



Growing Mid Wales

April Newsletter: Innovation

The definition of innovation is *the practical implementation of ideas that result in the introduction of new goods or services or improvement in offering goods or services*. Growing Mid Wales is itself an innovative partnership as it strives to represent the region's interests and priorities for improvements to our local economy.

With Welsh Government recently publishing its Innovation Strategy we thought it timely to focus this month on all things Innovative – how Growing Mid Wales complements and supports innovation activities in the region and what current funding opportunities there are for you to consider.

We also get to know a bit more about Claire Miles, our Regional Engagement Team Manager, who's answered our Meet the Team Q&A. Claire has been with Growing Mid Wales from the very start and worked alongside many of organisations leading activities that have benefitted from previous European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) funding on innovation – which we delve into more, later on in the newsletter.

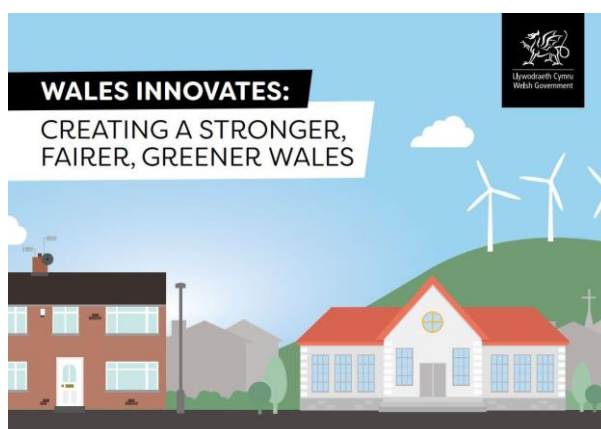
Helping to grow opportunity in Mid Wales,

The Growing Mid Wales team

Read on for:

- Welsh Government Innovation Strategy
- UK Government Science and Technology Framework
- Horizon Europe Guarantee Scheme Extension
- Mid Wales Innovation Case Studies
- Meet the Team
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Welsh Government Innovation Strategy



On the 27th of February, Welsh Government launched [their new Innovation Strategy](#). This will be important in setting the context for strategic regional activity in the field of applied research and innovation in Mid Wales.

The new cross-government vision of innovation for a stronger, fairer, greener Wales points the way to a different approach to innovation in the future; one which adopts a “mission-based” attitude and collaboration into the following four missions:

- **Education:** this mission helps ensure Wales has an education system that supports the development of innovation skills and knowledge throughout people’s lives in Wales, ensuring the talent, enthusiasm and incredible potential of our young people who, in the future, will not only benefit the Welsh economy but can make a real impact on people’s lives.
- **Economy:** this mission involves driving Wales forward to be a leading, innovation-based nation. This will see a Welsh economy that innovates for growth, collaborates across sectors for solutions to society’s challenges, adopts new technologies for efficiency and productivity, uses resources proportionately, and allows citizens to share wealth through fair work.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Wales’ health and care system is facing unprecedented levels of demand. This mission will see the health and social care sector collaborate with industry,

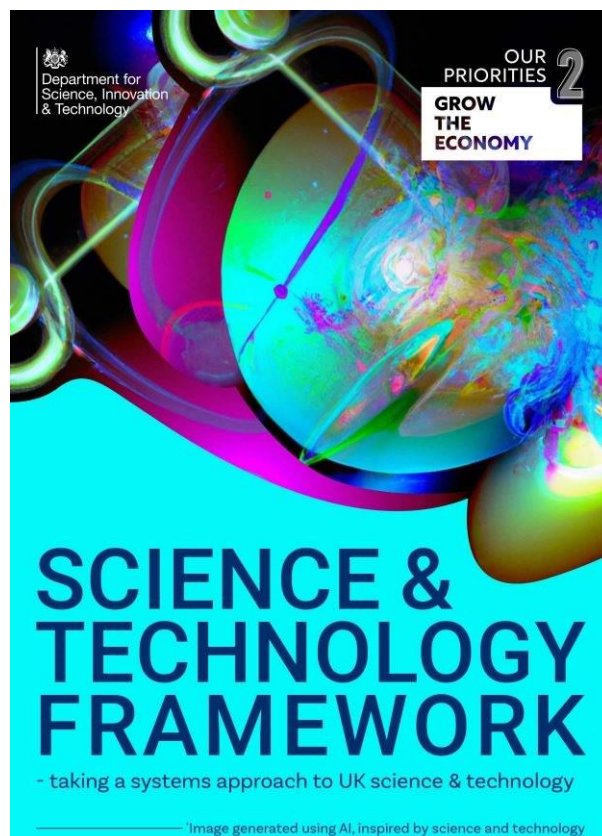
academia and the third sector to deliver new ways of working that deliver greater value and impact for citizens. This will involve them working together to use innovation to transform areas such as delayed transfers of care, community-based care provision, cancer and mental health services.

- **Climate and nature:** this mission will involve optimising our natural resources for the protection and strengthening of climate and nature resilience. It will focus the innovation efforts of the ecosystem on tackling the climate and nature crises simultaneously, ensuring a just transition to a wellbeing economy.

With the winding up of the existing European Union (EU) programmes this year and uncertainty over Wales' engagement with future EU scientific initiatives, the nature of the research, development and innovation landscape in Wales is changing.

The strategy makes a firm commitment that Welsh Ministers will seek to drive up investment from the UK Government and beyond in Welsh research, development and innovation.

UK Government Science and Technology Framework



On the 6th of March, UK Government unveiled its [new Science and Technology Framework](#) - the first major piece of work from the newly created Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, It will challenge every part of government to put the UK at the forefront of global science and technology through 10 key actions – creating a coordinated cross-government approach.

Horizon Europe Guarantee Scheme Extension



The UK Government announced an [extension](#) to the support provided to UK Horizon Europe applicants, originally launched in November 2021 and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has issued grants worth more than £882 million to the end of February 2023. The extension will ensure that eligible, successful UK applicants will continue to be guaranteed funding, supporting them to continue their important work in research and innovation.

The guarantee will be in place to cover all Horizon Europe calls that close on or before the end of June 2023. Eligible, successful applicants to Horizon Europe will receive the full value of their funding at their UK host institution for the lifetime of their grant.

Mid Wales Innovation Case Studies

In January 2022, [AberInnovation](#) launched the Mid Wales's first ever innovation challenge fund.

The Mid Wales Challenge Led Launchpad aimed at developing novel solutions to public sector and societal issues through research and innovation whilst offering new market opportunities for businesses and people in Mid Wales.

14 projects aiming to address challenges facing Mid Wales were awarded up to £30,000 each as part of the new programme supported by Ceredigion and Powys County Councils under the UK-wide Community Renewal Fund (CRF) and by the Welsh Government.

Businesses were provided with funding, support and the use of AberInnovation's facilities to look at challenges within their industry including the following:-

- carbon capture and offset
- reducing and reusing agri-waste
- circular sources of nutritious food

Examples case studies from the Launchpad fund can be found by clicking on the image.



1 - [AberInnovation Launchpad Case Studies](#)

Meet the Team



2 - Claire Miles, Regional Engagement Team Manager,

- **When did you start with the team?**

I started with the Growing Mid Wales Team back in the summer of 2016 – just two weeks before the Brexit vote! Back then, there were only three dedicated members of staff working on the regional agenda.

- **What are your current priorities?**

My role has a wide scope, helping ensure alignment and integration across all aspects of GMW work.

In terms of the European funded interventions, our priority now is helping the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) close down the current European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) programme, as well as celebrating the success and legacy of European funding in Wales. We also act as a key point of information in the new policy and funding landscape that has emerged since EU exit,

helping stakeholders and delivery partners navigate what comes next, and trying to keep track of when and where strategic delivery activity is ending and beginning as a result.

One of my key priorities over the next few months will be refreshing the Vision for Growing Mid Wales document to reflect the many changes we have seen as the result of the events of the last three years (Coronavirus, Brexit, economic downturn) and help ensure GMW is focused on the key opportunities in the medium to long term.

- **What developments have you seen over the years?**

Too many to mention! Generally, the emergence and acceptance of regional economic development within Wales – and Mid Wales as its own separate, distinct economic region – is the key development. From that, many other developments flowed – including the Mid Wales Growth Deal and the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP). Regional working has progressed A LOT in the last seven years, and the volume of work we now do as GMW is testament to that.



3 - Born and bred in Radnorshire

- **What's been your biggest achievement?**

It's a bit of a cop out answer, but having been with GMW for seven years and working across all aspects of it, I look at everything we have achieved as my greatest achievement. During the early days of GMW I spent a lot of time supporting elected members and officers to make the case for Mid Wales as a region, then for a Growth Deal, then for a RSP... it was work that got us where we are today.

- **What is your greatest hope for Mid Wales?**

I was born and bred in Radnorshire, went to University in Aberystwyth, and have spent the majority of my life in Mid Wales. My greatest hope is that all the work we are doing across all the different GMW functions will ultimately have the impact and produce the outcomes we are anticipating, and the young people of Mid Wales like my niece and nephew will have opportunities I didn't have.

- **One word that sums up the Growing Mid Wales Team:**

Forward-looking

Fact of the month: First Welsh woman to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society

Florence Gwendolen Rees



4 - Professor F. Gwendolen Rees. Credit: Aberystwyth University

Florence Gwendolen Rees, (3rd July 1906- 4th October 1994) was a Welsh zoologist and parasitologist, who successively held positions at Aberystwyth University of Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor, becoming Professor Emeritus in 1973. She became the first Welsh woman to become a fellow of the Royal Society and was also elected Fellow of the Institute of Biology. She was the Vice-President and President of the British Society for Parasitology and published 68 original research papers, as well as training many students.

In her honour, Aberystwyth University has announced it is renaming the former Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS) building on Penglais campus, now home to the Department of Life Sciences (DLS) which was established in 2022. Read more about her work at Aberystwyth University on the university's [website](#).

Other news

Mid Wales Tourism Study Report and Action Plan

Fourth Street, a Place Capital Group Company were commissioned by Growing Mid Wales to deliver a Mid Wales Regional Tourism Strategy.

In putting the report together, extensive research and analysis, supported by broad consultation was carried out.

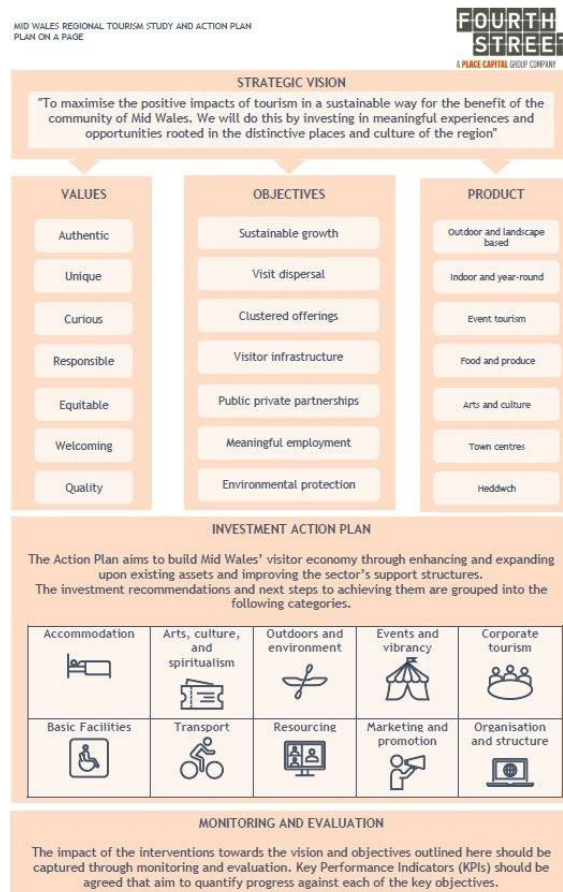
The report gives us a strong picture of the current picture of tourism in the region, including its successes, the key challenges it faces, and aspirations for the future.

The report intends to spark further discussion around emerging themes and priorities, as we work together towards a shared vision for tourism development in Mid Wales.

The report contains:

- analysis of the tourism sector at present across the region, including the dynamics of domestic and international tourist arrivals
- an audit of the visitor attractions, accommodation offer, food and beverage and retail provision across Mid Wales View the full report on the [Growing Mid Wales website](#), on the Documents page under the Research Studies section.

The corresponding action plan sets out investment recommendations and next steps to build Mid Wales' visitor economy through enhancing and expanding upon existing assets and improving the sector's support structures.



Keep up to Date

Need to catch up on what's been discussed in our meetings? Here's a reminder of where you can find the minutes for the following meetings:

- All minutes relating to the Growing Mid Wales Board are hosted on Powys County Council [website](#).
- Papers relating to the Growing Mid Wales Partnership can be found on our [website](#).

Keep up to date with Growing Mid Wales news, developments on activity and organisations we support by following our Twitter and Linked In pages:

<https://twitter.com/growingmidwales>

www.linkedin.com/company/growing-mid-wales

We're eager to reach out to as many organisations and businesses across Mid Wales as possible. You can make this possible by following, liking and sharing our pages.

Disclaimer: As a Growing Mid Wales Stakeholder you receive these emails so that we can share news and information with you on a regular basis. You can inform us if you no longer wish to receive these emails by emailing growingmidwales@ceredigion.gov.uk.

