



The Welsh Government's Major Events Unit recently hosted leading experts and key decision makers in the international major events industry for the inaugural Event Wales International Conference.

The conference, held at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff, outlined Wales' vision for becoming a leading destination for hosting major events and discussed the significant opportunities and challenges that face the Wales, broader UK and international events industries.

It builds on the success of major international events in Wales such as the Ryder Cup, Test Match Cricket and Radio 1's Big Weekend, and follows the launch of Event Wales last year, the country's first Major Events Strategy that was established to create Wales' first coordinated and systematic approach to delivering and hosting future major events.

The Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales, said: "Wales has already developed its pedigree as an outstanding host nation for major events - but we are not complacent. Wales is a small nation and to build on historic successes like the Ashes and Ryder Cup, Wales needs to build its position as a consistently outstanding destination for world class events.

"We look forward to working with the events industry to exploit opportunities for developing new partnerships and new forms of collaboration which can deliver a demonstrable return on public sector investment. Working together is crucial to the successful delivery of world class events which raise Wales' international profile and enhance the wellbeing of people and communities across the nation."

Roger Lewis, Group Chief Executive, Welsh Rugby Union, said: “International events can define a nation - they can instil confidence, belief, self respect and hope into its people. International events can bring communities together and they can tell a story to the world about the values and beliefs of the host nation. The story of Wales is so rich, so magical and so wonderful, that it needs to be told.”



Senior level delegates who attended the Event Wales International Conference included representatives from relevant central government departments, local government authorities, event owners and organisers, sports governing bodies and national & international federations, tourism and creative industry organisations, brands and sponsors and members of the media. Speakers included Roger Lewis and Richard Hills, Director of Ryder Cup, Europe, and Fiona Stewart, Managing Director, Green Man Festival.

Meanwhile, on another Welsh events related front, UK Government ‘red tape challenge’ proposals to scrap the bureaucracy surrounding live music performances have been welcomed by the Wales Tourism Alliance.

A public consultation currently running has been launched by the Westminster government to examine the impact of deregulating live music performances under Schedule One of the Licensing Act 2003 and removing the licensing requirements which have for so long “stifled investment and creativity”.

The Wales Tourism Alliance (WTA) has welcomed the proposals, calling them “a genuine attempt to free up the regulations on live music and start the cutting of unnecessary regulation.” Chris Osborne, chair of the Wales Tourism Alliance, said: “The UK Government’s pledge to deregulate the licensing of live music is a big step in the right direction. I sincerely hope that this is just the start of the cutting of the Red Tape that currently binds much of the tourism industry so tightly that it stifles both investment and creativity.”

“Removing the requirement for licensing of regulated entertainment will undoubtedly provide a real boost for the tourism industry, but it will also bring huge benefits for community groups and cultural and sporting events. Anything that helps entertainment venues can only be good news for our communities and businesses in Wales.”

Conservative peer Baroness Rawlings gave the UK Government's consent to the bill pending assessment and consultation. If the bill eventually becomes law it will bring an end to confusing and restrictive regulation of live music events for less than 5,000 people.

Mr Osborne concluded: “This bill could be a much needed shot in the arm for local pubs, who rely on entertainment to compete with cut-priced alcohol sales in off-licences and supermarkets.”

Lord Clement-Jones who has steered the bill has previously been quoted as saying that it is all part of the “coalition agreement’s pledge to put an end to red tape and bureaucracy.”