people over the next 2 years, helping to reduce poverty and disadvantage in the Swansea area.

Support will focus on under-employed women, over 25s with low skills or work limiting health conditions, young people, and under-employed people facing disadvantages such as disabilities or childcare responsibilities.

Around 120 employers will also receive support through the programme to develop more inclusive and flexible workplace practices.

Counsel General and Brexit Minister Jeremy Miles, who oversees EU funding in Wales, said:

"The Better Jobs, Better Futures suite of projects support the creation of a vibrant and responsive regional workforce with the skills to respond to the needs of a knowledge-based economy.

Welsh Government is committed to making Wales a more prosperous and secure place to live and work. This is another example of EU funds supporting partner organisations to future-proof the regional economy."

Mark Jones, Principal of Gower College Swansea, said:

Gower College Swansea is delighted to be leading this programme which builds on one of our key priorities – the delivery of employability skills – whilst meeting the specific needs of our local Swansea communities.

More information on the projects can be found [here](#)

Community Work Scheme Boosted by EU Funds

The Active Inclusion Fund, managed by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), has been awarded an additional £11.5 million from the European Social Fund.

The funding will enable third sector organisations across Wales to deliver community-based projects aimed at raising the skills and employability of people who have been out of work for more than 6 months or affected by factors such as work limiting health conditions or mental health issues.

The fund also provides paid work placements for up to 26 weeks designed to support the transition into sustainable employment.

The Active Inclusion Fund was launched in 2015 and has already supported over 11,000 people. The additional EU funding will now provide support to a further 8,700 people over the next 3 years, including around 3,000 young people.

Read the full press release [here](#) and visit the website [here](#)

£29 million EU Funding to Break Down Employment Barriers

The Communities for Work and Parents Childcare and Employment (PaCE) programmes, which are delivered in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), local authorities and the third sector, will now be extended to June 2022 following a £29m EU funds investment.

An additional £23.4 million of EU funding will be provided for the CfW programme, with an extra £5.6 million for PaCE. This will bring EU, Welsh Government and DWP investment in the 2 programmes to £123 million over their lifetime.

CfW supports those furthest from the labour market, and living in the most deprived communities in Wales, where there is a realistic prospect of moving them closer to work and into employment. Meanwhile PaCE specifically supports parents into training or employment where childcare is their main barrier.

Since their introduction in 2015, the Welsh Government's Community Employability Programmes, which are made up of CfW, PaCE and Communities for Work Plus, have been accessed by nearly 35,000 people in Wales and have helped nearly 12,000 people into employment. Read more [here](#)

Contact Us

Swansea Bay Regional Engagement Team,
Business Resource Centre,
Ty Parcyrhun,
Ammanford.
SA18 3EP

01554 742473 / swanseabayret@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

