



Prince helps Wales make a fresh start

There is no more natural setting for the launch of the Prince of Wales' Start project than the National Botanic Garden.

The Garden is welcoming the Prince on Tuesday September 7 as he cuts the ribbon on the very first Start Wales Festival.

Start (www.startuk.org) is a UK national initiative by The Prince's Charities Foundation to promote and celebrate sustainable living. HRH will take the opportunity to champion community groups and shining examples of sustainable practice.

The objective is to show how everyone can make positive changes to their lifestyles to benefit the planet in this, the International Year of Biodiversity.

The Start Wales Festival will provide a fascinating insight of the work going on in the Garden, communities and business across Wales, and provide a showcase for renewable and sustainable products and services which are available.

Project Start was first announced by The Prince of Wales in February with a speech at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, where he reflected on the role of his great great grandfather, Prince Albert, in establishing the Great Exhibition of 1851 to demonstrate the wonders of the modern world and the advantages it would bring - "a new starting point from which all nations would be able to direct their further exertions".

Project Start aims to echo the idea behind the Great Exhibition by showing people the technologies, techniques and principles that exist now, which will not only improve our lives, but also help to sustain the planet and conserve biodiversity.

It aims to provide a positive message and replace the negative language of climate change – stop, reduce, cut, don't – and stress the potential of a sustainable future to be better and more rewarding – for us and for nature.

The Garden provides the perfect backdrop. Its mission of conservation, education and inspiration are key to the future of everyone. These are clear for all to see on the 568-acre site, from the plant displays, organically-farmed Waun Las National Nature Reserve, biomass boiler and reed-bed sewerage system through to the chip-fat-fuelled land train, solar-powered sound boxes, recycled and borehole water supply, and wildlife allotment.

The Start Wales Festival is on September 7-8 and feature presentations and exhibits on the simple steps we can all take to make better use of our natural resources – energy, food, transport, buildings, waste – at home and at work.

The Festival programme will include the launch of

- The Size of Wales – an initiative to sustain an area of rain forest the Size of Wales,
- The Prince's Regeneration Trust's Green Guide,
- The Carmarthenshire Community Challenge
- and the Low Carbon South West Wales action plan

There will be keynote presentations including an address from HRH The Prince of Wales at 12.30pm on September 7 with other keynote speakers being Environment Minister Jane Davidson; Paul Twivy, Chief Executive of the Big Society; and George Marshall, Climate Change campaigner.

The Festival will include a wide range of exhibits and workshops covering energy, food, transport, buildings and recycling. Visitors will also be able to enjoy the Garden and take the Sustainability Trail, which showcases the renewable and sustainability elements.

Project Start – further information

Project Start is being run through The Prince of Wales Charitable Foundation and includes Start web: www.startuk.org, a centre of advice incorporating both content and interactive tools; Starting Points: Partner led initiatives helping large numbers of people to take simple steps to a better future; Start Conference led by IBM and held at Lancaster House: Bringing public, private and NGO sectors together in a “mini-Davos” style conference examining how best to bring about sustainable change in consumers behaviour; Start Tour: a UK tour by HRH The Prince of Wales to celebrate and promote sustainability

For more information, contact The Clarence House Press Office on 0207 024 5508/5506.

For further information on the Start Festival in Wales contact Peter Davies 07976457032 or 01834814955 or email wales@princescharities.org.uk

To contact the Garden, call 01558 668768 or email info@gardenofwales.org.uk