



**This is the forty sixth edition of our Torfaen Business Support E-newsletter**

### **COVID-19: Economic Resilience Fund (ERF)**

The Economic Resilience Fund (ERF) will provide support in the form of cash grants for businesses, social enterprises and charities and associated supply chain businesses that continue to experience a severe negative impact as a result of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. The grants will help meet operating costs (excluding staff wages) for the period 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021.

- **Local Authorities across Wales reopened applications for those businesses that are eligible WITH A TURNOVER OF LESS THAN £85K on the 26 July 2021.** Please **[apply via the Business Wales Eligibility Checker](#)**. This grant application will remain open until 9 August 2021. **[Read the Guidance Notes](#)**
- Applications for the ERF WITH A TURNOVER OF MORE THAN £85K are **now closed**

### **Taking reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus in workplaces and premises open to the public Updated Guidance**

Welsh Government have updated their **[guidance](#)** (19th July 2021) on the steps businesses need to take to keep their staff and customers safe during Coronavirus. This is a 4 step approach which represents a sequence in which the measures should be considered but is important that all steps are considered together and in the round.

There is also a new template to help businesses carry out their required **[risk assessment](#)** (21st July 2021)

More about **[ventilation](#)** can also be found at HSE



## **Welsh Government: Vaccination saves lives: new toolkit to help employers encourage employees to get COVID-19 vaccine**

The Welsh Government is encouraging employers to do all they can to support their workforce to get vaccinated.

A new toolkit has been launched to support businesses and organisations to help their workers get the COVID-19 vaccine.

It encourages employers to:

- Be as flexible as possible when it's time for staff to have a vaccine, this could include giving employees paid time off work to attend their appointments for both vaccine doses
- Use the campaign resources provided by the Welsh Government to run an awareness campaign in their organisation and provide employees with access to reliable and accurate information about the vaccine
- Share the Q&A document and expert advice videos to explain the vaccine and answer common questions employees may have
- Urge staff to be cautious about misinformation and encourage them to use trusted sources like [phw.nhs.wales](https://phw.nhs.wales) if they are searching for information or answers to questions about the vaccine
- Create employee vaccine champions by encouraging staff to discuss their experiences and share information with colleagues, family and friends

Read the Welsh Government press release here: <https://gov.wales/vaccination-saves-lives-new-toolkit-help-employers-encourage-employees-get-covid-19-vaccine>

The promotional pack can be found here: <https://gov.wales/covid-19-vaccination-promotional-pack-employers>



## **Changes to self-isolation for fully vaccinated adults**

All adults who have been fully vaccinated will no longer have to self-isolate if they are identified as close contacts of someone with coronavirus from 7 August 2021, the First Minister has confirmed.

The changes to the NHS Wales Test Trace Protect (TTP) service for fully-vaccinated adults will come into effect from 7 August 2021 – the same day as Wales is expected to move to alert level zero, if the public health situation allows.

Children and young people under 18 will also be exempt from the need to self-isolate if they are also identified as close contacts of a positive case.

But everyone who tests positive for coronavirus or has symptoms must continue to isolate for 10 days, whether they have been vaccinated or not.

Read more at [Business Wales News](#) and [Welsh Government Press Release](#)

## **Keep Wales Safe: guidance for tourism and hospitality businesses**

Guidance for tourism and hospitality businesses to keep employees and visitors safe during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Please ensure that you are aware of and following the updated [UKHospitality Wales Guidance](#) in addition to the [Guidance for Tourism and Hospitality businesses](#). (Please watch [this short film](#) to help you find your way around the guidance).

Information is also available on [recent and upcoming changes](#).

As each premises is different, businesses should read all guidance to understand the measures to be considered to operate the business safely.

For further information visit [GOV.Wales](#).



## **Claim for wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until 30 September 2021. From 1 July 2021, the government will pay 70% of wages up to a maximum cap of £2,187.50 for the hours the employee is on furlough.

From 1 August 2021, the government will pay 60% of wages up to a maximum cap of £1,875 for the hours the employee is on furlough.

For claims from 1st July 2021, employers must top up employees' wages to make sure they receive 80% of their wages (up to £2,500) for the hours they are on furlough. The caps are proportional to the hours not worked.

Find out more about [how the scheme is changing](#).

Claims for furlough days in July 2021 must be made by 16 August 2021. Further information is available at: [Claim for wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **New plan to help see more Welsh food and drink products on retailers' shelves**

A new plan to help food and drink companies across Wales get their products on the shelves of major retailers has been launched by the Welsh Government.

The [Food and Drink Wales Retail Plan](#) has been developed alongside an industry expert group and aims to see the turnover value for the food and drink industry in Wales grow proportionally more than the UK as a whole.

It has eight key objectives including creating a stream of new entrepreneurial food and drink businesses and accelerate the growth of companies with a turnover of more than £10m in the retail sector.

For further information please visit [GOV.Wales](#).



## **Life Sciences Hub Wales: New ‘Achieving Innovation’ resource now live**

[Life Sciences Hub Wales](#) is committed to supporting and working with life sciences companies, the health and social care sectors and academia to identify and embed innovation to make a real difference to patients and the people of Wales.

[‘Achieving Innovation’](#) is an online resource providing all sectors with the tools and information needed to make the difference. It includes information on

- Key insights
- Fresh perspectives
- New research
- Support organisations directory
- Policy review of innovation
- Blogs

You can also find out more about the [Digital Health Ecosystem Wales](#) (DHEW)



## **Ffilm Cymru and Clwstwr Launch New Green Cymru Challenge Fund for a Sustainable Screen Sector in Wales**

The Green Cymru Challenge Fund is a fresh partnership between Ffilm Cymru and Clwstwr. They are pleased to announce a new multidisciplinary innovation fund, which looks to advance solutions to key environmental challenges within the film industry in Wales.

The Green Cymru Challenge Fund will make available £75,000 in funding for individuals, organisations and collaborations across sectors – including media, academia, technology, transportation, energy, water and waste management - to research and develop new sustainable ways of working in film and TV.

The Green Cymru Challenge Fund will be open for Expressions of Interest from 14th July to 20th August 2021. More information at: [Home | Ffilm Cymru \(ffilmcymruwales.com\)](https://www.ffilmcymruwales.com)

### **Future Fund: Breakthrough**

Future Fund: Breakthrough is a £375 million UK-wide programme which encourages private investors to co-invest in high-growth, innovative firms.

The programme makes equity co-investments with private sector investors in growth stage R&D-intensive British companies operating in breakthrough technology sectors.

- Minimum total investment round size is £30 million.
- Maximum Future Fund: Breakthrough share of an investment round is 30%.

Future Fund: Breakthrough is delivered by [British Patient Capital](https://www.britishpatientcapital.com) a commercial subsidiary of the British Business Bank.

It is a separate programme to the now closed Future Fund that provided convertible loans, valued up to £5 million, to a broad range of innovative companies to address the funding challenges caused by Covid-19.



## **Make a genius decision and recruit an apprentice**

Recruiting an apprentice is a genius way to help strengthen your business cost effectively with fresh, new talent.

In addition to supporting a young person in their first steps on the career ladder, you'll work with a training provider who will help you to develop a personalised training programme that supports your own specific business needs now and in the future.

The Welsh Government's apprenticeship recruitment incentives mean that businesses in Wales, regardless of size or sector, could be eligible to receive up to £4,000 in support for each apprentice they recruit. Make a genius decision, visit [www.gov.wales/apprenticeshipswales](http://www.gov.wales/apprenticeshipswales) or call 03000 6 03000 for more information.

## **Business Support Virtual Clinics – Do you need a chat?**

### **September bookings now open!**

We are holding monthly on line Business Support Clinics to help any existing or start up business within Torfaen with impartial advice and support.

This gives you an opportunity to speak to our business support team for 20 minutes about your enquiry. Our next business virtual clinic is:

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - 10:00am - 12:00pm** [Book your 20 minute slot](#)



**Economy & Enterprise Team – Business Support** - If you need to get in touch with an enquiry complete your [details here](#) and we will contact you as soon as possible.

**COVID-19: [guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#)**

**COVID-19: [Support for businesses](#)**

Watch our twitter for further updates [@Torfaenbiz](#)

All editions of our COVID-19 e-shot can be found/viewed [here](#)

All editions of our COVID-19 e-shot are also available in Welsh [here](#)