

# RUABON NEWS LETTER 505

PRESS RELEASE  
Ken Skates MS | Clwyd South

18/01/24  
*for immediate publication*



Senedd Cymru  
Welsh Parliament

## **UK Government urged to step up and support station lifts campaign**

**Campaigners for improvements at Ruabon Station have repeated their calls for the UK Government to step up with funding.**

The Welsh Labour Government wants lifts installed at Ruabon to help people with mobility issues, families with young children and commuters carrying heavy luggage move between platforms, but the UK Government refuses to contribute to the costs – even though the work comes under Westminster’s remit.

Local Member of the Senedd Ken Skates raised the issue in the Senedd this week and was told the Welsh Government is ‘doing everything we can at our end’.

Addressing Deputy Minister Lee Waters, who is responsible for transport in Wales, the Clwyd South MS asked: “Will the Minister provide an update on plans to improve Ruabon Station?”

Mr Waters responded: "Yes. Thank you to Ken Skates, who has been a consistent champion of Ruabon Station. We agree it has great potential, serving a wide area and is the rail gateway to the World Heritage Site at Pontcysyllte. We continue to press the UK Government for funding of the delivery of a new access-for-all bridge at the station."

While transport is devolved to Wales, responsibility for station infrastructure remains with the UK Government. Since devolution, Wales has received less than 2% of the £100bn+ the UK Government has

spent on improvements – despite having 5% of the population and 11% of the track miles.

Coupled with the lack of consequential funding to Wales despite the billions spent in England on HS2, the lack of investment from Westminster has been dubbed 'The Great Welsh Train Robbery'.

Mr Skates said campaigners for the improvements at Ruabon were left disappointed once again when, in November, the UK Government announced funding for other Welsh stations.

Responding to the Deputy Minister this week, he continued: "As you know, the Welsh Government has worked incredibly hard to try to get the improvements necessary at Ruabon Station. But back in November, there was the announcement of six stations in Wales that will receive upgrades, and Ruabon was not amongst them.

"Could you identify the reasons why you believe Ruabon Station has not yet benefited from the upgrades that so many passengers require of the station? Is it a problem with Network Rail or UK Government? Because I do understand that Transport for Wales has been pretty consistent in supporting the necessary works."

Mr Waters said: "I can confirm that Ruabon Station is one of our top priorities for delivery in Wales through the UK Government's Access for All scheme. Transport for Wales are working closely with Network Rail on that, and a final outline design is due at the end of March. So, I think we're doing everything we can at our end.

"A new accessible bridge at Ruabon would make a significant difference there, but we can only take it forward if the UK Government funds it. Rail is not devolved to Wales, it is a UK responsibility, and I'm bound to ask what are all those Tory MPs in North Wales doing if they can't deliver funding for a modest investment like this."

Welsh Ministers had previously asked the UK Department for Transport to urgently prioritise work at Ruabon – with First Minister Mark Drakeford a keen supporter of the plans.

But the final say will come down to the UK Government, which has repeatedly stopped the project in its tracks by refusing to invest in Ruabon.

The Welsh Government's first bid for funding was a replacement bridge with lifts, and the second for a reduced cost alternative which would see lifts fitted to the existing footbridge. Both were rejected.

Mr Skates and Ruabon councillor Dana Davies have worked alongside the Friends of Ruabon for years to campaign for improved access at the station.

**In 2017, former Clwyd South MP Susan Elan Jones presented a petition to Parliament calling for action from the UK Government.**



In a further attempt to incentivise the UK Government to invest in Welsh stations, including Ruabon, the Welsh Government even offered to match-fund vital upgrades.

Cllr Davies said: “It is well documented that the Welsh Government has previously put money on the table for this long-awaited work, even though it’s not a devolved area. The Friends of Ruabon – and many other local people – have been frustrated and extremely disappointed by the lack of progress and numerous false dawns.

“Some years ago, when the Welsh Government first committed to funding half of the project, we celebrated – we thought it was a done deal. We didn’t think there was any way the UK Government would refuse to fund half the cost of a project it should be paying for in full.”

**-End**

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16/01/24  
*for immediate publication*



Senedd Cymru  
Welsh Parliament

## **Pioneering Bank** **'should be replicated across the UK'**

**The Wrexham-based Development Bank of Wales (DBW) is continuing to generate millions of pounds for the Welsh economy – and safeguard thousands of jobs.**

Clwyd South MS Ken Skates led the creation of the UK's first regional development bank during his time as the Welsh Government's Economy Minister.

Last week he asked his successor Vaughan Gething for an update on the DBW's performance and was told it is making 'strong progress'.

Mr Skates is now urging a future UK Labour Government to adopt the model of regional banks.

The Economy Minister Vaughan Gething said: "Half-year results issued by the bank show it is making strong progress, making 239 investments totalling £51m – investments which are creating and safeguarding 1,718 jobs. The bank continues to play a vital role helping businesses across Wales access the finance needed to develop, grow and progress sustainability goals."

The DBW, based at Yale Business Village, was set up by the Welsh Government to make it easier for Welsh businesses to get the finance they need to start up, strengthen and grow. It can offer loans of £1,000 to £10m and equity investment from

£50,000-£10m for established businesses and co-invests alongside banks, crowd funders, grants, investors and other lenders.

Mr Skates has previously said the DBW's success 'is in no doubt due to the fact that the bank was headquartered in Wrexham rather than Cardiff'.

He added: "The Development Bank has performed beyond even our expectations, especially in Wrexham and North Wales where it has helped to grow businesses and attract investment.

"Throughout the pandemic and since, the Development Bank has supported a huge number of businesses in our region. In fact, it has helped a disproportionate number of small businesses in Wrexham and across North Wales since its creation."

Wrexham's Member of the Senedd, Lesley Griffiths, said: "The Development Bank is a fantastic Welsh Labour Government initiative that could have been located anywhere in the country, but I am proud it is based in Wrexham.

"Since it launched in 2018, the Development Bank has directly invested more than £500m in Welsh businesses and supported almost 33,000 jobs in the process. It also provided a crucial lifeline to many local and regional businesses during the pandemic.

"The Development Bank is a real success story and there is no reason this initiative could not be repeated across the UK."

Mr Skates added: "I strongly believe this is a model which could and should be adopted and replicated across the UK. I would urge a future UK Labour Government at Westminster to look to Wales and do exactly that and create regional banks across the United Kingdom."

Mr Skates said the DBW was created to operate ‘where there was market failure’ and to support economic opportunity by making finance available to viable businesses.

The bank had an impact of £1.2bn in its first five years which the Clwyd South MS said ‘simply wouldn’t be in the Welsh economy otherwise’. **-Ends-**



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## ‘Freedom Leisure’

The leading charitable and not-for-profit leisure trust that manages 29 leisure centres across Wales, is extremely proud to announce that it has been chosen as a finalist in two categories in the upcoming:

## ‘Swim Wales Awards’

Which take place at a gala event in Cardiff later this month.

These prestigious awards, organised by Swim Wales, the recognised National Governing Body for aquatics in Wales, recognise and celebrate the incredible spirit of aquatics by showcasing individuals, groups and organisations for their passion, dedication and outstanding achievement.

The two award categories are

## ‘The Sustainability Initiative Award’

and the prestigious:

## ‘Learn to Swim Wales Provider of the Year Award’.

Freedom Leisure manages the leisure centres on behalf of the councils in Powys, Wrexham and Swansea and boasts over 12,000 swimmers on its Swim Wales Learn to Swim programme with a highly skilled team of swimming instructors teaching both children and adults to learn the ‘life skill’ of swimming.

The submission for ‘The Sustainability Initiative Award’ centred around Freedom Leisure’s significant investment in energy saving initiatives which has resulted in reducing carbon emissions and improving their environmental impact.

### **Freedom Leisure’s Chief Executive Officer commented**

Ivan Horsfall Turner, Freedom Leisure’s Chief Executive Officer commented; “We are delighted to have been selected as a finalist in the Swim Wales Awards 23/24. We welcome over 800,000 visits to our swimming pools each year and we are proud to have over 12,000 participants on our Swim Wales Learn to Swim Programme. Having a strong partnership with Swim Wales enables us to provide children and adults with a fantastic experience, supporting their growth in confidence with a life skill which results in enjoyment, safety and aquatic fun in the water particularly in our coastal areas such as in Swansea.”

“We have enjoyed a strong working relationship with Swim Wales over several years that ensures people of all ages and abilities in Wales who are learning to swim do so through the highest quality of learn-to-swim experience. Also, their mission of aquatics for everyone for life, aligns seamlessly with our own mission of improving lives through leisure”.

Ivan was joined by other members of his Senior Leadership Team to the ceremony on 20th January 2024 in Cardiff, demonstrating the



organisations passion and commitment to aquatics development in

Wales.

## Cyrsiau yn dechrau yn Rhiwabon cyn bo hir! Courses starting soon in Ruabon!

11/01/24	Cyngor ar Arbed Ynni   Energy Saving	10.30am - 12pm
18/01/24	Cyllidebu   Budgeting	10.30am - 12.30pm
25/01/24 01/02/24	Thabledi   Tablets	10.30am - 12.30pm
08/02/24 15/02/24	Ffonau Clyfar   Smartphones	10.30am - 12.30pm
22/02/24 29/02/24 07/03/24 14/03/24 21/03/24 28/03/24	Sgiliau TG Sylfaenol   Basic IT	10.30am - 12.30pm

**Llyfrgell Rhiwabon, Caer Llan, LL14 6NH**  
**Ruabon Library, Caer Llan, LL14 6NH**

Cysylltwch â | Contact  
[info@groundworknorthwales.org.uk](mailto:info@groundworknorthwales.org.uk)  
[www.groundworknorthwales.org.uk](http://www.groundworknorthwales.org.uk)



[www.groundworktraining.org.uk](http://www.groundworktraining.org.uk)



## Diwrnod Cofio'r Holocost Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place each year on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust encourages remembrance in a world scarred by genocide.

The 27<sup>th</sup> January was specifically chosen to

remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of other people killed under Nazi Persecution and in genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. It marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.

If you would like to remember, then Wrexham Library service has many books including 'The Tattooist of Auschwitz' by Heather Morris, The Book Thief by Markus Zusak, The Secrets We Keep by Theresa Howes, 'The Red Ribbon' by Lucy Adlington, 'First One In Last One Out' by Marilyn Shimon and much more. You can also borrow these titles and more from our free online e.book and eaudio book platform BorrowBox; visit [www.wrexham.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/libraries) and follow the online services link.

### Ti a Fi Cefn Mawr Library

Cylch Ti a Fi gives you and your child the opportunity to meet regularly with parents / guardians and other children so that the children can enjoy playing together giving you the chance to socialize over a cuppa! It is a great opportunity for parents / guardians to meet to share experiences and socialize in an informal Welsh atmosphere. Ti a Fi sessions take place at Cefn Mawr library every Wednesday during term time, 1.00-2.15pm. There is no need to book, just turn up and join in the fun!

### Welsh Language Author of the Month

Manon Steffan Ros is a Welsh full-time novelist and playwright as well as a games author, scriptwriter and musician (as half of the folk duo 'Blodau Gwylltion'). She has written over twenty books and has won countless awards, including the Tir na n-Og Prize (a set of annual children's literary awards in Wales) three times. Her winning titles include, 'Trwy'r Tonnau' in 2010, 'Prism' in 2012 and 'Pluen' in 2017. She has translated some of her novels into English, and in June 2023 she won the Yoto Carnegie Medal for her English translation of her novel 'The Blue Book of Nebo'

**Warm Places** If you're struggling to keep warm or you feel you need to have some company, why not visit your local library this winter? Come and enjoy the library's facilities, read a book, use the computer, read the local papers or join in with our many groups, clubs and learning activities available for children and adults. We have hot drinks available throughout the winter months and all of our activities free to join. Don't be cold this winter, come and join us!

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## **Training - Upcoming events**

### **Group B (Level 2) Safeguarding Intermediate Course**

Date: Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th  
January 2024 you must attend both dates

Time: 6:15pm arrive for course to start promptly at 6.30pm -8:30pm

Venue: Plas Pentwyn Resource Centre, Coedpoeth Trainer:

Groundwork North Wales/ WFIS Childcare Team

Cost: £5.00

Please remember to email [Childcaretraining@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:Childcaretraining@wrexham.gov.uk) for course availability before making your payment

Click on the link for more information: [Training directory 2023/2024](#)



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd Wrecsam  
Wrexham Family Information Service

## **Exploring the Play Cycle**

This course will look at 'Dysplay' which is useful in explaining some of the reasons why children may struggle to engage with peers. Participants will learn how to recognise children's play frames and be better equipped to support them.

Date: Wednesday 24th January 2024

Time: 6:30- 8:30pm

Venue: Ruabon Centre of Excellence, off Stanley Grove, LL14 6AH

Trainer: WCBC Play Team

Audience: All Practitioners

Cost: £5.00

Please remember to email [Childcaretraining@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:Childcaretraining@wrexham.gov.uk) for course availability before making your payment

Click on the link for more information: [Training directory 2023/2024](#)

### **Training reminder:**

Your place on any of our courses will not be confirmed until payment has been made. Please ensure you pay the full amount of the course within 3 days of booking to secure your place.

A delay in payment may mean we have to offer your place to another person due to high demand. If you are experiencing difficulties in paying for the course please let us know.

Our preferred method of booking and payment is via our online payment system

👉 [Civica Payments Portal](#)



## **Self-assessment of Service Statement**

**will go live on 31<sup>st</sup> January**

The Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) will be available to complete online from 31 January 2024.

The SASS is an online form that all childminders and providers of childcare and play services in Wales are required by law to complete.

The information provided through the SASS submission will help CIW to plan inspections and provide the right help and support to those who need it most. The data from across Wales will be collated, anonymised and published later in 2024.

Providers will need a [CIW Online](#) account to complete the SASS. Those who do not have an account should take urgent action to create one.

If you do not complete your SASS by this date, it will impact your future ratings.

The deadline to complete the SASS is 15 March 2024.

Please contact the child care-team if you would like support completing your report: [childcareteam@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:childcareteam@wrexham.gov.uk)

Coleg Cambria is starting a new cohort in March at the Yale site for the Level 4 Professional Practice and Level 4 Preparing for Leadership.



Two dates have been confirmed so far, 20/3/24 and 17/4/24 which will act partly as an introduction. Further dates are being worked on currently by the work-based practitioners, but as a general guide, there will be around 8 to 10 sessions, one full day per month on average throughout an academic year.

Please feel free to contact Sally Ewing, at [sally.ewing@cambria.ac.uk](mailto:sally.ewing@cambria.ac.uk), call on 01978 267189 or message on 07892 757286.

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## Museum's Café has a New Home



The Café has relocated to a temporary location at [Tŷ Pawb's Food Court](#), complimenting their superb line-up of local eateries.

The menu includes all the snacks, sandwiches, light meals, great coffee and irresistible desserts that regular Courtyard Café customers will recognise.

They are open from 10.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, and 11.00am-3.30pm on Saturdays.

Ivan was joined by other members of his Senior Leadership Team to the ceremony on 20th January 2024 in Cardiff, demonstrating, a Football Museum for Wales.

Wrexham Archives Service will soon be moving to a brand new home at Wrexham Library.

## Wrexham Archives Survey



The Courtyard Café has now been moved temporarily to Tŷ Pawb's Food Court with opening hours: from Monday to Friday 10.30am-4.30pm and Saturdays from 11.00am to 3.30pm.

The menu includes snacks, sandwiches, light meals, teas, coffees and desserts

Wrexham Museum is now closed to the public so that the building can be redeveloped into the 'Museum of Two Halves' – a brand new museum for Wrexham alongside the Football Museum for Wales.

Wrexham Archives Survey has been preserved from 1996 when it was part of the old Counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire. The service actively collects and preserves historical records and makes them available to the public for research purposes

We'll be sharing further details ahead of the opening day.

Wrexham Archives hold records relating to the history of the County Borough of Wrexham since its creation in 1996 and records relating to the area when it was part of the old counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire.

The service actively collects and preserves historical records and makes them available to the public for research purposes. We are happy to add records to the collections, which relate to the history of the County Borough.

The records that we hold include maps and plans, photographs, newspapers, pamphlets and business and family collections. We also hold a large collection of local studies library books as well as providing internet access to a wide range of local and family history sources.

We value your comments and they will be used to inform decisions on the development of the service going forward, and in applications toward funding to improve the Archive Service in the long term..

Wrexham Archives Service will soon be moving to a brand new home at Wrexham Library.

We'll be sharing further details ahead of the opening day.

We are also looking to improve the service and ask you to contribute by completing this survey....

Wrexham Archives hold records relating to the history of the County Borough of Wrexham since its creation in 1996 and records relating to the area when it was part of the old counties of Denbighshire and Flintshire.

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Featured Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>  
January @ 1:00 pm-2:00  
pm

[Matinée: The Telemann  
Baroque Ensemble](#)

Tŷ Pawb Market St,  
Wrexham, Wrexham

We are delighted to

welcome The Telemann Baroque Ensemble for a concert for flute, violin, viola, cello and harpsichord, featuring works from composers Handel, Telemann, Frederick the Great and Stamitz.

25<sup>th</sup> January @ 4pm–5.30pm

### [Play Session](#)

Tŷ Pawb Market St, Wrexham, Wrexham

Play Session Free! 16:00 - 17:30 A free open access playworker supported session in our new 'Lle Celf Ddefnyddiol' // 'Useful Art Space'! This redesigned space is equipped for den-building,





27<sup>th</sup> January @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

[Family Art Club//වහුභාෂා පවුල් කලා සමාජය // Clwb  
Celf Teulu Amlieithog!](#)

Tŷ Pawb Market St, Wrexham, Wrexham

This week's session will be run by artists Ellie Ashby and Manori Weerasinghe! Participation is welcome in Sinhala and English.

This year Family Art Club is Multilingual!

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for more info.*



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[www.choirsforgood.com/join](http://www.choirsforgood.com/join)

**We are looking for  
Volunteers to help in our  
Miners Rescue Cafe.  
Pop in or call 01978 664832  
or 07703360081  
3 Maesgwyn Road Wrexham  
LI12ap**



# **Birthday Parties at:** **Ruabon Sports Complex.**

with a:  
**Sports hall, Seminar room  
and Spectators' area.**

**Available Evenings and weekends.**

**Birthday party options available**

Including:  
**Football, Nerf, Netball and Cricket.**

Contact: Ruabon 01978 822978 or Chirk 01691778666





### The Adventures of Mr Brodie

It's very cold today with a wind chill of -5 degrees.

Dad was at a charity meeting so mam took me to Jackie's Beach for a change.

Not another soul was on the beach, too cold for everyone.

When dad gets home we're off for a picnic in the camper at Littlehaven Beach.



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I do hope you have all come through the bad weather unscathed, and are still able to enjoy most of your days.

Best wishes

Sybil (Bremner)