



Growing Mid Wales February 2024 Newsletter



We hope you've had a great February,

The Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) have been powering on with developments since the start of the year and we're dedicating this whole edition to the team's work; the results of last year's Skills survey are ready to share and the Chairs for the established business cluster groups have been announced.

The RSP are led by you, the employers, apprentices and training providers of Mid Wales, to drive investment forward in skills.

Our *Meet the Team* colleague this month is Louise Grove-White, the RSP's Project Officer. Louise gives an insight into her role and her key achievements since joining the team.

Our rescheduled Sustainable Business Solutions event, to explore ways that could help your business decarbonise, is now being held on Monday, 11 March. Register before midday on 4th March to attend in person (You can also join the event online). More details on our [Eventbrite](#) page.

Helping to grow opportunity in Mid Wales,

The Growing Mid Wales team

[Cover: RSP Construction & Energy Cluster group meeting]

The poster features logos for Cerddedion County Council, Tyfu Ceredigion Cymru Growing Mid Wales, and Powys. The text reads: 'Free event for businesses', 'Sustainable business solutions in Mid Wales: Minimising emissions and costs', 'NEW DATE', 'Monday, 11 Mar 2024 10:30 - 14:30 at Bargoed Farm, Llwyncelyn, Aberaeron'. It describes a solution-focused discussion on greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs, lists speakers as energy networks, and mentions a site tour and lunch. Sponsors include nationalgrid, SP Energy Networks, and WALES&WEST UTILITIES.

1 - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sustainable-business-solutions-in-mid-wales-tickets-837602199727>

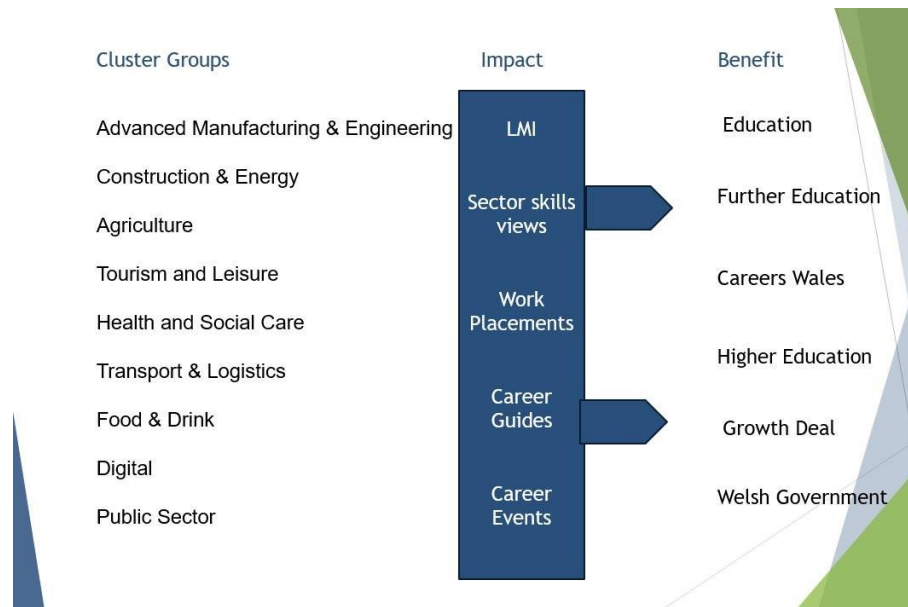
RSP Business Cluster Group Chairs

At the RSP Board meeting held on 29th January, the business cluster group chairs were announced. Each chair is from a business or organisation in a particular sector and will be the voice for the groups when sharing information between the groups, the RSP Board and with wider stakeholders.



Below is a diagram to show the impact the business cluster groups can have on driving change in the skills landscape in Mid Wales:

LMI - Local Market Intelligence



RSP Construction & Energy Cluster group

On 23rd January, the RSP held their first Construction & Energy Cluster group meeting in Newtown with Doug Hughes chairing the meeting.

Dr Gemma Delafield, our Regional Energy Lead presented on “Net Zero: What are the opportunities and challenges for businesses in Mid Wales” and discussed the energy survey findings alongside an interactive session which led to some productive discussions.





The results are in for the RSP survey

Last year, the RSP ran a Skills survey to help inform important plans on skills and recruitment - a big thanks to all who took part - 111 of you!

Powys – 63% of respondents

Ceredigion – 37% of respondents

The largest contribution was from the manufacturing and engineering sectors (17%).

Analysis of the results will be used to report back to Welsh Government on the skills landscape for Mid Wales.

Here's a snapshot of some of the results:

General Challenges

What is the main challenge facing you as a business?

Recruitment – 63%

Retention of staff – 11.65%

What is your most common recruitment issue?

Not enough interest in these types of roles – 30%

Applicants don't have the necessary skills or experience – 20%

What roles are you facing skills challenges in?

Skilled trade occupations - 27%

Apprenticeships

Do you currently employ apprentices?

No – 56%

Yes – 44%

Why do you not employ apprentices?

Not suited to business need – 36%

If you do employ apprentices, what benefit do they bring to your business?

Sustains the future of the business and provides a positive sentiment for the business – 97%

The full survey responses will be available on our new website in March 2024.

GMW team news

In other news, we are pleased to announce two new members to the GMW team. We would like to welcome Peter Jones and Amy Waters who join the Growth Deal Portfolio Management Office. As Projects & Performance Manager, Peter will be responsible for liaising with Project Sponsors regarding business case development, providing support and monitoring progress. Amy joins as Senior Service Support Officer providing much needed administration support to the team.

Also, congratulations to Dr Gemma Delafield who has been appointed as the Regional Energy Lead. Gemma will lead on providing technical and strategic advice to Ceredigion and Powys County Councils, and external stakeholders, on how Mid Wales could reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with its energy system. This covers everything from increasing renewable electricity generation in the region, to exploring ways to decarbonise heat, transport and industry. Gemma's previous role as Regional Energy Officer is being advertised [now](#). Closing date 07/03/24.

We wish them all the best in their new roles.

You can see who's who in Growing Mid Wales with our [staff structure](#).



2 - Amy Waters, Senior Service Support Officer



3 - Peter Jones, Projects & Performance Manager



4 - Dr Gemma Delafield, Regional Energy Lead

APPLY NOW

WE ARE HIRING

REGIONAL ENERGY OFFICER

➤ Full time ➤ £33,024 - 34,834 per annum

We are looking to strengthen our regional team of enthusiastic, experienced and committed officers with the addition of a regional energy officer with experience covering project management, research, and carbon management such as climate change, energy, environmental science & technology.

We offer a range of benefits: flexible working (including location), opportunities for training, an attractive pension scheme, as well as the opportunity to work in a fantastic location.



Meet the Team

Louise Grove-White - RSP Project Officer



5 - Louise Grove-White

When did you start with the team?

I started with the Mid Wales RSP team in December 2022. I had never worked in the public sector before so the change was real - a new system of working and a new language to navigate but the reception I received from the Growing Mid Wales Team has been amazing.

I've had a varied career to date – I started my working life as an administrator in a gallery in Cardiff and soon moved into fundraising and project management. A particular high point in my career was

managing the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition and Exhibition for five years at the Natural History Museum in London. I travelled with the international touring exhibition and got to meet and work with some amazing people including Sir David Attenborough, Chris Packham, Michaela Strachan and world renowned wildlife photographers. It was an amazing and unforgettable experience.

More recently I have worked for the Prince's Trust Cymru, the Black Mountains College and digressed into the world of beauty care at the FARMERS' Lavender Farm near Builth Wells.

Can you tell us more about your role?

As a Project Officer, I work on across the RSP on a number of projects from managing the development of the new website through to generating new labour market intelligence to inform our skills priorities for the region.

I also have responsibility to identify and develop any new initiatives which come our way. For instance, I am working with NPTC and Building Heroes to potentially bring the Building Heroes intensive construction skills course to Powys aimed specifically at armed forces veterans and their families. I also manage three of the new cluster groups – the Provider, the Public Sector, and the Young Persons Guarantee Clusters – working with the Chairs on the priorities for each group.

What are your current priorities?

Firmly on our horizon is the launch of the new Mid Wales RSP website. Currently we have a page on the Growing Mid Wales website but with the work and profile we have achieved within the region over the last six months we really needed a dedicated site to communicate with our target audience and to showcase Data Cymru's Data Observatory which will provide data on the region's economic performance, employment, demographics, post 16 education and training, Welsh language and a series of infographics focusing on our priority sectors.

Currently working closely with both Ceredigion and Powys education departments to look at 14+ years-old careers advice, information and guidance for the region. This is a big piece of work which will need the voice of our learners, schools, education departments and businesses in order to understand the current landscape.

What developments have you seen over the years?

My experience is just over 12 months and the changes have been off the scale. With the establishment of the cluster groups, we have a clear connection with the business community and the training provision within the region. This is a solid platform to influence change bridging that gap between education and regeneration and building a strong and vibrant economy in Mid Wales.

The links with both local authorities are stronger than ever and there is a natural synergy to involve the RSP in all things skills related across the region. This is a great step forward for us.

2024 is looking rosy!

What's been your biggest achievement?

I think my biggest achievement has been to establish good working relationships across the local authorities, training providers, HE and FE, Third Sector, Welsh Government and the other RSP's. We are a 'Partnership' and now more than ever I am seeing the rewards for working on those relationships.

One word that sums up the Growing Mid Wales Team:

Connection – we are becoming more and more integrated within the team. Working in silos is a thing of the past and this integration across our work streams has been invaluable in being able to communicate the GMW vision and how the RSP fits into it.

Other news

FREE Online session for Advanced Bid Writing, Tendering to win contracts

Business Wales are holding a free online session, on 26 March, to help improve in the tendering process to win contracts.

The session will include top tips on winning bids, how to build persuasion into your answers, maximising the chances of high scores and more!

Visit [Business Wales](#) for more information and how to register for the session.

Keep up to Date

Need to catch up on what's been discussed in our meetings? Here's a reminder of where you can find the minutes for the following meetings:

- All minutes relating to the Growing Mid Wales Board are hosted on Powys County Council [website](#).
- Papers relating to the Growing Mid Wales Partnership can be found on our [website](#).

Keep up to date with Growing Mid Wales news, developments on activity and organisations we support by following our Twitter and Linked In pages:

<https://twitter.com/growingmidwales>

www.linkedin.com/company/growing-mid-wales

We're eager to reach out to as many organisations and businesses across Mid Wales as possible. You can make this possible by following, liking and sharing our pages.

Disclaimer: As a Growing Mid Wales Stakeholder you receive these emails so that we can share news and information with you on a regular basis. You can inform us if you no longer wish to receive these emails by emailing growingmidwales@ceredigion.gov.uk.

