

Wales Tourism Alliance **Cynghrair Twristiaeth Cymru**

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PRESS RELEASE

Wales Tourism Week “Tour” Calls At Llechwen Hall and Tredegar

The Second Wales/ British Tourism Week takes place between March 10 and 14 - and 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, Rhondda AM Leighton Andrews, and leading industry figures. It then links up with Cynon Valley AM Christine Chapman at Llechwen Hall, near Pontypridd, for a photo opportunity (10-45) and then moves onto Tredegar Town Centre, where Trish Law will meet the bus at the Town Clock (11-30) for a further photo opportunity.

During the week 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.

Wales Tourism Alliance Chairman, Julian Burrell, said Tourism was a vital contributor to Regeneration plans and would be at the forefront of changes taking place within the Heads of the Valleys area. “Awareness created by Wales Tourism Week will help to reposition tourism into its rightful place as the main economic

driver in Wales,” he said. “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 across Wales a halt called to cuts in those council services that affect how we deliver quality products for our growing list of visitors.”

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