



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Arwain cydweithredu – un ystad gyhoeddus Cymru
Leading collaboration – one public estate Wales

11
EDITION
ELEVEN

Welcome to your Ystadau Cymru Conference and Awards Special

WHAT'S INSIDE

Chair's Introduction
Page 2

Ystadau Cymru
Awards 2024
Page 3

Asbestos
Awareness
Training
Page 6

Ystadau Cymru
Conference
Page 7

Richard's Report
Page 9



Ystadau Cymru Awards 2024



The 2024 Ystadau Cymru awards saw 11 high quality submissions for consideration by our expert judging panels and by the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government, Jayne Bryant MS.



Celebrating Success



WINNER Marsh House



Supported accommodation project, led by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in partnership with Pobl Group and Merthyr Valley Homes.

The awards were announced at the
Ystadau Cymru Conference 2024 on 28 November
with the Cabinet Secretary herself honouring the awards winners.

Continues on page 3...

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

I am especially pleased with our eleventh issue of the Ystadau Cymru newsletter, which is essential reading for all involved in the Welsh public estate.



Beverly Owen

Welcome to the new issue of the Ystadau Cymru Newsletter – where we celebrate our award winners and reflect on the success of the 2024 Ystadau Cymru conference.

As we begin a new financial year Ystadau Cymru has been looking at how we can maximise our efforts and collaborate further to better deliver services to the people of Wales.

One project that shows such collaboration is the Asbestos Awareness training, delivered by Caerphilly County Borough Council in partnership with the Ystadau Cymru Building Safety Group.

The training is specifically aimed at those working on the public estate here in Wales, the training is offered online and across a range of dates.

For further information on the training dates and how to book please see **page 6**.

Regular visitors to the Ystadau Cymru webpages will notice that a number of best practice case studies have been published to the site.

We are always on the look out for new case studies showcasing successful estate management, whether that relates to decarbonisation, biodiversity, building safety or community asset transfers. If you have a story to share then please contact the Ystadau Cymru Secretariat.

I would like to welcome Sian Jones to the Ystadau Cymru team. Sian is the head of the Regeneration Corporate Delivery and Strategy team within Place Division, and I know Sian is keen to explore greater alignment between the functions of Regeneration and the work ongoing to increase the sustainability of the public sector estate here in Wales.



Ystadau Cymru Awards 2024



Assessing the submissions and restricting it to three projects deserving of attention proved difficult, but it was eventually done through (at times) passionate debate and expert consideration...

and the winner is... Marsh House

As the Cabinet Secretary reflected, **“Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is addressing significant housing challenges with innovative solutions that meet immediate needs and contribute to long-term stability and quality of life.”**

The demand for temporary accommodation has significantly increased and **Marsh House** was created to help address these challenges.

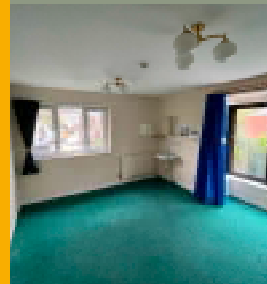
BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



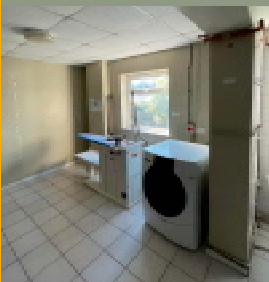
The project completed in **March 2024**, repurposed the old Glan Yr Afon Residential Care Home into supported and temporary accommodation, housing **32 residents**.

This includes **10 hostel spaces for young people and 22 temporary supported accommodations for adults**.

The project was funded through the Transforming Towns initiative, with additional support from MTCBC, creating jobs and supporting local businesses.

Overall, the project sought to provide high-quality, sustainable housing solutions that improve the quality of life for residents whilst also supporting the broader community.

BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





Ystadau Cymru Awards 2024



and the runner up is... Corwen Town Centre Improvements



Denbighshire County Council and Partners

The Cabinet Secretary said,
“This package project was developed as a part of a programme of wider improvements within the Dee Valley.

This initiative includes 4 sub-projects which have been delivered in and around Corwen High Street with the aim of improving visitor connectivity networks, town centre assets and public realm between the new heritage railway and the High Street creating a new and improved visitor entry point to the World Heritage site.”

Llangollen Railway Trust has opened a new heritage railway station and social enterprise **Cadwyn Adfywio** has delivered external works to safeguard a prominent heritage building in the town centre providing office space, community facilities and hot-desks for individuals and businesses.



Other improvements include installing of EV charging points within town car park, creation of a new bus interchange and provision of refurbished public toilets enabled by a community asset transfer.



Ystadau Cymru Awards 2024



Commendation Award: Fitzalan High School



Cardiff City Council and Partners

As the Cabinet Secretary said,
“Fitzalan High School is an exceptional new build secondary school, providing state-of-the-art facilities.

Sustainable features include efficient building form, fabric-first approach, solar shading, glazed rooflights, LEDs and PVs achieving BREEAM Excellent.”

The school was among the first built to provide flexible and adaptable spaces to teach and learn the New Progressive Curriculum.

The project embodied the core principles of the Social Value Economy, strongly focusing on community engagement, sustainable development, and social impact.

By taking an inclusive approach which promoted collaboration across sectors, the project has created a lasting impact that fosters respect, diversity and innovation.

This means that the project exceeds mere construction; It is a beacon of excellence in creating meaningful social value.

INSPIRED BY THE 2024 WINNERS?

Think you have a collaborative project that brings innovation and improvements? The awards will launch again in April 2025 so keep a look out for new guidance and entry forms on the Ystadau Cymru website!



[Ystadau Cymru website](#)

ASBESTOS AWARENESS TRAINING

New for 2025 and delivered in partnership with **Caerphilly County Borough Council**.



Aimed at organisations in the Welsh public sector ranging in scale from the Town and Community Council sector to the Welsh NHS, the 2 hour online training course will provide the delegate with a basic understanding of:

- » What asbestos is and where it can be found
- » Understand the risks involved when working with asbestos and its effect on health
- » The legislative requirements of the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012
- » Who can be a Duty Holder and what are their responsibilities
- » Types and content of asbestos surveys
- » Asbestos Management Plan
- » Training and communication requirements.

TRAINING DATE AND TIMES:

Choose from one of the many dates available below:



**24th June:
9:30 – 11:30am**



[Calendar link](#)



**30th July:
1 – 3pm**



[Calendar link](#)



**28th October:
9:30 – 11:30am**



[Calendar link](#)



**22nd July:
9:30 – 11:30am**



[Calendar link](#)



**14th October:
9:30 – 11:30am**



[Calendar link](#)



**4th November:
1 – 3pm**



[Calendar link](#)

Cost: free to delegates from the Welsh public sector. Priceless for those who use your buildings.

For further information on this course or the work of Ystadau Cymru:  [Ystadau Cymru website](#)

YSTADAU CYMRU CONFERENCE – 28 NOVEMBER 2024

The theme of the conference was “Managing Risk Across the Public Estate”. A broad approach but one vital to successfully manage in a time of competing and increasing pressures on budgets, time and staffing.

There were four presentations at the conference which were well received by attendees.



COLLABORATIVE BUILDING SAFETY

Delivered by the Chair of Ystadau Cymru Building Safety Sub-Group, Neal O’Leary; supported by Ali Evans of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Neal outlined the work of the sub-group to date, with work on asbestos safety and RAAC.

He also stressed that the sub-group were not content to deal with safety challenges as they arose to public prominence- the group was actively horizon scanning to identify building safety issues before they became major “issues”.

Ali Evans gave a detailed preview of the asbestos awareness courses that Ystadau Cymru is offering in 2025.

She expertly outlined the reasons why staff should be aware of asbestos issues, including the need for detailed record keeping; correct handling of this dangerous substance and consideration for removal of asbestos.

More information on the work of Ystadau Cymru Building Safety Sub-Group can be found at:

Terms of reference: Buildings Safety Sub-Group:  [Ystadau Cymru website](#)

CONSIDERING CLIMATE IMPACTS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Delivered by Jean-Francois Dulong, Climate – Change Mitigation and Adaptation Policy Officer at the Welsh Local Government Association and member of Ystadau Cymru Environmental Sustainability Sub-Group.

Jean-Francois discussed the need to consider not just climate change mitigation but how we start adapting to those changes which are now inevitable.

With the publication of the Welsh Government's **Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales** in October 2024, we are seeing a substantial shift in how climate change risks are regarded.

Although the mitigation of climate change remains imperative, we also need to consider how we adapt to extreme weather patterns to ensure our communities are resilient and fit for the future.



Climate Adaptation Strategy for Wales

CHALLENGES OF MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR PROPERTY

Delivered by Alex Gee, Senior Solutions Manager at the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Alex took the conference through the complex decision making process for managing a public sector estate.

He outlined the issues with an ageing building stock; the increasing costs of borrowing and the need for “good” data to make smart investment.

He made detailed observations on what was good data on assets, including the suitability of location at present and in the future; the utilisation of the built assets, the civic sensitivity of the building, running costs and so on.

Such data is to be used to develop a business case in light of a number of issues, not just budgets on the winding path to a carbon net zero future.

RINGLAND CAMPUS – TRANSFORMATION OF RINGLAND COMMUNITY SERVICES TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY NEEDS

Delivered by Leah MacDonald of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

Leah gave some background to the Ringland area of Newport – one of the 10% more deprived areas of Wales with associated issues of poor health, poor life expectancy and higher than average crime rate than the rest of Newport.

She then outlined the partnership working with the health board, Newport Council to provide new homes for the area and new shops.

At the same time, maintaining access to sports grounds. She also stressed the importance of the Ringland Community Hub which brings together several council services for the local community.

Finally, she covered the new 19 Hills Health and Wellbeing Centre which includes access to local GPs, local dentist, speech therapy services and sexual health services in one location.



So better quality buildings, integration of services, improved pedestrian access and a joint communication strategy with the local community – all part of one long term collaborative product.

A BIG THANK YOU GOES TO...

Finally, the Secretariat would like to thank Tom Bowring of Vale of Glamorgan Council for being the MC of the conference once again.

As ever he MC'ed the conference with aplomb, despite the disruption of a fire alarm at his end.

RICHARD'S REPORT

ACPW is Back! Good news for all readers



2024 saw the creation of Place division, which brought the existing Regeneration and Land functions together.

Taking a place-based approach the division is tasked with maximising community and cultural assets, supporting local authorities to repurpose more derelict buildings, supporting the diversification of town services, and progressing more opportunities to unlock strategic sites / opportunities.

The Division will be the home of existing programmes and workstreams including the Transforming Towns Programme, the Land and Buildings Development Fund, Ystadau Cymru and the Community Assets Task & Finish Group.

In bringing our land and regeneration functions together we recognise existing skills and experience and how they can be complementary in making further progress against our shared ambitions.

I am really hopeful for what we can achieve over the coming months.

This programme aims to reshape our town centres to better reflect new ways of working following the COVID pandemic.

These include an increase in home working amongst staff; a revised focus on service delivery on places, rather than previous service delivery boundaries; and to support work to reimagine our high streets, following the changing shopping habits brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

I don't need to tell public sector colleagues about the pressures on finances in upcoming years. We all need to examine the best ways to deliver services within constrained resources. Within Place division, I and the Cabinet Secretary took the decision to refocus ACPW as a funding scheme.

The great news is that ACPW will continue into the 2025-26 funding year, but will focus on revenue funding only.

Ystadau Cymru will also continue our funding of the Communities Asset Commission and projects to support the work of the Board and subgroups.

So get ready for the launch of the ACPW Grant scheme in May 2025 so you can maximise the support you could receive throughout 2025-26!

Guidance and forms will be available on the YC web pages!

The capital elements of ACPW have been reallocated to Local Government general capital fund, enabling greater local control over funding decisions.