

Wales Tourism Alliance **Cynghrair Twristiaeth Cymru**

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PRESS RELEASE

Tourism Week Is Back!

The Second Wales/ British Tourism Week takes place between March 10 and 14 - and again there will be a string of events across Wales to reinforce the importance of the Tourism industry to Wales to our Assembly Members and local Councillors and, on a wider basis, raise the profile of Britain's £85 billion visitor economy.

The Wales Tourism Alliance will focus on the Senedd on Thursday, March 13, when Tourism Minister Rhodri Glyn Thomas will call in at 9-30am at WTA's Senedd base for the day for a picture with tourism industry representatives. WTA will be around all day to discuss the economics of tourism with Assembly Members and staff that are present.

Four regional events are taking place to bring together members of the industry with councillors with the aim of getting over the message that local authority services must be maintained in a year when public spending will be tight and councils will look to shave budgets.

Many other industry meetings are being held during the week and some are still being finalised as we go to press with this newsletter in early March.

The week itself will be launched on Friday March 7 when the Wales Official Tourist Guides Association stages an awareness-raising guided "tour" of the Heads of the Valleys, including the Blaenavon World Heritage site. The trip sets out from the Senedd in Cardiff Bay at 10-00am after a 9-45am photo call with the Welsh Assembly Government's Deputy Minister for Regeneration, Leighton Andrews and leading industry figures.

It then links up with Cynon Valley AM Christine Chapman at Llechwen Hall, near Pontypridd (10-45), for a photo opportunity and then moves onto Tredegar Town Centre (11-30) , where Trish Law will meet the bus at the Town Clock for a further photo opportunity.

Wales Tourism Alliance Chairman, Julian Burrell, said awareness created by Wales Tourism Week helped to reposition tourism into its rightful place as the main

economic driver in Wales. “For far too long Tourism has been seen as a poor relation of other industries- when in reality it has delivered substantial financial returns from every corner of Wales to significantly fuel essential spending on health and education,” he said.

“We want to see further investment in our industry from the Assembly and from local government and a halt called to cuts in those council services that affect how we deliver quality products for our growing list of visitors.”

On **Monday**, the focus shifts for a day to **British Tourism Week**, with a launch event planned for London. BTW again has the support of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and this year seeks to emphasise that eighty per cent of our industry’s success comes from domestic visitors and that we can all do more to encourage Britons to holiday at home.

During the week, regional events are taking place in north, south east and mid Wales, following on the first WTW “taster” event, held on February 29, when Tourism Minister, Rhodri Glyn Thomas, launched the west Wales regional event, Carmarthenshire Tourism Association’s new campaign – ‘On Your Doorstep’ during Carmarthen’s St David’s Day celebrations.

The **mid Wales** branch of the British Holiday and Home Parks Association is holding an event in Machynlleth on Monday to give politicians, councillors and planning officers an insight into the important contribution that holiday home parks make to tourism and the local economy. Holiday home parks in Mid Wales generate an average of around £700,000 each to the local economy annually.

The association is joining forces with Mid Wales Tourism and Tourism Partnership Mid Wales to stage the event at award-winning caravan sales company Salop Leisure’s centre in Machynlleth, which will be followed by a canapés and drinks reception at the Plas Dolguog Hotel.

South East Wales Tourism Forum are holding a reception on Monday, March 10, at the Celtic Manor Lodge Hotel, Newport between 6-30 and 8-30pm for representatives of the tourism industry and for local councillors with an interest or responsibility in tourism.

Forum Chair Mandy Davies will host the meeting, which has been sponsored by Capital Region Tourism. Sir Brooke Boothby, Executive member of WTA and Chairman of British Holiday and Home Parks Association in SE Wales will give an address on tourism development across the region.

There will be a **North Wales** Tourism morning reception in the Borderlands area at the Tourist Information Centre Llangollen, Yr Hen Gapel on Monday 10 March at 10.30am, another at Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw, Llanbedrog, Pwllheli on the same day at 10am plus a lunchtime reception at Pili Palas, Menai Bridge, Isle of Anglesey on Friday 7 March at 12.30pm - NWT 01492 539058.

Other events organised as part of the Wales Tourism Week include the Hiraethog Sausage Fest with David Jones MP at Hafod Elwy Hall, Hiraethog, Denbighshire on Friday 14 March – for further information please call 01690 770345 and the Llandudno Visit Day on

Friday 14 March – organised by Llandudno Hospitality Association – for further information please call 01492 876886.

North Wales Official Guides – WOTGA has organized three options for politicians to meet with their members on 15 March whilst they are on their Continuous Professional Development Weekend. In the morning, there is a canal trip including Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, a lunchtime meeting at the West Arms Hotel, Llanarmon DC or an afternoon visit to Whittington Castle.

In mid Wales, a marketing conference has been organised by Brecon Beacons Tourism at Theatr Brycheiniog, Brecon on Thursday March 13 - *Tourism as it Needs to Be!* (10am – 1.30pm, lunch included).

Speakers include Punch Maughan and Elizabeth Jeffreys from Brecon Beacons Tourism, Andrew Fryer, Gaynor Thomas from HSBC Brecon Jazz, and a representative of the National Park's tourism team. Keynote speaker is Steve Beioley, director of The Tourism Company, who will speak about his consultation work he is currently undertaking for Visit Wales on destination management and marketing areas.

On Thursday, Cambrian Railways Partnership is holding a familiarisation event, meeting at Mid Wales Tourism's headquarters in Machynlleth before delegates board a train to Porthmadoc where they will be transfer to the Ffestiniog Railway. The event is aimed at Tourist Information Centre staff, politicians and councillors who have an interest in tourism and transport. Delegates from Ceredigion, Powys and Gwynedd County Councils, Snowdonia National Park, Mid Wales Tourism and Tourism Partnership Mid Wales have been invited to attend.

West Wales Hospitality Forum - a Tourism Training Forum for Wales/ VW/People 1st event is being held at 12 noon on Thursday 13 March; the venue is the new Swansea Leisure Centre.

Jennie Evans will lead on a presentation looking at the customer service training programme currently being developed, Joe (Mick) La Lopa's talk is entitled "The Platinum Rules of Sales Mastery", and "Storytelling – a Welsh Tradition" will feature David Ambrose, Director of Beyond the Border, the Wales international storytelling festival- contact either lisajohnston@tffw.org.uk or lowriedwards@tffw.org.uk (07977 989723 / 07977 989748).

For more information on Wales Tourism Week events contact the local organisers direct- or David Chapman or Felicity Garland on 02920 493685.