

Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru
Ambition North Wales

Annual Report 2024/25

ambitionnorth.wales

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OUR AMBITION

To be confident and cohesive, focused on improving the region's economic, social and environmental well-being.

To see the region develop in a sustainable way, with opportunities for people to gain new skills, develop rewarding careers, for businesses to grow and communities to prosper.

To do this while championing the Welsh language, our culture and heritage, in line with the well-being goals for Wales.

Foreword

We are delighted to present the Ambition North Wales 2024-25 Annual Report.

This is a first for us, as we were privileged to take on our new positions as Chair and Vice-Chair during the past year. Together, collaboratively, with our counterparts across North Wales councils, we are encouraged that progress has been made but determined to maximise the pace of delivery – for the benefit of our regional businesses and communities.

This Annual Report highlights the progress made in delivering the North Wales Growth Deal, work linked to our responsibilities as a regional Corporate Joint Committee – entities established in 2021, as well as our role in delivering broader regional projects.

The Growth Deal, now in its fourth year, has seen significant progress made on many projects across all five of its programmes. These include our first construction project being delivered at pace, advancements towards further improvements in digital connectivity, infrastructure developments and crucial low carbon energy schemes making strides.

Impact and efficacy of the Growth Deal work has been further enhanced by successfully delivering £126.5 million of projects funded via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, allocated across our six council areas.

Our responsibilities as the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee – on regional transport and strategic planning, and economic wellbeing, have seen significant tangible actions too. These include the production of the Draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales and its subsequent public consultation, alongside initial preparations relating to a forthcoming Strategic Development Plan. Plus, there has been an ongoing collaboration to ensure solid foundations are laid for the delivery of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.

Exciting times lie ahead too as our Ambition North Wales governance structure will soon transition from being led by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, to that of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, led by its Board.

We hope you find this Annual Report insightful in demonstrating the breadth of our work over the last 12-months, and the productive year we have ahead.



Cllr. Mark Pritchard
Chair, North Wales Corporate Joint Committee



Cllr. Charlie McCoubrey
Vice-Chair, North Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Securing Investment, Driving Change

Over the past twelve months, we have strengthened our collective commitment to building a more vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive economy for North Wales - and seen that commitment translate into tangible results. This progress is clear in our Growth Deal with a further six projects, seeking a total of £30.3m in Growth Deal funding to deliver £153.7m in total investment, securing a final investment decision during the year:

- Former North Wales Hospital - developing the site, including the restoration of the Grade 2* listed building, new homes, green spaces, a training facility, and commercial space.
- Cydnerth - will futureproof the Morlais tidal energy scheme, run by Menter Môn, by enabling its 18MW grid capacity to increase over time to 240MW.
- Tourism Talent Network - creating world class training and knowledge transfer facilities across five locations in North Wales.
- Parc Bryn Cegin - developing energy-efficient employment premises suitable for new and existing businesses to expand and relocate.
- LPWAN - aims to deliver infrastructure improvements which will strengthen wireless technology and its application across the region.
- Centre For Environmental Biotechnology - creating new equipment and new scale-up facilities for use in exploring the use of biological processes as low carbon alternatives to products and industrial manufacturing processes

These projects add to the total investment to date which stands at £16.6 million, with £15.3 million of that funded directly through the Growth Deal. These figures reflect not only the scale of ambition but also the trust placed in our ability to deliver meaningful change.

Our spend to date is clearly dominated by public sector intervention, but this shouldn't be a surprise to anyone. Many of our projects target entrenched and chronic market failures that, without public funding, would remain significant barriers to private sector investment. Our future depends on joint financial commitments across Governments and sectors to enhance the region's infrastructure and create the conditions for sustained private sector investment and a thriving economy.

We knew that our ambitions would not be realised overnight, and this year has been marked by a significant step-change towards delivery. Over the past four years, the Growth Deal has enabled greater strength in our regional collaboration, and it is now beginning to make an impact through delivery of its projects.

continued....

continued.... Securing Investment, Driving Change

Through our annual independent Portfolio Assurance Review in October, we received useful recommendations that will further support us to deliver effectively with our partners. We're already underway in developing a process to identify potential new projects for a Growth Deal reserve list and an associated streamlined route to funding decisions.

Regional investment is at the core of our mission. Ambition North Wales has a long-standing and trusted relationship with the private sector, with strong links to founders and senior leaders across key industries. This engagement is further bolstered by the work of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership, which sits within our organisation and provides valuable insight from industry and education to shape our skills and employability plans.

All of these collaborations are instrumental - not only in delivering the Growth Deal, but also in fulfilling our broader role as the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, with a statutory responsibility to promote and enhance the economic wellbeing of the region. The past year has shown what can be achieved through strong partnership working, particularly with the successful development of the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion plant. This project, detailed in this report, exemplifies how close collaboration with the private sector can unlock additional investment - in this case, freeing up £6.4 million in Growth Deal funding to be reinvested elsewhere.

Our role in securing and enabling investment continues to grow. We are proud to be working with Flintshire Council, Wrexham Council, and wider partners to progress an Investment Zone in the region. With a decade-long commitment of up to £160 million from both UK and Welsh Governments, this initiative aims to strengthen a globally significant advanced manufacturing cluster with far-reaching benefits across North Wales and beyond.

It is an honour to lead such a dedicated and forward-thinking team. I would like to thank our Board, partners, and stakeholders for their continued collaboration and commitment. Together, we are making real progress - and delivering lasting impact for North Wales.



Alwen Williams

Portfolio Director and Part-Time Interim Chief Executive Officer
Ambition North Wales



Hedd Vaughan-Evans

Head of Operations and Part-Time Deputy Portfolio Director
Ambition North Wales

MILESTONES

April 2024 - March 2025



April

The RSP held its “Navigating Workforce and Skills Challenges” Conference for employers at Venue Cymru.



May

The Economic Ambition Board approved business cases for 4 projects - Former North Wales Hospital (FBC), Cydnerth (OBC), LPWAN (BJC), Centre for Environtmental Biotechnology (BJC)



June

The SPF Bid writing support grant opened for applications.



July

Launched our Impact and Social Value survey for employers - to understand awareness, perspectives and practices.

August

Connectivity Clinics began in communities as part of our SPF funded Rural Digital Connectivity project.

September

The Economic Ambition Board approved the Full Business Case for the Tourism Talent Network project.



October

The Funding Agreemnet for the Centre for Environmental Biotechnology project was signed.



November

Two fund advisors were appointed to deliver the Clean Energy Fund - the WCVA in partnership with Comminity Energy Wales will lead on the voluntary sector sub-fund, and UMi on the private sector sub-fund.



December

A partner in a Cluster Management Organisation launched to drive agri-tech and food technology innovation across Mid and North Wales.

January

The North Wales Skills and Employability Portal funded by SPF was launched.



February

The Economic Ambition Board approved 3 business cases: Parc Bryn Cegin (FBC), Cydnerth (FBC), Responsible Adventure (OBC).



March

Our 12-week consultation on the draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales reached its mid-way point.



NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Ambition North Wales is now a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). This means it is now its own legal entity, rather than being hosted by a local authority. As a CJC, Ambition North Wales has two new statutory responsibilities - regional transport and strategic planning, as well as a non-statutory responsibility to enhance and promote the economic well-being of North Wales. The CJC has adopted the brand Ambition North Wales and operates as a partnership organisation - comprising the six local authorities in North Wales and the Eryri National Park Authority.

During 2024/25, Ambition North Wales worked towards transferring its Portfolio Management Office and the North Wales Growth Deal into the CJC on 1 April 2025.

Regional Transport Plan

A draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales was developed, along with required supporting documents. The publication sets out policies to achieve an accessible, sustainable, affordable and integrated transport system for North Wales.
On 20 January 2024, a 12-week public consultation began on the draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales.

Strategic Development Plan

The North Wales Strategic Development Plan will ensure the region, as a whole, is considered in one plan - reflecting how people live, and how markets and businesses operate. SDP actions have focused on strong engagement with a view to producing a Delivery Agreement document, which will be subject to a public consultation in Summer 2025.

Economic wellbeing

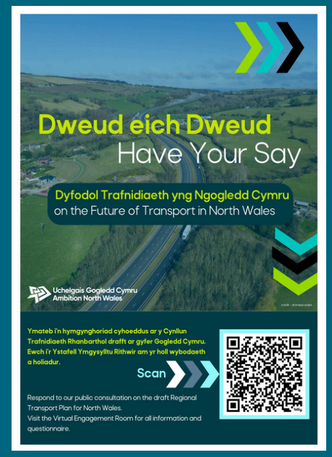
This reflects the current work of Ambition North Wales - including delivering the region's Growth Deal. It also comprises the CJC's responsibility to work in partnership with Flintshire and Wrexham councils to deliver the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone - an investment of up to £160m, over 10 years.

NORTH WALES REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN (DRAFT)

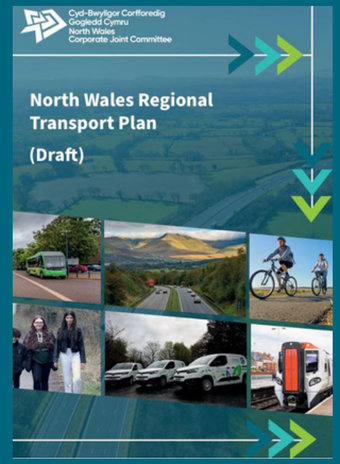
We developed a Draft Regional Transport Plan alongside partners including local authorities, Transport for Wales and Welsh Government.

The Plan outlined our strategic policies and interventions until 2030, across various modes of transport and travel. Focusing on integration and innovation, it aimed to provide residents and visitors with more travel choices and better digital connectivity, while also reducing our environmental impact.

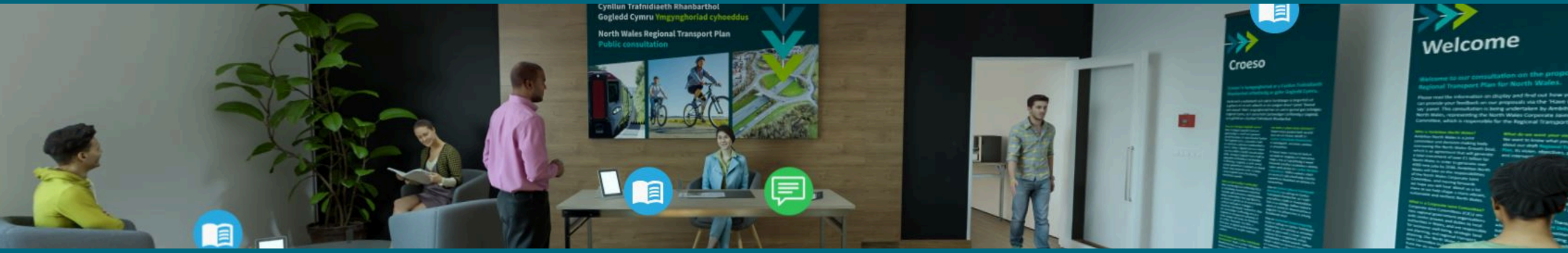
The 12-week public consultation opened on 20 January 2025, encouraging the public, businesses, third sector organisations, community groups and visitors to look at the draft Plan, and feedback.







To ensure the Plan was widely accessible, it was produced as an 'Easy Read' by Learning Disability Wales, and Frequently Asked Questions were published. Channels for responding included FREEPOST, email and via a Virtual Engagement Room.



FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM INVESTMENT ZONE

A joint commitment by both UK and Welsh Governments - the Investment Zone aims to enhance and grow a globally significant advanced manufacturing cluster in North East Wales.

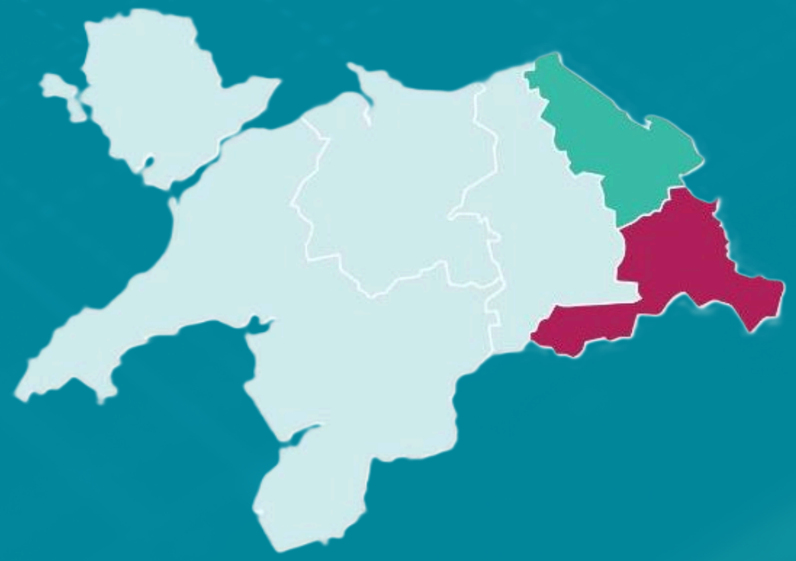
We are therefore working in partnership with Flintshire and Wrexham councils to deliver the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone – which will see an investment of up to £160m over 10 years.

It will unleash further potential for Flintshire and Wrexham, which are already home to high-value manufacturing operations and strategic industrial sites, by offering a unique blend of support, infrastructure and targeted incentives designed to attract and sustain businesses.

Benefits will be far reaching, extending across North Wales and beyond.

> The Investment Zone is poised to transform the region into a hub of advanced manufacturing excellence, making it an extremely attractive prospect for investors and inward investment. The potential £160 million funding package isn't just a short-term boost, it's a decade-long pledge. It will not only enable the development of key sites, but also the infrastructure needed to effectively deliver them, alongside the skilled workforce required to make those sites a success.

Cllr. Mark Pritchard, Leader, Wrexham County Borough Council and Chair, North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and Cllr. Dave Hughes, Leader, Flintshire County Council, Member of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee



> **Crucially for us, sustainability is also at the heart of future plans, with partners committing to align developments with green manufacturing principles, creating high-skilled jobs and drive economic growth while also protecting our environment. This is a hugely positive opportunity for North Wales, and I am excited about the possibilities it holds.**

Alwen Williams, Ambiton North Wales

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS



QUARTER 1 HIGHLIGHTS

April to June 2024

FORMER NORTH WALES HOSPITAL FULL BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL

The Economic Ambition Board approved the Full Business Case for the Former North Wales Hospital. The project will see the site developed, including the restoration of the Grade 2* listed building, new homes, green spaces, a skills and training facility, and commercial space.



SPF DIGITAL INTERVENTIONS LAUNCHED

Work commenced on the Shared Prosperity funded workstreams.

Annog Cyf were appointed to deliver a programme to support communities to improve their broadband.

BIC Innovation started delivery of a project providing advice and guidance to small businesses on how they can adopt the latest digital communications technologies.

The Smart Local Energy Bid Writing support package launched, with a tender open to identify a list of suppliers, and applications opened for SMEs, social enterprises and community organisations to procure a bid writing consultant.

In partnership with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) we launched phase 2 of the Emissions and Biodiversity project with the aim of streamlining the approach in line with local authority business case processes; and training over 75 project managers and decision-makers across Wales how to use the approach.

NAVIGATING WORKFORCE AND SKILLS CHALLENGES

A conference, providing North Wales employers with insights into recruiting and retaining staff, was organised by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership.

Keynote speaker, Craig Weeks of JCB delivered a personal perspective on skills development; and the event gave a platform to other experts who spoke on workforce-related topics - from skills development to managing Gen Z. All focused on innovative solutions to challenges linked to attracting and retaining talent.

Over 150 delegates attended - sharing their experiences and discussing their skills requirements with experts and exhibitors.

With insights and strategies exchanged, attendees left equipped with ideas to help move their businesses forward in the current market.



QUARTER 2 HIGHLIGHTS

July to September 2024

ADVANCED WIRELESS OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL

The Outline Business Case for the Advanced Wireless project was approved by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. The project which forms part of the broader Connected Campuses Project is a £19 million grant scheme to help private businesses and public sector organisations upgrade their systems to advanced wireless solutions such as the latest standards of Wi-Fi, Low Power Wide Area network technologies, such as LoRaWAN, satellite and 5G.

LPWAN PROMISES TO BOOST DIGITAL CAPABILITY

The Business Justification Case for the Low Power Wide Area Network (LPWAN) project was approved by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

LPWAN provides low power wireless connectivity over long distances, enabling a wide range of devices and sensors to be connected cost effectively. The project aims to deliver infrastructure improvements which will strengthen wireless technology and its application across the region.

The initiative will focus on expanding current coverage of a type of LPWAN technology, LoRaWAN (long range wide area networks), to support public services through greater use of the Internet of Things (IoT). The expansion of coverage aligns with the Welsh Government's Digital Strategy for Wales.



CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL BIOTECHNOLOGY+ APPROVAL

The business justification case for the CEB+ project was approved by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board - securing funding from the Growth Deal.

The transformational project will research unique enzymes and their potential use as products and processes that have less impact on the environment than current materials and industrial chemicals.

In addition, the facility at Bangor University's Henfaes site, has the potential to create up to 65 new jobs, generate up to £15m net additional GVA and upskill businesses.

SUPPORTING SOCIAL VALUE IN THE REGION

We launched an Impact and Social Value Survey for employers, to understand views, actions and aspirations. Results, shared via an online workshop, have enabled us to:

- Improve our approach to incorporating social value in procurement processes
- Better understand considerations as we construct a valuable support programme
- Inform strategies and policies for promoting social value in North Wales

THE FLINTSHIRE AND WREXHAM INVESTMENT ZONE

Working with Flintshire and Wrexham Councils we announced an open call for projects and sites to inform the development of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.

The commitment by both UK and Welsh Governments proposes an investment of up to £160m, over 10 years - for the development of an Advanced Manufacturing Investment Zone, with far reaching benefits, extending across North Wales and beyond.

QUARTER 3 HIGHLIGHTS

October to December 2024

PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING SECURED FOR THE DEESIDE PROJECT

We announced that the development of the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant would go ahead without the need for £6.4m of public sector Growth Deal funding - after additional private sector investment was secured for the project.

This followed months of close collaboration with The Circular Economy (TCE) - our partner on the Deeside project. Successful partnership working and groundwork by both parties enabled an investor to commit the remaining funding requirement for the plant via the Abrdn Sustainability Infrastructure Fund.

NEW CLUSTER MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION LAUNCHED

In partnership with Growing Mid Wales, M-SParc and AberInnovation we were pleased to announce the official launch of the Cluster Management Organisation (CMO) to drive agri-tech and food technology innovation across North and Mid Wales.

The CMO will coordinate activities and promote funding opportunities available through a project that will run initially for two years using funding from Innovate UK. The aim is to strengthen collaboration between businesses, research institutions, and regional partners to boost innovation and competitiveness in the agri-food and agri-tech sectors.



FUND ADVISORS APPOINTED TO DELIVER CLEAN ENERGY FUND

We appointed WCVA and UMi, following a competitive procurement process, to prepare and mobilise the Clean Energy Fund.

The £24.6m fund will comprise of two sub-funds, with WCVA working in conjunction with Community Energy Wales on the voluntary sector sub-fund; and UMi leading the sub-fund targeting the private sector.

The Clean Energy Fund project will aim to support initiatives which help achieve renewable energy and decarbonisation targets and that have an element of local ownership.

Once launched in July 2025, WCVA and UMi will conduct the project over an initial 5-year period.

Cronfa Ynni Glân
Clean Energy Fund

TOURISM TALENT NETWORK SET TO TRANSFORM

The Tourism Talent Network project had its Full Business Case approved - securing £4.43m of Growth Deal funding, which will unlock a total £19m investment in world class training and knowledge transfer facilities across five locations in North Wales.

The project is spearheaded by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai in collaboration with 'Spoke' businesses – Portmeirion and Zip World, with two others to be appointed in 2025, and strategic partnerships with Snowdonia Hospitality and Leisure and the National Trust.

Together they will create a network of state-of-the-art facilities which will become anchors for delivering apprenticeships and other specialist skills support, extensive SME and micro business engagement, as well as a comprehensive programme of school outreach across the region.

QUARTER 4 HIGHLIGHTS

January to March 2025

GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT AT PARC BRYN CEGIN

Approval was given to the Full Business Case for the development of new employment units at Parc Bryn Cegin on the outskirts of Bangor.

To be delivered in collaboration with Welsh Government, the units will provide 1,730sqm of energy-efficient floor-space, which will be net zero operational carbon when in use.

The aim is to drive business growth and job creation in North West Wales - by delivering high-quality units suitable for local businesses wishing to relocate and inward investors.

LAUNCH OF THE NORTH WALES SKILLS PORTAL

NORTH WALES **SKILLS** portal **SGILIAU** GOGLEDD CYMRU

We launched the North Wales Skills Portal, a new online platform as the region's 'gateway to opportunities'.
It offers access to jobs, apprenticeships, and training opportunities while providing employers with access on support available to develop their workforce.

Working with key partners, the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) developed the Portal using feedback from employers and industry. The feedback suggested that more can be done to help people and employers to understand and navigate the different employment, training, and support opportunities in the region.

The Portal addresses this by providing a central hub for people looking for their next opportunity and employers looking to expand their networks for local talent.

CYDNERTH TO PROPEL TIDAL ENERGY ADVANCEMENTS

Cydnerth - a major Growth Deal low carbon energy project, was able to progress towards delivery, following approval of its Full Business Case.

The Cydnerth project will futureproof the Morlais tidal energy scheme, run by Menter Môn, by enabling its 18MW grid capacity to increase over time to 240MW.

The expansion will create up to 230 new jobs and supply chain opportunities, cementing the region's position in the tidal energy sector.



RESPONSIBLE ADVENTURE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL

Led by Zip World, this major initiative Growth Deal project had its Outline Business Case approved. The project would be implemented across two culturally important sites - Llechwedd and Penrhyn Quarries, and is designed to increase visitor time and spend in the area while ensuring minimal environmental impact and maximum cultural and social benefits for local communities.

NORTH WALES REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN

We developed a draft Regional Transport Plan - alongside partners including local authorities, Transport for Wales and Welsh Government. This led to a 12-week public consultation, launched in January 2025, on its content.









Progress on the first construction project

Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre

At the beginning of 2024, the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre (EEOC) was the North Wales Growth Deal's first construction project to move into delivery - and at present, construction is a matter of weeks away from completion.

The EEOC at Wrexham University is a pioneering development, which will become a specialist centre for industry engagement, research, and innovation. The development will provide North Wales with a centre for collaboration and skills development in sustainability, renewables, and high value manufacturing. A particular focus is composites as lightweight alternative for manufacturing, supporting the development and adoption of hydrogen technologies, and maximising the benefits of optics and photonics expertise.

The EEOC project is being delivered across two of the University sites - the Plas Coch campus in Wrexham and the OpTIC Technology Centre at the St Asaph campus.

£9.81m Total investment to date

2 gross direct jobs created

1 collaboration created

10 actions to develop local supply chain

1 enterprise supported

"The construction of the EEOC aligns with one of our key goals of our newly launched vision, which is around ensuring excellence in the quality and impacts of research and enterprise, and in turn, delivering successful innovation and transformational impact.

We look forward to the building opening for the start of the next academic year in September, and helping us to realise our ambitions of it being a specialist centre for research and development, and delivering innovation, which will drive economic growth, here in North Wales.

Thanks must go Ambition North Wales, as this trail-blazing development would not be possible without investment from the North Wales Growth Deal."



Professor Joe Yates, Vice-Chancellor, Wrexham University

Another year of the DSP

In early 2024, Bangor University's Digital Signal Processing Centre project entered its third year of delivery. Since its launch, the project has achieved academic and professional recognition.

Following Growth Deal investment this year, the DSP Centre has opened an innovation laboratory to showcase its technologies to regional partners. It will also demonstrate applications of 5G technology and will form the basis for a three year regional business engagement programme designed to encourage adoption and exploitation of digital technology across a range of regionally important sectors.



- £2.33m Total investment to date
- created 10 gross direct jobs
- created 9 gross indirect jobs
- secured £1.52 million additional revenue income
- 76 knowledge management products created and shared
- 12 new intellectual property registered



Professor William Heath, Head of School, Computer Science and Engineering

""The North Wales Growth Deal investment enables the DSP Centre to develop and share its digital technology across the region. The partnership is already delivering benefits. I'm excited at the further opportunities to broaden our networks and create additional local jobs."



Centre for Environmental Biotechnology Plus

In July 2024, Bangor University's second Growth Deal project was approved by the Economic Ambition Board. The aim of the Centre for Environmental Biotechnology Plus (CEB+) is to build on the academic success of the Centre for Environmental Biotechnology and the collaboration experience of the BioComposites Centre to create a new environment to explore and develop sustainable solutions to industrial and agricultural challenges. Using a catalogue of over 1,000 enzymes, the Centre will use new equipment and new scale-up facilities, funded by the Growth Deal to develop new products and processes which will tackle some of the most urgent challenges facing society today. The key objectives of the project are to

- Improve the economic prospects of the North Wales region and beyond through collaborative industrial research, job creation and by attracting inward regional investment.
- Create opportunities for industry to operate with better environmental outcomes.

The new scale-up facilities, based at the Henfaes Research Centre near Abergwyngregyn, are close to completion and this will enable to the project to open up more widely to business collaboration.

The project has already started to deliver the following against the key North Wales Growth Deal objectives of job creation, increased GVA and enhanced levels of investment in the region:

- High Value jobs directly in the Centre due to increased activity
- Additional inward investment and employment opportunities through the growth of related activity
- A growth in research activity at both the University and with partner organisations providing further high value employment.
- Graduating students and ongoing professional development relevant to the target sectors.

£0.83m Total investment to date

created 7 gross high value direct jobs

4 students completing qualifications

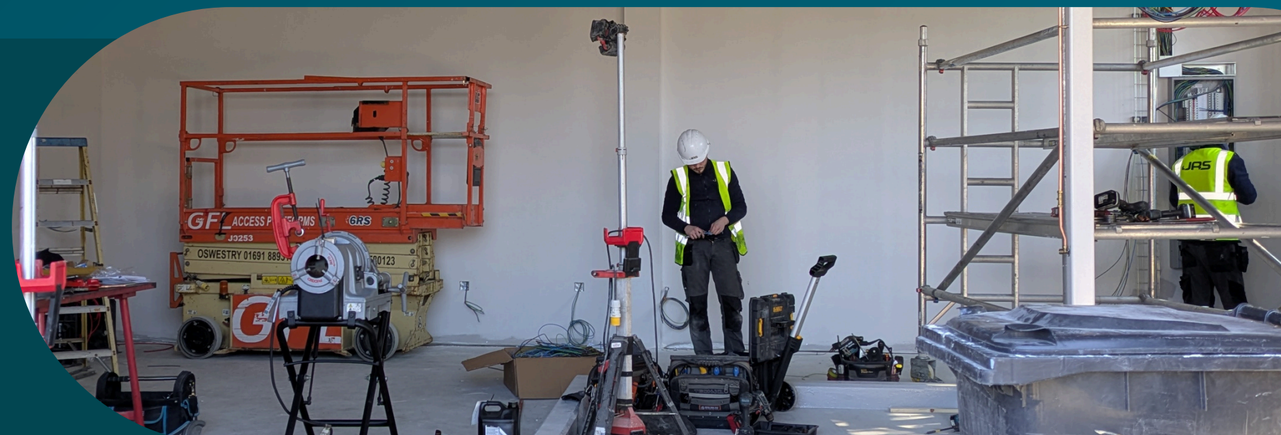
162m2 research floor space created

41 collaborations created in support of the project



Professor Paul Spencer, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research:

"The investment from the Growth Deal has enabled us to move to the vital next step in the translation of research excellence into real-life impact and will foster increased economic growth and prosperity in North Wales."



Tourism Talent Network

In 2024, the Tourism Talent Network was officially launched as part of the North Wales Growth Deal portfolio, with the goal of building a resilient, skilled, and future-ready workforce for the region's tourism and hospitality sectors.

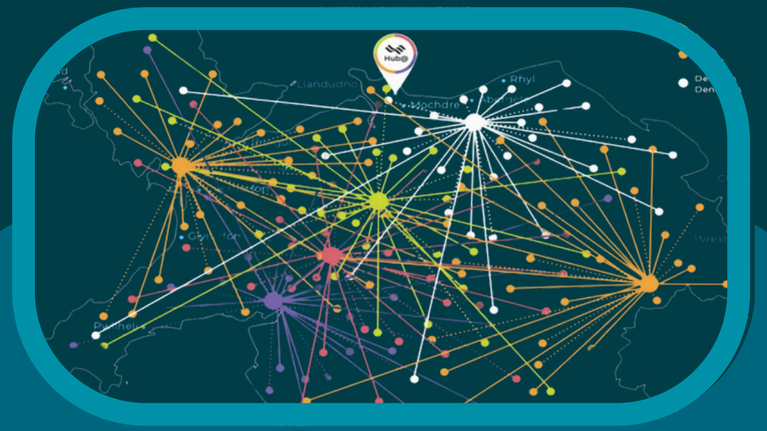
At the heart of this project is the creation of a regional hub of excellence based at Coleg Llandrillo. This hub will be closely connected to a network of outstanding training facilities hosted by our Spoke partners: Zip World, Portmeirion, National Trust and Snowdonia Hospitality & Leisure. Together, these state-of-the-art facilities will deliver apprenticeships, skills development, and extensive support for SMEs, microbusinesses, and schools across the region.

By embedding a cross-cutting focus on sustainability, digitalisation, innovation, sense of place, and culture, the project will help to future-proof tourism and hospitality in North Wales. It will drive up quality, stimulate job creation, elevate the sector's profile, and position it as a career of choice for communities throughout the region.

Looking ahead, 2025 will see the construction and launch of private sector partner infrastructure, marking a major step in expanding the network's reach across North Wales.







£1.87M
Total investment to date

"Recognising the scale and unique quality of the tourism and hospitality sector in North Wales, our vision for this pioneering project is to establish the region as a leader in sustainable tourism and hospitality innovation. We're proud to see this ambitious project move into its implementation phase and are confident it will bring lasting economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to North Wales."

Aled Jones-Griffith
Chief Executive Officer
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai



FUND ADVISORS APPOINTED TO DELIVER CLEANENERGY FUND

We appointed WCVA and UMi, following a competitive procurement process, to prepare and mobilise the Clean Energy Fund.

The £24.6m fund will comprise of two sub-funds, with WCVA working in conjunction with Community Energy Wales on the voluntary sector sub-fund; and UMi leading the sub-fund targeting the private sector.

The Clean Energy Fund project will aim to support initiatives which help achieve renewable energy and decarbonisation targets and that have an element of local ownership - meaning that assets owned by stakeholders located and operating in theregion will benefit, whether that's businesses, communities or voluntary sector organisations, subject to eligibility.

Both Funders Advisors are now preparing the sub-funds prior to the fund launch. WCVA and UMi will then conduct the project over a 5-year period initially - work which will include sourcing and recommending investments, due diligence as well as monitoring the progress and performance of all grants and loans.

Cronfa Ynni Glân
Clean Energy Fund

Nicki Clark from Umi:, said:
"We're incredibly excited and privileged to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Ambition North Wales and WCVA, to enable organisations in North Wales to create real andl asting economic, environmental, and social impact through the adoption of clean and sustainable energy."

Alun Jones, Head of Social Investment at WCVA, said:

"All social businesses work to deliver 'the triple bottom line' of people, profit and planet and areonly too aware of the responsibilities they carryin supporting the decarbonisation agenda. This fund offers them a huge opportunity to access funding to make their plans happen. We're really looking forward to helping support some interesting and impactful projects."



SOCIAL VALUE

We have always sought to maximise the benefits to the region from the capital expenditure associated with the Growth Deal and our procurement principles put a strong emphasis on securing added value through procurement activity. A key part of this is commitment to embedding social value in Growth Deal delivery. All procurement packages over £100k are required to include social value commitments with project sponsors required to include a 15% social value weighting in their scoring criteria. The primary aim here is to secure additional social value and community benefits from projects but a secondary objective is to support local and regional and national companies to secure contracts as they are often well places to deliver social value and community benefits.

This work aligns with the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act—ensuring economic growth delivers environmental and community benefits.

Our recent survey of the Welsh market revealed larger North Wales organisations often have formal social value strategies, while SMEs show strong ethical practices but need more support to formalise efforts. At Ambition North Wales, will continue to develop the support and resource packs to support SME's (especially with procurement) with Social Value delivery in North Wales.

Tourism Talent Network

A £2.9M contract has been awarded to a local North Wales supplier, supporting the delivery of two spokes within the programme. Both spokes have committed to using the same supplier, who will deliver a strong Social Value offer, including:

- Promoting the benefits of the circular economy to local businesses
- Investing in the promotion of green spaces and biodiversity within local education settings
- Contributing time and resources to support environmental education and community engagement
- Supporting STEM curriculum activities in local schools and colleges

Centre for Environmental Biotechnology

A £500k+ contract awarded to a local North Wales supplier with strong social value offer, including:

- Circular economy support
- Donations to biodiversity and community projects
- STEM and university curriculum sup

Enterprise Engineering and Optic Centre

A £10M+ contract has been awarded to a local North Wales supplier, recognised for delivering exceptional social value. The supplier's social value commitments are already making a tangible impact, including:

- Creating local apprenticeship opportunities
- Sustaining and generating local jobs
- Providing meaningful support to the local community

Cross-sector collaboration secures total private sector funding for new plant

Ambition North Wales formally accepted the withdrawal of the Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant from the Growth Deal in November 2024.

The development will proceed without the need for the allocated £6.4m of Growth Deal funding. This successful outcome has been made possible thanks to close collaboration between Ambition North Wales and The Circular Economy Developments Ltd, which enabled investors to commit to the funding required for the plant.

The Deeside Anaerobic Digestion Plant will use food waste from the area to generate and export green electricity and biomethane for commercial use. Alongside creating high value employment, the new site will be carbon negative - delivering a much-needed carbon zero energy source for local industry, including helping the local Toyota Manufacturing Facility to meet decarbonisation targets. The processed digestate will then be used to produce fertiliser for local farms and CO_2 will be captured for storage or industrial use.





Mac Andrade
Chief Executive Officer
The Circular Economy Developments Ltd

"We are excited to solidify our commitment to Deeside as the location for TCE's headquarters. This decision reinforces our dedication to supporting local growth, creating sustainable job opportunities, and contributing positively to the region's economic landscape.

By working closely together with Ambition North Wales, we have strengthened our shared commitment to sustainable development in Deeside, fostering meaningful connections that will drive local growth and support a greener economy."

THE NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL

Cynllun Twf Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Growth Deal

funded by:

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

UK Government
Llywodraeth y DU
Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
Swyddfa Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru



OVERVIEW OF THE GROWTH DEAL

- To build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales.
- To build on our strengths, to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to deliver inclusive growth.
- To promote growth in a scalable, inclusive and sustainable way, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

INVESTMENT

£240M
Growth Deal target investment

Total Target Investment:
over **£1bn**

SPENDING OBJECTIVES

Create up to
4,200
new jobs

Generate up to
£2.4bn
net additional GVA

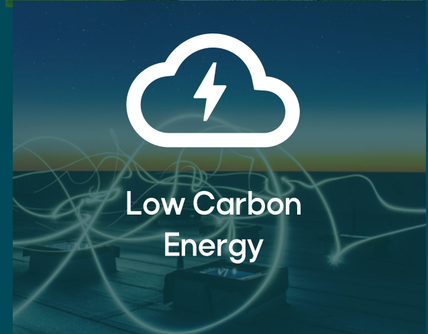
OUR PROGRAMMES











Agri-food and Tourism

The programme aims to promote and support employment and training in the Agri-food and Tourism sectors, building on world-leading skills and expertise already established within the region.



Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub

A distinctive, world class rural economy hub offering food-grade facilities and knowledge transfer services to enhance the food and drink sector.

SOC approval — Change Request approved



Tourism Talent Network

Future-proof tourism and hospitality skills provision and increase the commercial benefits from one of the best established and fastest growing sectors in the region.

SOC approval — OBC Approved — FBC Approved — Implementation and monitoring



Responsible Adventure

This project will promote North Wales as a leading sustainable tourism destination. It aims to attract additional visitors in a way which is environmentally sustainable and considerate to local communities. It consists of developing a new sustainable cable car, slate explorer and eBus network.

SOC approval — OBC Approved

KEY
SOC - Strategic Outline Case
OBC - Outline Business Case
FBC - Full Buisiness Case

Digital Connectivity

Addressing connectivity challenges within the region, enhancing the capability to develop new technologies for the future ensuring that businesses and residents can benefit from fast, high-quality connectivity.

The Digital Signal Processing Centre



Research and development of new technologies which improve how data is processed efficiently and reliably between devices and people.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → FBC Approved → Implementation and monitoring

The Last Few %*



Providing a minimum 'superfast' (30Mbps) broadband to poorly connected communities across North Wales.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → Project under review

Full Fibre*



This project will deliver strategic investment in fibreoptic networks to provide wider access to gigabit capable connectivity supporting economic growth in the region.

Developing OBC → Project under review

4G+



This project will improve 4G mobile connectivity at key economic sites in the region, targeting transport routes, business and tourism hubs while supporting the further deployment of 5G network coverage in these areas.

SOC approval → OBC Approved

Advanced Wireless



The Advanced Wireless project will support private and public sector organisations adopt the latest wireless technologies to support improved service delivery, business efficiencies, innovation and growth, particularly through the use of internet of things applications.

SOC approval → OBC Approved

LPWAN



This project aims to deliver extensive and accessible LoRaWAN network coverage throughout the region, providing businesses and public sector users with a cost effective solution for adopting internet of things applications and supporting innovation.

SOC approval → BJC Approved → Implementation and monitoring

*Following a Portfolio Review, focusing on impact and deliverability, this project was withdrawn from the North Wales Growth Deal in May 2025.

KEY
SOC - Strategic Outline Case
OBC - Outline Business Case
FBC - Full Buisiness Case
BJC - Business Justification Case

Innovation in High Value Manufacturing

Promote innovation and commercialisation of technology in the manufacturing industry, building on the existing strength of the sector within our region.



Centre for Environmental Biotechnology

Prifysgol Bangor University

Exploring the use of biological processes as low carbon alternatives to products and industrial manufacturing processes.

- SOC approval
- BJC Approved
- Implementation and monitoring



Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre

Prifysgol Wrecsam Wrexham University

Delivering state-of-the-art facilities to explore optics, photonics and composite materials as a lightweight material alternative, reducing carbon within the sector.

- SOC approval
- OBC Approved
- FBC Approved
- Implementation and monitoring

KEY
SOC - Strategic Outline Case
OBC - Outline Business Case
FBC - Full Buisiness Case
BJC - Business Justification Case

Land and Property

Addressing land and property challenges within the region, to unlock opportunities and build on our strengths. The programme will develop sites to provide residential and employment premises. It will also maximise capacity at key transport links.

KEY
SOC - Strategic Outline Case
OBC - Outline Business Case
FBC - Full Buisiness Case
BJC - Business Justification Case



Former North Wales Hospital

Remove dangerous buildings and prepare the site for new homes and new commercial units for new and existing businesses to relocate and expand.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → FBC Approved → Implementation and monitoring



Western Gateway, Wrexham

The provision of primary services to deliver development plots for new and existing businesses to expand or relocate.

Preparing the SOC



Holyhead Gateway

Improve the port's capacity and facilities, creating a multi purpose berth for new energy projects, commercial traffic and cruise ships.

SOC approval → Project under review



Kinmel Studios*

This project will design, build and operate a new film and television studio at Tir Llwyd Enterprise Park, Kinmel Bay.

Project under review



Parc Bryn Cegin

Develop new build employment premises suitable for new and existing buisinesses to expand and relocate.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → FBC Approved → Implementation and monitoring



Wrexham Gateway

Part of the Wrexham Gateway masterplan, this project aims to deliver a transformative mixed-use regeneration scheme of the area around Wrexham General Station.

Preparing the SOC



Warren Hall, Broughton

The provision of primary services to deliver development plots for new and existing businesses to expand or relocate.

Preparing the SOC

*Following a Portfolio Review (May 2025), focusing on impact and deliverability, this project was placed on a reserve list of projects which can be viewed at www.ambitionnorth.wales

Low Carbon Energy

Unlocking the benefits of developing low carbon energy projects within the region, positioning North Wales as a leading location for the low carbon energy sector.



Cydnerth (Morlais)

Develop additional grid connections for tidal energy suppliers to deploy more turbines within the zone.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → FBC Approved → Implementation and monitoring



Smart Local Energy

Support projects to achieve renewable energy, decarbonisation and have local ownership.

SOC approval → OBC Approved → Developing the FBC



Egni

Developing a Centre of Excellence, enhancing research, design and innovation in low carbon energy.

OBC Approved



Trawsfynydd*

Deploy Small or Advanced Modular Reactors at the site to generate low carbon energy.

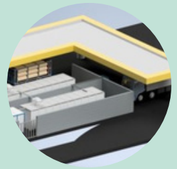
Project under review



NEW-H2*

Kick-start the region's hydrogen economy by supporting and delivering a hydrogen hub.

SOC approval → Project under review



Holyhead Hydrogen Hub

This project will establish a green hydrogen production and distribution facility, at Parc Cybi, Holyhead within the Anglesey Freeport zone.

SOC approval

*Following a Portfolio Review (May 2025), focusing on impact and deliverability, this project was placed Reserve List of projects which can be viewed at www.ambitionnorth.wales

KEY
SOC - Strategic Outline Case
OBC - Outline Business Case
FBC - Full Buisiness Case

GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW*

Local authority partners established the Economic Ambition Board as a joint committee in 2019. It is the decision-making body for the North Wales Growth Deal, as well as leading regional economic collaboration.

Having secured the Growth Deal in December 2020, the partners entered 'Governance Agreement 2'. This agreement, a legally binding document, defines the role and function of the Economic Ambition Board and its use of delegated powers. It also outlines the decision-making structures and democratic accountability.

The Growth Deal's governance arrangements enable decisions to be made openly and transparently for the benefit of the whole of the region. While the Economic Ambition Board acts as the decision-making body for the Growth Deal, there are strong formal and informal links to the Welsh and UK Governments as funders of the Deal.

The Economic Ambition Board has adopted a delivery model based on a best-practice approach to portfolio, programme and project management. This approach is an integrated way of meeting an organisation's ambition, driving better decisions and increasing the likelihood of successful outcomes.

*Governance information set out on this page is accurate up until 31 March 2024, which is the final date covered by this Annual Report 2024/25. From 1 April 2025 the Governance Structure of Ambition North Wales changed as it became a Corporate Joint Committee. Deatils are available at www.ambitionnorth.wales

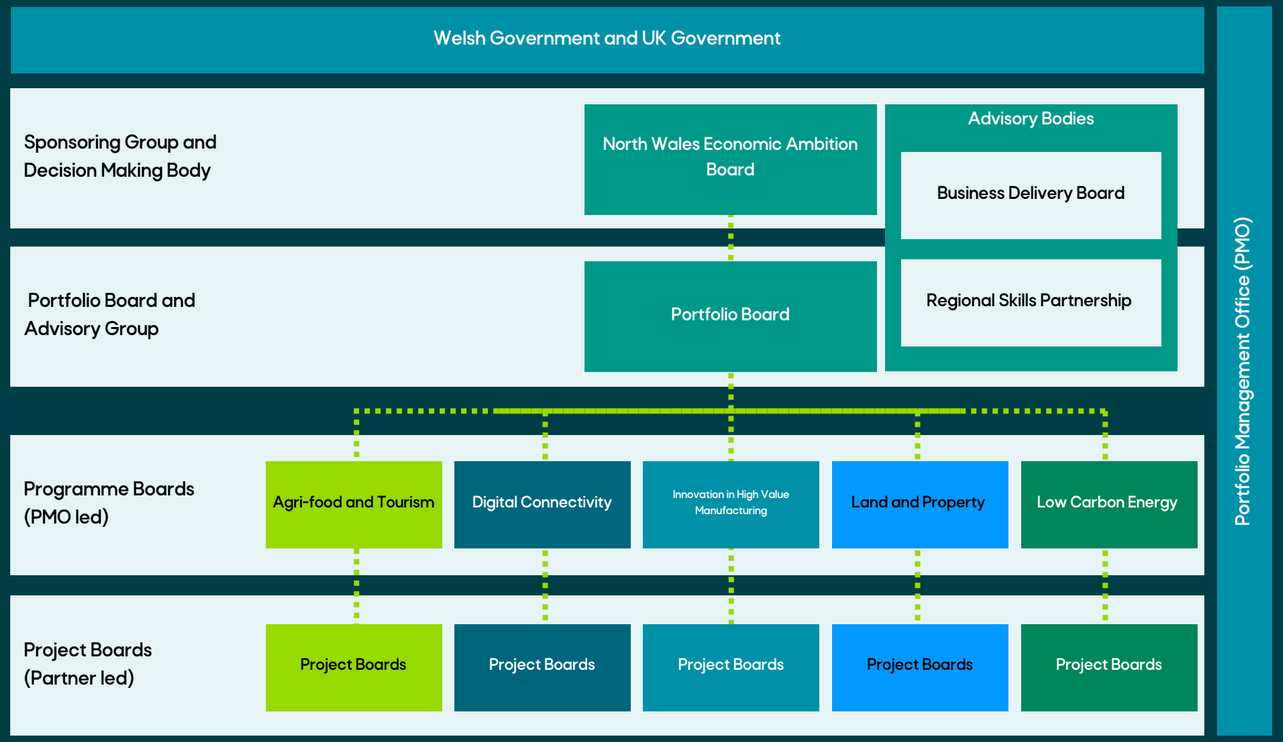
REPORTING

The Portfolio Management Office produce quarterly progress reports and an annual report on the Growth Deal which are shared with the Welsh Government and UK Government, the Economic Ambition Board and its partners. These reports are publicly available on our website.

SCRUITNY ARRANGEMENTS

Scrutiny of the North Wales Growth Deal is provided by the six local authorities through the existing Scrutiny Committee arrangements. The Scrutiny Committees consider the quarterly and annual reports produced by the Portfolio Management Office.

GROWTH DEAL PROJECT DELIVERY STRUCTURE



2024-25 in numbers

4
Projects in delivery

7
OBCs approved

8
FBCs approved

35
Jobs created
(26 Direct, 9 Indirect)

£15.32m
Growth Deal spend

£16.61m
Total Investment

£4.712m
Revenue income secured

£16.61m
Individuals completing accredited qualifications & CPD training coursesitional funding

10
Transformative actions taken to develop local supply chains

12
New Intellectual Property registered from projects

47
New collaborations involving organisations in support of Growth Deal projects

139
New knowledge management products created and shared



SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Partneriaeth Sgiliau Rhanbarthol Gogledd Cymru
North Wales Regional Skills Partnership

REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP



The last 12 months have been undeniably busy for the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership. With delivery of the 2023-2025 Skills and Employment Plan well underway, work continues to progress against the RSP's 3 identified priority areas which include enabling and empowering employers, enabling and empowering individuals and, how support is provided and making the connections. There has been a broad range of activities undertaken by the RSP this year, and some of the most impactful activities include:

North Wales Skills Portal

A significant highlight this year has been the launch of the much-needed North Wales Skills Portal. The North Wales Skills Portal is an innovative online platform designed to connect individuals and employers with local skills development, employment opportunities, training, and support providers. Made possible by SPF funding, the Skills Portal brings together local job vacancies, training opportunities, sector insights, business skills support and access to local events and resources.
You can find out more about the Portal, and learn how you can get involved here. Your continued support and engagement will ensure that the Portal continues to be a valuable regional asset.

NORTH WALES SKILLS portal SGILIAU GOGLEDD CYMRU



Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) Report

Up-to-date LMI is an integral part of the RSP's work - it allows the RSP, local providers and key stakeholders to better understand the evolving labour market in their 9 key and growth sectors. A report was commissioned to study the latest available data, combined with the future trends and forecasts to highlight the needs for the region in the medium and long term. This information will also be beneficial for Growth Deal projects to better understand what the future projections are in their industries to ensure investments being made lead to meaningful, long-term economic impact. You can read the report here.

Graduate Report

To better understand the migration of graduates, the RSP commissioned Darogan Talent to explore the trends and assess the needs of local businesses in terms of graduate recruitment. Some key findings suggest that although young people don't necessarily return to North Wales straight after graduating, they do return later in life. Next steps for the RSP include reviewing the recommendations within the report and working with partners to explore the potential for piloting regional initiatives, such as a graduate programme tailored to local employer needs. If you're keen to know more, you can find the report here.

Growth Deal Project Support

As part of the Ambition North Wales PMO, the RSP play a key role in supporting Growth Deal projects to identify and respond to skills needs. Over the past 12 months, work has continued to refine the approach to gathering information on skills gaps and workforce challenges, ensuring that emerging opportunities are captured and addressed effectively. We have worked with many projects across the portfolio during the year. One example of our work with the Growth Deal is with the Tourism Talent Network, where we have supported them through making introductions to stakeholders, data gathering, and making connections to Grwp Llandrillo Menai's other aligned projects such as the Tourism Talent Pathway. The RSP will continue to support projects as they progress throughout the duration of the Growth Deal term.



Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Sub-group

Advanced Manufacturing and Energy are two growing sectors in North Wales, particularly with the development of the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone. The RSP has established a new employer sub-group that brings together employers of all sizes from both sectors, across the region to discuss skills needs, challenges and opportunities. With Debbie Jones (from M-SParc) as the Chair, and Martin Evans (from Airbus) as the Vice-Chair, this group is set to play a key role in shaping skills development, responding to industry needs, and supporting regional economic growth through the Investment Zone, as well as the wider context.

> Our people are key to the success of our advanced manufacturing business. They are what makes the difference! Training underpins this, delivering the necessary skills for today and tomorrow. Ultimately, ensuring Broughton remains at the forefront of Aerospace manufacturing. The North Wales RSP and Welsh Government's support has been crucial, enabling us to develop and deliver world class training.
>
> **Martin Evans, Head of Industrial Academy at Airbus and Vice Chair of the Advanced Maunufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group**

Economic Development Programmes

- North Wales has welcomed two major investments outside the Growth Deal over recent years - the Anglesey Freeport, and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone.
- For the Anglesey Freeport, the RSP has assisted the Isle of Anglesey Council and Quod Consulting with LMI to form part of their Outline Business Case for the Anglesey Freeport application. The RSP provides a strong basis for the Freeport's work on skills and has played a key role in developing the skills plan for the Freeport which has been included in the final business case to both UK Government and Welsh Government.
- To see the full potential of the Investment Zone, it's critical that the skills needed in the advanced manufacturing sector are taken into consideration early. To support with this need, the RSP have commissioned Amion to produce a Skills Strategy. The Investment Zone initiative presents an opportunity to develop a targeted approach to skills development, ensuring alignment with sectoral growth in advanced manufacturing, employer needs, and emerging economic trends. We look forward to seeing developments over the coming months.



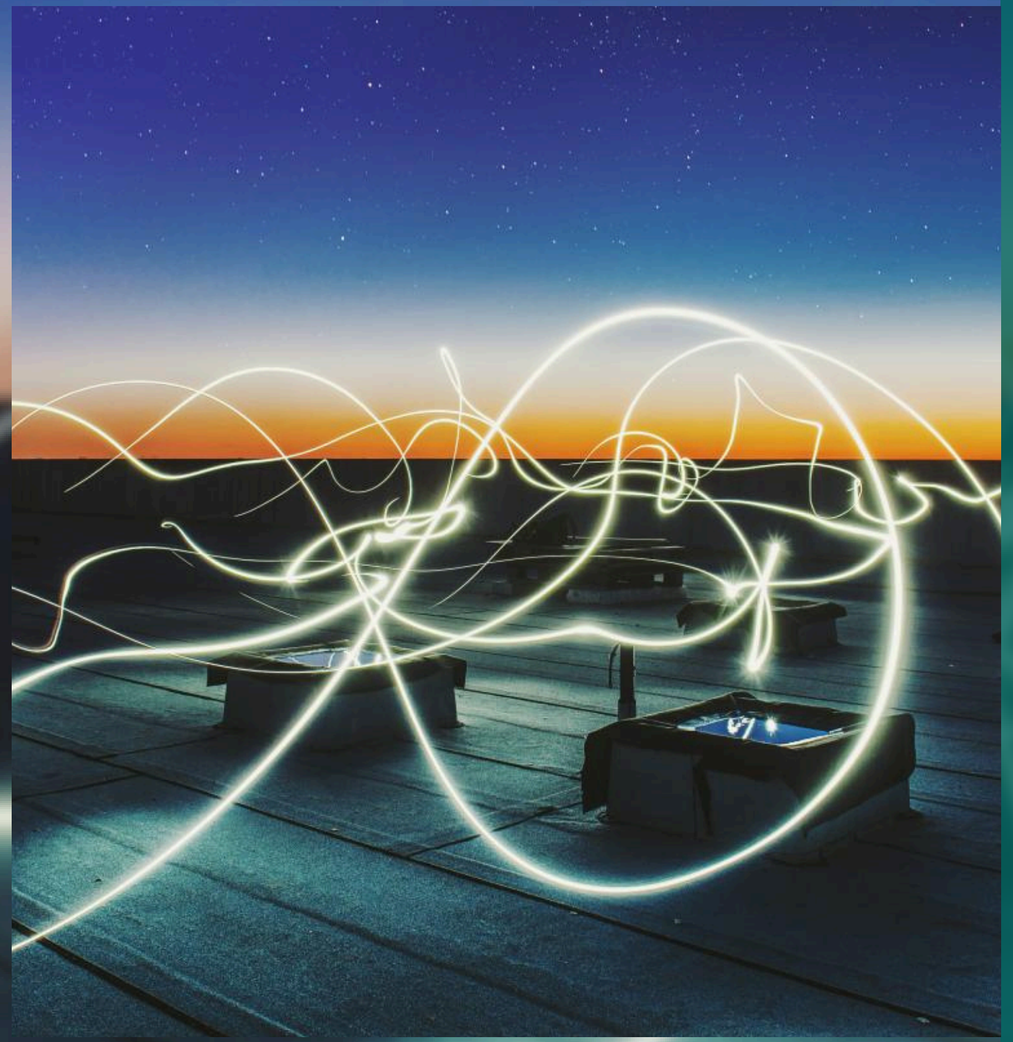
The Anglesey Career Pathways pilot

Delivered in collaboration with key regional partners, the Anglesey Career Pathways Pilot was developed to better align education with employer needs, enhance career readiness among young people, and support local economic development. The pilot has successfully tested three projects in 2024:

- Inspire to Build - introduced sixth form students to a range of careers in construction, from architecture to civil engineering, through employer engagement, a site visit and hands on project management challenges.
- Social Care Insights - engaged over 700 Year 9 pupils to explore diverse roles within social care ahead of their GCSE choices, aiming to raise awareness and interest in a sector with growing workforce demand.
- Teacher-Employer Encounters - brought together over 30 teachers and local employers to deepen understanding of the skills young people need to succeed in the workplace, helping educators better connect classroom learning to real labour market expectations.

With strong engagement and positive outcomes, discussions are underway to replicate this approach with other local authorities, supporting workforce pipeline development aligned to key regional sectors.

> Being part of the Regional Skills Partnership Board and some of its subgroups has given us an opportunity to begin to showcase and demonstrate what great career opportunities and added value to the economy that there is within the health and social care sector.
>
> The Regional Skills Partnership supported a successful series of events in Ynys Môn, where year 9 pupils at each of the 5 high schools attended a showcase event dedicated to the health and social care sector. Pupils got to experience and hear first-hand what career opportunities are available within the sector to enable them to make decisions when embarking on their GCSE options.
>
> **Jenny Williams, Chair of the North Wales Social Care and Health Workforce Board - part of the Regional Partnership Board**



LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS

LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS AND REGIONAL ENERGY STRATEGY

The Strategic Energy Team have worked closely with the 5 local authorities (with Conwy's plan having already been developed) and consultants ARUP, The Carbon Trust and Afallen to deliver Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) specific to each Local Authority area

Over the last year, the strategic energy workstream moved into a monitoring phase, creating tools and processes to join up projects, stakeholders and funding opportunities. Next year, we plan to move into a project origination and delivery phase, where our monitoring processes identifies gaps.



All the Local Area Energy Plans were completed, three were endorsed by the local authorities and three are in the political process.



We developed four directories: projects, stakeholders, funding and actions which can be integrated to track decarbonisation projects across the region, share available funding opportunities with stakeholders and track our progress to net zero.



We prioritised the actions assigned to Ambition North Wales from both the Local Area Energy Plans and Regional Energy Strategy, to come up with a forward work plan identifying gaps between the required outputs and the actions.



We are monitoring our actions and working towards monitoring the actions of others who have ownership of the energy system.



We reshaped the Regional Steering Group, to bring together collaborators across the energy group, share best practice and steer the whole system to net zero.



SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PROJECTS



Our 2024-25 UKSPF project consisted of eight key workstreams that maximised the benefits and opportunities available to businesses and communities across North Wales, through investments aligned to the North Wales Growth Deal. Together, the workstreams addressed challenges faced by individuals and SMEs - specifically in relation to skills shortages, capacity and knowledge gaps - and helped businesses accelerate the readiness of projects so they can be deployed earlier. This, in turn, helped lay the foundations for the benefits of the Growth Deal to be realised sooner. SPF funding provided essential revenue support to complement our capital-funded projects, allowing activities such as feasibility studies, community engagement events and business assessments to occur.

Bid Writing Support

Community organisations and small enterprise in North Wales were able to apply for a bid writing support grant for clean energy projects. The support funded consultations with specialist advisors on crafting effective funding applications.

Subsequently a suite of documents was developed and published on our website. The publications offer support to organisations in developing stronger, more coherent projects and proposals and are designed to be particularly beneficial for those applying to the Growth Deal's Clean Energy Fund - to be launched in Summer 2025.



Access Agreements

Guided by ANW's digital team, local authorities were supported to investigate the feasibility of signing Access Agreements, which would allow network providers to use their land to install, operate or maintain a digital communications infrastructure. In line with UK Government's desire for local government to play an active role in facilitating the improvement of digital infrastructure, every council agreed that signing the AAs was a feasible and positive step forward - with some singing agreements during the course of the work - making it easier for network operators to invest in improving connection for the residents and businesses of North Wales.

Mobile Survey Kit

In January, specialist 4G survey equipment was purchased to conduct independent evaluations of the mobile signal across the region. Consultants from the supplier organisation - Keysight, provided operational training to relevant members of the Ambition North Wales team, alongside partner organisations. The new kit will now be transported by refuse lorries on established routes across the region - meaning the location of coverage or connectivity issues can be identified. This new capability will inform the direction of Growth Deal investment by providing information to operators in relation to location specific issues and needs.

Rural Digital Connectivity Support

This was a new project to support communities across North Wales to understand their options around improving broadband connectivity. Annog Cyf, the commercial arm of Menter Mon, was appointed to undertake the work in association with Cadwyn Clwyd, forming an effective partnership amplified by local intelligence and resourcing. Over 500 people were guided on their broadband options, and events were held throughout the region to shout about the type of support available.

Cysylltedd Digidol Gwledig
Rural Digital Connectivity

North Wales Skills Portal

January saw the launch of the highly anticipated North Wales Skills Portal - a website that connects individuals and employers with local skills development, employment opportunities, training, and support providers. Within the first 10 days of launching, the Portal received over 1,000 unique visitors - emphasising the demand for this regional asset.

NORTH WALES **SKILLS** portal

SGILIAU GOGLEDD CYMRU

Benefits and Social Value - survey and workshop



Last summer, we conducted a survey into how familiar the region's organisations were with the concept of social value and whether they have strategies to drive this element of the wellbeing economy. We wanted to identify who was doing well and what type of support was needed, with a view of sparking a more collaborative multisectoral approach to tackle common goals.

Based on the response, our Social Value Lead designed a 2hr online workshop, which was attended by 77 people. It providing a walk-through of all things social value and addressing each difficulty expressed by the respondents, with 4 guest speakers sharing valuable insights and best practice from the public, private and third sector.



SME connectivity Assessments

Anglesey Sea Salt, Edwards of Conwy and Carl Kammerling International were some of the businesses that received support through our SME Connectivity Assessments digital workstream. Led by delivery partner BIC Innovation, we worked with businesses to map out their current technology systems, present options for improving connectivity and give tailored recommendations on how to adopt new and relevant advanced wireless tech to enhance operational efficiency and innovation. Insights will feed into and inform the GD Advanced Wireless project.



Carbon Emissions and Biodiversity

Sharing best practice and delivering training sessions on how climate change considerations should inform business case development.

We were able to over-achieve on the output and outcome targets set across our SPF workstreams.

Ineed, independent evaluators viewed the project as a success, deeming it ....

> **....highly cost effective...**

... in delivering tailored digital, environmental and employment guidance...

> **....at a fraction of traditional cost...**



CHARITY OF THE YEAR

CHARITY OF THE YEAR

Annually in September Ambition North Wales select a charity of the year. The Team's charity for last year (September 2023-2024) was Tŷ Gobaith.

The team have embraced a fantastic mix of fundraising activities and fun for Tŷ Gobaith. From taking part in Dark Runs across the region to hosting a series of successful bake sales, the efforts culminated in a hugely popular Quiz that brought colleagues and the community together. A big thank you to everyone who got involved and supported these brilliant events and the charity!

Some members of the team took the opportunity to visit Tŷ Gobaith to see the invaluable support they provide to families across North Wales.

A big thank you to Tŷ Gobaith for being our Charity of the Year —we're incredibly proud to support such a vital organisation.

We raised an amazing £2,860 for Tŷ Gobaith

hope house tŷ gobaith
children's hospices

We are proud to announce that our Charity of the Year (September 2024-2025) is the Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) North Wales.

Gogledd Cymru rasasc North Wales

RASASC provides vital information, specialist support, and therapy to anyone aged 3 and over who has experienced sexual abuse or violence—whether recent or historic. Their services also extend to partners and family members affected by such experiences, offering compassionate, professional support to help people heal.

We plan to support the organisation's dedicated team through a range of fundraising and awareness-raising activities throughout the year.

So far the team have raised £265 and have led on:

- The creation of care packages for RASASC clients to a value of £675
- A festive Christmas Jumper Day
- Charity bake sale.



Keep an eye out for more of our Team Charter Events taking place near you as we continue to support this vital cause throughout the year!

The Next 12 months

The financial year begins with a significant change to our governance structure, as our Portfolio Management Office team and Growth Deal are transferred into the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee on 1 April 2025.

As a team we will focus on meeting the duties of the Corporate Joint Committee – the production of a Regional Transport Plan, a Strategic Development Plan, and to promote and enhance regional economic wellbeing – which includes continuing to deliver the Growth Deal.

We have already made great strides within our transport responsibilities, given the launch of our public consultation on the draft North Wales Regional Transport Plan.

Likewise, on economic wellbeing we have, in collaboration with Wrexham and Flintshire councils and partners, established firm foundations on which the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone can be developed.

In terms of the Growth Deal portfolio, there have been some real challenges to date, however progress is being made and we are now seeing a significant increase in the number of projects moving into delivery and the first jobs being created. From the up and coming roll out of the Tourism Talent Network, the launch of our Clean Energy Fund, work starting on-site at tidal energy scheme – Cydnerth, to the delivery of the Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre and facilities at the Centre for Environmental Biotechnology, alongside digital projects such as 4G+ and Advanced Wireless – we are really moving on an upward trajectory.

In addition to this, as this financial year comes to a close, we are reviewing our Growth Deal portfolio which will inform the development of a new reserve list of impactful and swiftly deliverable projects. This will create a very healthy pipeline for the Growth Deal and de-risks the portfolio if projects stall or further funding is released.

On the vital element of skills – which is crucial to the success of all elements of our work – our Regional Skills Partnership will continue to play a key role in supporting Welsh Government's Jobs and Green Growth and Net Zero ambitions.

The appointment of a permanent Corporate Joint Committee Chief Executive is due to be confirmed during June 2025 – and will truly lead in driving progress for communities, businesses and individuals across North Wales.

So, we enter our next financial year, embracing change – committed to collaborating regionally so that our hard work bears fruit, meaning that North Wales thrives now and for future generations.

Alwen Williams

Portfolio Director and Part-Time Interim Chief Executive Officer Ambition North Wales



OUR PARTNERS

Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn
Isle of Anglesey County Council

Conwy
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Cyngor sir ddinbych
denbighshire
County Council

Cyngor Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
County Council

Cyngor Gwynedd

wrexham
County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
wrecsam

Prifysgol Bangor University
1884

Coleg Cambria

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

Prifysgol Wrecsam
Wrexham University

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