

Notes of Regional Tourism Forum North Wales

06.03.24

10:30 -12:30

Yr Ysgol Busnes / The Business School

Coleg Cambria Northop Site

Attendees: Michael Bewick (MB), Suzie Davies WTA (SD), Bethan Morris IOACC (BM), Jo Smith DMP Flintshire (JS), Steven Jones Cyngor Gwynedd (SJ), Richard Jones FCC (RJ), Joe Bickerton WCBC (JB), Catherine Williams WATO (CW), Frankie Hobbro WAVA (FH), Peter Mc Dermott DCC (PM), Clare Sharples CCBC (CS), Ash Pearce NRW (AP), Phil Nelson VW (PN), Caryl Jones VW (CJ), Claire Carew VW (CC), Andrew Forfar VW (AF)

Apologies: Jim Jones NWT, Sian P Jones Cyngor Gwynedd, Andy Godber IOACC, Jasmin Ryan CCBC, Ioan Gwilym Eryri NP, Nigel Treacy, Sam Reagan

Welcome

MB welcomed guests AP, FH & SD to the Forum and introductions were made.

Round table update

RJ from FCC updated on behalf of the NE and CS from CCBC on behalf of the NW – please see appendix 1 & 2 below.

MB asked about LA budgets for 2024/2025. All LAs stated that budgets were not set but they would be lower.

CW from SA reported that the winter is generally quieter for the outdoor sector, however, anecdotally things are picking up with bigger groups returning, including corporates. She added that Adventure Smart would be expanding to an online module for all businesses to help instigate and promote safety in the outdoors. CW added that she had attended an Allyship course recognising underrepresented groups participating in the outdoors. Please see <https://allyship.openinguptheoutdoors.com/>

MB added that they had been undertaking their own research and found that their customers were looking for outdoor experiences more and more.

FH reported the visitor numbers were circa 30% down across the sector. Some major attractions had closed and the ongoing energy costs, staffing costs and cost of living crisis a concern. NWT and WAVA report a number of attractions may not open this season. Less visitors arriving and cutting their discretionary spend. FH stated that a number of WAVA members with attractions both in Wales and other areas of the UK were reporting lower and decreasing visitor numbers at their Welsh attractions. She was also concerned about the 'welcome' messaging post covid. Smaller businesses were being bought out by larger corporations and the identity and character of these businesses are being lost. Issues of NDR now looming.

MB added that it looked like the season was compressing.

JS stated that some lifestyle businesses were closing due to changing policy. Many are small quality businesses that input into the local economy. Visitors spending patterns were changing with more B&B guests opting for takeaway meals rather than eating out.

A discussion around the fact that the impact of several micro businesses closing can have as much impact on local economies as one larger business. MB added that larger business closure gets the attention of Government whilst lots of micro businesses closing gets little to no attention, yet the effects on the economy can be as great.

SD agreed. She added we are looking at two different stories, LAs announcing town centre regeneration projects yet small businesses reporting closures with local character being eroded. It would be good hear those two stories coming together with the regeneration work enabling and helping small businesses to thrive. We need to understand why the Welcome to Wales messaging isn't getting thorough and maybe the Ambassador programme may help with this. That said it is good to hear the positive messages coming out of this meeting. CW said whilst we hear of places closing there are examples of investment and new developments in the region.

Update from VW

CC joined via video link and updated on the Development and Engagement side of Visit Wales.

CC also gave an update on the timetable around the election of the new FM.

Recycling – info in newsletters re webinars

<https://businessofrecycling.wrapcymru.org.uk/resources/navigating-the-future-waste-regulations-webinars>

CJ presented on the VW marketing activity.

CJ encouraged members to send any information on new product or activity to the product information mailbox Productnews@gov.wales and to share content with us.

Levy Working Group update

Due to time constraints this item was omitted.

VW Research

PN gave an update on VW research and future plans. He reminded the Forum that a full update had been given at the Autumn Roadshow in Llangollen and that all publications have been updated online.

We have certain requirements about what data is collected for Welsh Government, official stats for monitoring purposes, market demand supply side research and visitor experience monitoring and performance matrices.

With respect to the GB tourism survey Q2 & Q3 data for 2023 had to be re-run due to quality of data collected and will now be published late March.

The Day Visitor Survey information was published in December and full data will be published at the end of March 24

- To date, January to Sept 23 there were circa 127.5m leisure day trips to Wales resulting in a £3.9b spend
- 34% of those were tourism related trips generating circa £1.8b spend and are circa 8% lower than 2022
- The figures reflect comments made today

Historically we have been able to publish rolling LA level data, however, because of Covid and methodological changes it will be about another year before we are able to publish rolling average figures again. We are currently piloting a new method of LA level data collection by using a machine learning algorithm on an AI platform, combining several different data sources. This will allow for predictive visitor number and spend levels. It will be business focused and we will update on this later in the year. We will be trialling this in Pembrokeshire with the aim of rolling it out across Wales in due course.

International Passenger Survey

- 2023 data will be out in April
- Q3 2023 figures down 8% pre covid, a figure that is roughly the same in other parts of the UK apart from Scotland
- Spend reached £201m in Wales just above the 2019 values but we need to caveat that this does not take into account inflation. In real terms spend is down
- Overall, 2023 750k inbound visits to Wales 10% down on 2019 £390M spend
- 2023 occupancy report will be published early April

The latest UK Sentiment Tracker published in 2024 shows perceptions regarding the cost-of-living crisis have fallen slightly. Intentions to travel continue to rise but there is a disparity between intention and action, possible down to people wanting to go on holiday but deciding they can't afford to travel. These insights are published on the VB website <https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights>

Latest **Tourism Barometer** will be published 12/03/2024 [here](#) (English) and [here](#) (Cymraeg)

Latest **Market Demand Survey** for UK and Ireland will be published soon.

SD asked a question relating to predictive analysis and security. PN stated that it will not hold individual data as it will use what is publicly available already, transport, TfW data etc. Any data provided by individual businesses will only be visible to themselves and will not be sold or shared with other organisations.

Proposed National Park for NE Wales

AP gave a presentation on the proposed new National Park for NE Wales.

MB asked that business adjacent to park be consulted and in terms of, Eryri itself drives so much in terms of visitor traffic and the infrastructure in the area.

PM the business and residents just outside the park i.e. Rhyl need to understand the benefits. AP stated that the consultation would endeavour to reach those audiences.

APPENDIX 1 – Update from NE Wales

DENBIGHSHIRE UPDATE

Rhyl TIC Rhyl Museum co relocation

Good progress has been made with the consultants (Planning Solutions Consulting) who are carrying out a feasibility study on DCC's behalf. A draft copy has been distributed to stakeholders for feedback. Final version of the study is expected by mid-March 2024.

Denbighshire Tourism Forum

Due to current spending constraints it has not been possible to hold our usual in-person March Tourism Forum. Instead, the tourism team have arranged two on-line forums:

Guest speakers on the Thursday (21/03/2024) Forum include Gwen Davies of Vale Vineyard, who will be sharing details of her journey to become the first grape farmer in the Vale of Clwyd followed by Tom Taylor of Llangollen Railway winners of the Go North Wales Tourism Awards Attraction of the Year 2023.

Then on Friday (24/03/2024) the guest speakers are Rob Price from Ruthin Festival who are Celebrating 30 years in 2024 and Gail Swan who will be telling the story behind Swans Farm Shop a traditional hill farm and award-winning farm shop in Treuddyn which is about 4 miles from Mold.

We plan to hold a traditional in-person Tourism forum in October 2024.

Wales Tourism Ambassadors

Conwy are leading on the admin of the Wales Ambassador programme this year.

Denbighshire attended the first all-Wales Ambassador group meeting of the year in January and are continuing to work with partners on deciding joint activity in the coming year and other areas including site security and getting feedback from existing ambassadors.

New Ambassadors Coastal Path Module. The National Trail Team have offered to create a module focussed the Wales Coast Path, the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path, Offa's Dyke Path and the Glyndwr Path (at their cost), we have agreed to have the module on the Denbighshire Tourism Ambassador course.

We'll also be looking at further developing our content in the new financial year.

Some marketing activity in this quarter:

We've created a number of blogs on the North East Wales website written by the author Julie Bromilow-Nicklen. These are of particular interest as all of her visits are by public transport. We're keen to encourage our visitors to explore the county via bus and train and Julie's pieces demonstrate this is possible. They contain detailed information on the bus routes used too.

Created a feature on St David's Day in the period running up to it using VW resources.

In the next financial year, we are planning on highlighting events and festivals from spring into autumn.

[UK Government Minister optimistic for the future of Rhyl](#)

Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, visits Rhyl and Ruthin 27/02/2024.

Levelling Up Round 2

Latest progress updates from 10 projects based in and around **Ruthin**.

St. Peter's Church and Cloisters

- A public event was held on the 11 February to showcase the projects that Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area of Ruthin are working on, including their Clwyd West Levelling Up funded project.
- You can view a walk-through of the plans for this project [here](#).

Clock Tower

- Project continues to make progress, surveys of the structure and checks for asbestos have been completed, these were to ensure that no asbestos is present as well as checking that no further dilapidation had occurred ahead of submitting an application for tender.

Loggerheads & Moel Famau

- News Release: [Exciting developments coming to Loggerheads and Moel Famau in 2024!](#)

Ruthin Gaol/46 Clwyd Street

- Design team have been working design options for the project with a view to the project board agreeing to one final design that can then be shared with the public around Springtime.

Nantclwyd y Dre

- Nantclwyd y Dre is home to a maternal roost of Lesser Horseshoe Bats, this means that the project team and its designs need to be mindful of the breeding and hibernation periods and to ensure that the project works do not interfere with their habitat. The Project Team have completed the initial surveys to study the numbers of bats roosting at Nantclwyd y Dre and their movements etc. with a further emergence survey to be carried out in Spring to further inform the works programme.
- Design team have been working on the design options for the West Wing of Nantclwyd y Dre, options will be presented to the Project Board with a view to sharing the preferred option with the public around Springtime.

St Peter's Square

- The Project Team have been working on a design option for St Peter's Square.
- A Road Safety Audit has been carried out, the design and reports will be taken to Project Board for a decision by the end of Feb.
- Public Consultation on preferred design option will take place in Springtime.

Cae Ddol

- Bridge inspections have been completed at Cae Ddol to look at the state of repair and to show what works may be needed to future proof these routes within the park.
- Tree Surveys have been carried out to enable the project to map out a potential active travel route.
- A master plan has been drafted to plan out the proposed areas of work and as Cae Ddol and the visuals from the master plan will be available for the public consultation to take place in Springtime.

Bryneglwys

- Drainage and Heating surveys have been carried out, the Project Team now have heating options with trustees deciding on the best cost effective and environmentally friendly for the site.
- Project Team is aiming to go out to tender to find a contractor to undertake the works needed to complete the project in March.

Gwyddelwern

- Project Team held a meeting to consult with stakeholders about the plans for the project. The project received positive feedback and some good ideas for the project were shared at the meeting.

Information about delivery plans for individual Clwyd West Levelling Up projects have been added to the Denbighshire County Council website - view dedicated webpage [here](#).

All delivery plan milestones are provisional and are based on best information at this stage in the project's development. The webpage will be updated if information changes.

FLINTSHIRE UPDATE

Destination Management Plan 2024-2026

Draft DM Plan will be going to FCCs Cabinet – to hopefully be adopted (provisionally June 2024). The plan will be a framework for tourism development in the County and should help in raising the profile of the visitor economy across the Council.

There are several work streams currently underway which are contributing to the delivery of the Destination Management Plan, including:

1. Development of the Flintshire Coast Park funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund in addition to the day-to-day management of the coast for local people and visitors by the Council. (Improving visibility of county boundary signs and network of tourist signs)
2. Thanks to Brilliant Basics Fund we are improving regionally recognised trails in Flintshire and associated infrastructure.
3. Development of Place Making Plans funded through a combination of Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.
4. Tourism grant programme funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.
5. Town centre events and activities grants funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.
6. Business decarbonisation projects funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.
7. Development work in Greenfield Valley funded through UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.
8. Activities by individual town councils to improve and promote their towns for visitors and to run or support events.
9. Day to day promotion of the County to visitors at both local and regional level.

Wales Tourism Ambassadors

One broad aim of the DMP is to increase the number of Flintshire Ambassadors to 500.

We'll also be looking at further developing our content in the new financial year to add a least 3 new modules for Ambassadors to reach the Gold Award.

Flintshire Tourism Association

FTA has secured external funding from Antur Cymru to host several "sustainability" networking events for tourism-related businesses in North Wales between March and June this year.

Subject areas are going to include: - (using a specialist delivery provider)

Eventbrite links below for sharing and to register.

Monday 12 March - Waste Regulations

<https://urlsand.esvalabs.com/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2F828302594357%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&e=6ab4c3f7&h=29bf394a&f=y&p=n>

Monday 08 April - Understanding Environmental Sustainability

<https://urlsand.esvalabs.com/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2F838469614187%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&e=6ab4c3f7&h=ecc8d819&f=y&p=n>

Monday 13 May - Understanding Net-Zero and What This Means for Your Business

<https://urlsand.esvalabs.com/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2F838481479677%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&e=6ab4c3f7&h=d83465ee&f=y&p=n>

Tuesday 04 June - The Circular Economy - Where Materials Never Become Waste and Nature Regenerates.

<https://urlsand.esvalabs.com/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2Fe%2F838480256017%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&e=6ab4c3f7&h=26d7cc67&f=y&p=n>

Wednesday 19 June - Fire Safety Legal Update

<https://urlsand.esvalabs.com/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2Fe%2F838476524857%3Faff%3Doddtdtcreator&e=6ab4c3f7&h=8f71ede7&f=y&p=n>

WREXHAM UPDATE

Held our 6-monthly Wrexham Tourism Forum last Wednesday at Xplore! Science museum in the City Centre with over 70 businesses represented.

Main tourism projects underway at present;

- Working with Maximum Effort and Wrexham AFC to establish the Ryan Reynolds Park in the City Centre by end of 2024
- New City Centre walking / football / food tours all in place having started – or about to start this Spring
- Tourism Ambassador Gold modules released this month – with a celebration day for all Level one Coleg Cambria hospitality students and mayor at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in March
- Levelling-up work at Trevor Basin on schedule to finish by December 2024, including new liftbridge, boat hire centre, public access steps and walkways opening up viewpoints and new visitor car park / signage. In addition, Pontcysyllte aqueduct to re-open from Monday 18th March.
- New 'Welcome to the City and County Borough of Wrexham' signs starting to go up this week on 21 A-roads around the County thanks to Brilliant Basics.
- Wrexham group attractions starting package discussions to add products to TXGB this year
- Just hosted a fam-trip for UNITED airlines last Friday to Wrexham and on Saturday, Bran-Hansen (largest tour operator out of Norway) visited with a view to adding Wrexham to their sports itineraries from August 2024.
- STEAM data collection to finish this month, with reports expected late April / early May for 2023.
- Welcome to Wrexham series 3 trailer shot in town last week with Luke Evans, Rob McElenhenney and Prince William, airing on Disney+ in April

APPENDIX 2 – Update from NW Wales

NW Forum Conwy update – Joint Feedback for Gwynedd, Anglesey & Conwy.

Brilliant Basics Fund Projects

Gwynedd projects 2023/2024/5

Two successful bids presented to draw down Brilliant Basics 2023 – 2024 Rd3 Funding to upgrade coastal facilities at Dinas Dinlle and public toilets at key destinations.

Maritime - Beach safety in Gwynedd

Additional safety signs have been positioned along the coastline advising beach users of local dangers, and we are currently in the process of upgrading beach maps and pamphlets in preparation for the main summer season.

In recent years we have seen a deterioration in the condition of the beach car park at Dinas Dinlle, near Caernarfon and following a successful application for funding from the 'Brilliant Basics Fund', work finally commenced on the upgrade of the car park.

The improvements include:

- Resurfacing of the existing car park with 'grasscrete' material and marking out dedicated parking spaces
- Modify the layout of the car park into two main parts and introduce a one-way for traffic safety purposes
- Provide a bus shelter and lay by for public transport services
- Provide picnic areas, Cycle racks & bins and recycling facilities
- Improvements to retaining walls, railings and landscaping

The work is due to be completed by the end of March 2024.

Arosfan Scheme in Gwynedd

Brilliant Basics funding was secured in order to improve the management of motor homes and tackle illegal parking and camping issues across the county with the roll out of four "Aires" style facilities. The site at the maes car park Cricieth is the first of four sites to be opened by Cyngor Gwynedd. The Arosfan scheme offers sites specifically for motor home owners to stay up to 48 hours similar to the Aires model on the continent.

Work is nearing completion at the Glyn Arosfan site at Parc Padarn Llanberis, the North Quay, Pwllheli site & the Doc Fictoria car park (old Shell site), Caernarfon.

Hand in hand with the Arosfan scheme the Authority has also issued enforcement notices which prevents motor homes from parking illegally over night at lay bys on the A496 route near Barmouth, on the A497 near Cricieth and the Y Foryd area near Caernarfon. The action has been undertaken following the increase in illegal parking and camping overnight near the main tourism destinations.

Conwy

- **Llandudno Promenade shelters and colonnades** which, despite a delayed start on the project, the project is progressing well. A tender exemption was approved and contracts awarded for the replacement of the shelters. The work on the shelters has started: The first shelter is complete, the second is

up and has the roof going on next week and the third shelter has the base in as it due to be put up by the end of next week. There has been an initial site visit to assess the Colonnades and a fee proposal is being prepared for the consultancy team overseeing the project and paperwork is being drawn up for the procurement of a structural survey.

- **Destination and directional signage** - audit work has started for the directional signage element (focused on fingerpost signage) which is expected to be completed by the end of March 2024. A consultation event was held in February 2024 and there is an active online survey which will close on the 14th March. In terms of destination signage, Following a Sell2Wales tender process, the Creative Producer contract has been awarded. A project steering group has been set up and inception meetings have taken place. An initial workshop took place with children and young people at the Take pArt event at Venue Cymru. Good turnout with 80 people engaged with over the weekend. The information gathered will be used to shape the main programme of workshops.
- **In Anglesey**, The Brilliant Basics project work almost complete on public conveniences in Beaumaris, Moelfre, Rhosneigr and Traeth Bychan.

Levelling Up Fund

- Levelling Up Fund progressing with projects in Holyhead
 - Uchedlre centre
 - Improvements to cinema
 - New kiosks on newry beach
 - St Cybis church improvements
- SPF Stage 2 applications have been approved (single LA and multi LA applications)
- Freeport development progressing

Slate Landscape in Gwynedd

The Slate Landscape WHS has been continuing the work on the Levelling Up project focussing on the creation of cultural hubs and facilities in Llanberis, Bethesda and Blaenau Ffestiniog, along with conservation works and town Centre improvements.

They have also secured SPF funding for town Centre improvements in Penygroes, Porthmadog and Tywyn meaning that all 6 of the main towns within the destination will see projects such as public art installations, improved signage, new welcome signs and small scale infrastructure projects taking place.

The WHS have been working on presenting a full application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund by February 2024. If successful, this will be a £1.75m project across the WHS to support community activities, offer training and volunteering opportunities, support businesses and improved marketing and interpretation.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Business Support Team and Llechi Cymru are organising an event on **Friday 08 March 2024** at ZipWorld, Chwarel Penrhyn. An opportunity to:

- Find out how businesses are engaging with The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site
- Find out about the latest support available to businesses.

- Visit Chwarel Penrhyn - guided tour.

Shared Prosperity Fund Project Conwy

- Improving and futureproofing the visitor economy – The project has a number of elements including:
 - The production of a winter tourism marketing campaign
 - Feasibility study to improve the night-time economy
 - Development of networking events for Conwy Tourism Ambassadors
 - Development of local trails, and
 - Support for the Tourist Information Centre online shop.
- Working Word won the winter tourism marketing contract, alongside Follow Films for photography and videography. Work has started in this area (radio campaign, social media campaign, influencer visit, and photography and videography production).
- Savills have been appointed to conduct the night time feasibility study. Will be completed early June from which an action plan will be created for the development of recommendations up until December 2024.
- Other tenders and contracts live on Sell2Wales or in process of appointing.

Town Centre Regeneration

- The process of establishing the Regeneration Framework for Gwynedd has identified the regeneration of town centres as a priority.
- Town Centre Regeneration is also a priority project within the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028.
- To ensure a vision is established and priority projects identified for the Gwynedd's towns, Place Making Plans are being developed. Work has been completed at Bangor, Caernarfon and Porthmadog and is underway for Pwllheli, Dolgellau and Bala. The intention is to ensure that all the County's main towns have a strategic direction. This complements Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Programme. Investments will be made in several town centres during 2024 with SPF funding.
- Conwy are also working with Colwyn Bay Town Council to develop their Place Plan further. They have received some development funding from Transforming Towns to host workshops on the six main themes in their plan and develop these further. These sessions will be complete by March 2024.
- Conwy are working with Menter Mon and a number of town councils to develop a Smart Towns Project bid, to install free Wi-Fi in a number of our town centres. We hope to be in a position to submit that for Transforming Towns funding by April 2024.
- The work to remove asbestos in the former M&S building on Mostyn Street Llandudno is being completed. The building is due to be handed back to Mostyn Estates today.

Destination Management

- Destination Management Plan for Anglesey has now been adopted by the County Council. Next steps will be creating an Action plan and delivery partnership.

- Destination Conwy Partnership Work is continuing work with the Partnership to produce an Action Plan to sit alongside the revised strategy which was launched November last year. The first meeting was in February 2024 and Jasmin is also meeting with chairs later today to structure a plan going forward.

Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Strategy 2035

- Work is in progress to set up new partnership, finalising the yr 1 action plan and monitoring outputs.
- Industry, community and partner meetings being programmed for March and April 2024.
- A successful UK Shared Prosperity bid to fund elements of the sustainable tourism priorities, including a new events support fund. Three rounds of events funding have been conducted during the spring and summer 2023 and for 2024 events.
- Over 70 bids presented.
- Conwy will be carrying out some consultation on signing the MOU with Gwynedd and Eryri for their Sustainable Visitor Strategy 2035. They are particularly keen to engage with businesses in the Conwy area of Eryri National Park. The consultation event is planned for 20th March at Glasdir in Llanrwst.

[Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy 2035 | Visit Snowdonia \(ymweldageryri.info\)](https://ymweldageryri.info)

Wales Tourism Ambassador Scheme

- Over 330 registered on the Gwynedd Ambassadors programme. 9 modules now available since April 2023. Enabling ambassadors to reach gold level of attainment.
- Conwy Ambassadors Course currently has 560 Ambassadors at bronze level, 454 silver and 359 on gold. Conwy will be running a series of networking events this year with the support from SPF. Modules are currently being updated and a refresher module being developed.
- Anglesey now have the new silver modules now live and already have 27 Ambassadors achieving the Silver level with 76 in Bronze. They are exploring options for further training and development
- The Wales Ambassador Management Group welcomed another partner on board this year from Blaenau Gwent. Conwy has agreed to chair the Management Group for this year while Nicky from Denbighshire is on secondment. We held first meeting for 2024 earlier this year and all partners are supporting and working with Denbighshire and Artichoke, planning for another Wales Ambassador Week for 9th-13th September 2024 which will coincide with Adult Learners' week. The group are in the process of developing survey to ask ambassadors what type of events they would like to attend and to gather feedback on the current course content.

Business Support Update Gwynedd

In Gwynedd, the Business Development Funds, which are supported through the Shared Prosperity Fund, plan to support Gwynedd businesses to recover and develop, stabilise and prepare for the future.

- In terms of business support, out of 108 SPF smaller grant business support applications (under £25,000) - £1.5m of support has been awarded. The 61 smaller grants - approx. £860,000 has been earmarked and awarded.
- With the larger grants (up to £250,000) we have successfully completed the assessment of 84 applications to the value of £8.5m and have awarded 13 grants to the value of nearly £1.6m.
- In total 74 grants have been awarded, totalling over £2.4m. We have been meeting with Busnes Cymru to discuss any further sources of support that may be available for the unsuccessful applications.

Gwaith Gwynedd – Skills and employment support

Gwaith Gwynedd continues to try and prepare unemployed individuals for the needs of the tourism sector here in Gwynedd, by improving skills to try to ensure that these match the needs of businesses. Our next series of Job Fairs have been organised for the period from February to April 2024, with an excellent response already from businesses. Gwaith Gwynedd's provision has been extended since the 1st of October 2023, to include In-work Support for employed individuals looking to improve their skills in order to progress within their workplace.

Anglesey's ARFOR Programme – Enterprising Communities that benefits Welsh Language and the economy – A number of private projects in the pipeline awaiting awards includes food producers.

Other news from Anglesey:

Launch of New Anglesey Website

- Launched 01 March. <https://www.visitanglesey.co.uk/>

Cruise Ships

- Very successful season with more vessels than ever
- New partnership approach and coordinator appointed by Holyhead town council. Resources needed to safeguard this vital post for the region.
- In excess of 70 vessels now booked for 2024

Menai Suspension Bridge Restrictions

- Menai Suspension bridge restrictions still having an impact
 - Restrictions started, planned until 2025 to replace hangers

Maritime - Anglesey

- Michael Thomas is now the Maritime Manager for the island. Currently recruiting Beach Wardens for the summer.