

# [ HIGH PRODUCTIVITY





Aled Roberts

## High productivity Leader of Wrexham Council, Councillor Aled Roberts

Wrexham has much to offer across a number of sectors including manufacturing, tourism, education, bioscience and sustainable energy.

**A**s Leader of Wrexham County Borough Council I am delighted to be involved with the World Class Wales publication showcasing all that Wales has to offer. I am therefore pleased to introduce Wrexham to you or, if you already know the area, we would love to welcome you back and tell you something new about our County Borough. Wrexham, situated in North East Wales adjacent to the English border region, has easy access to the urban areas of Manchester and Liverpool while also being a perfect base for exploring the stunning North Wales scenery.

The County Borough, which has the town of the same name as its focal point, has excellent road and rail links to the rest of North Wales, the North West and Midlands of England, and direct train routes to London.

The total population of Wrexham County Borough is 130,200, with 62,000 living in the town of Wrexham which is the largest in North Wales.

Commercially and industrially, Wrexham is a growth area and is the natural hub for the surrounding region. It is the main retailing centre in North Wales with the town being the main draw for a catchment area that extends across the whole of North Wales and much of Shropshire. There is also a thriving independent retail sector with a wide range of boutiques and smaller stores offering superb service and variety. Wrexham ranks as the third largest retail centre in Wales after Cardiff and Swansea.

The County Borough is also home to a number of household names that have manufacturing bases here. The likes of Sharp, JCB, Kellogg's and Cadbury's all have factories in the area while there has been a growth in the medical, bioscience and sustainable energy sectors.

Tourism generates £75m of revenue for the County Borough and has two National Trust properties, Chirk Castle and Erddig, and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, nominated for UNESCO World Heritage Inscription, at the heart of its offer. These are supported by a strong leisure offer including a multi-screen cinema, ten-pin bowling alley, regional tennis centre, numerous restaurants, bars and country pubs as well as a National Hunt racecourse at Bangor-on-Dee, an athletics stadium, international football ground, several top quality golf clubs and unspoilt countryside in the Ceiriog Valley. Many of the surrounding villages have their own thriving communities which prove popular with residents and visitors.

Wrexham is also home to Britain's newest University, Glyndŵr, and therefore has all the facilities that one would expect including a conference centre, a regional hospital and a range of accommodation.

One of the other strengths of the area is the feeling of community. People are our key asset and have demonstrated over the years their commitment, adaptability and appetite for hard work. Wrexham retains much of its character as a traditional heavy industry power base but the advent of new sectors has been welcomed and our broad spread across a variety of sectors gives us a solid foundation to move forward once again. This will ensure we remain an area of high productivity.

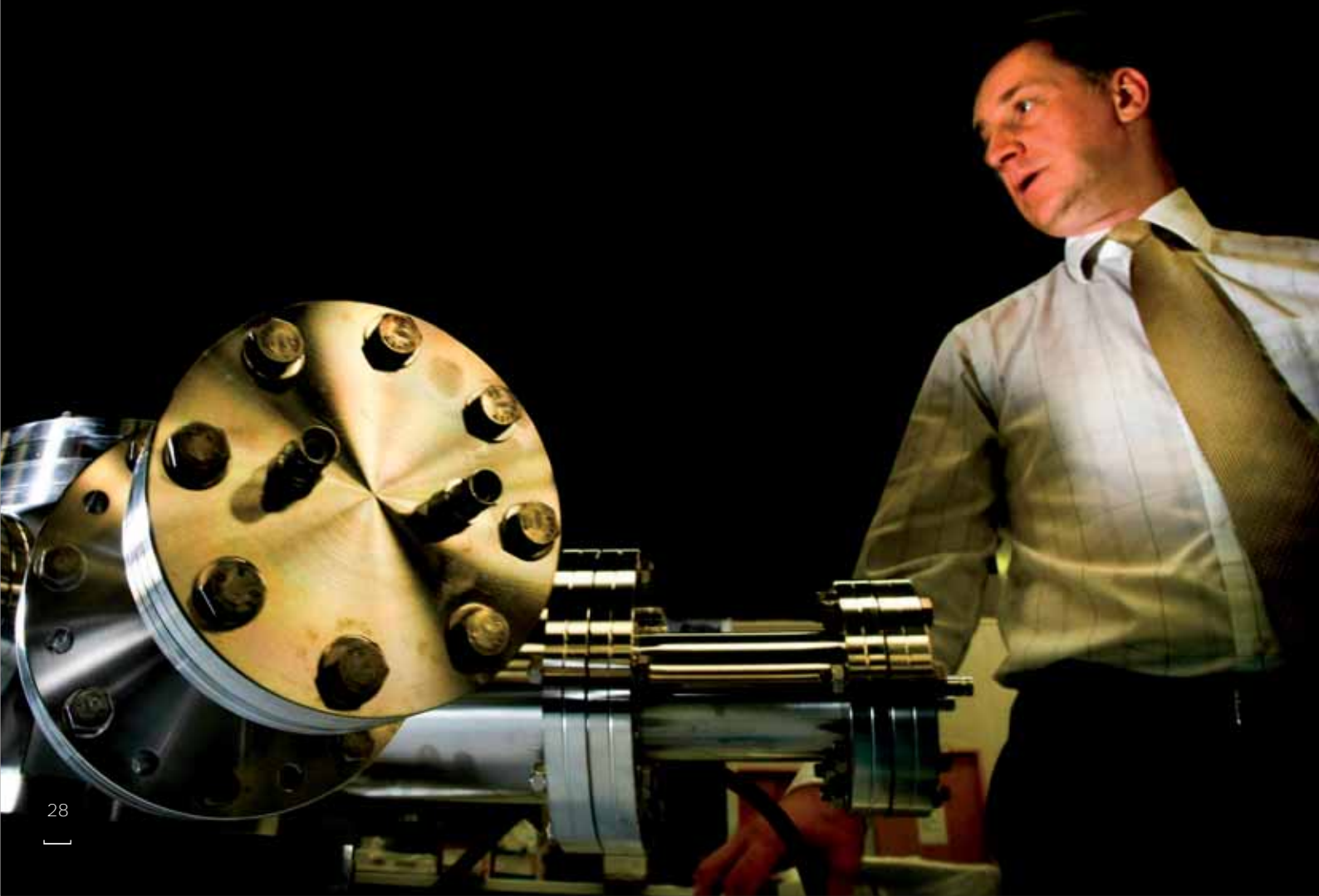
[ Commercially and industrially, Wrexham is a growth area and is the natural hub for the surrounding region. It is the main retailing centre in North Wales with the town being the main draw for a catchment area that extends across the whole of North Wales and much of Shropshire. ]

# The best of town and country

Patrick Small

**Wrexham's confirmation as the economic hub of North Wales has been driven by the strength and commitment of its workforce, the dynamism of local businesses and consistent support and encouragement from government agencies.**

[ "Businesses choose Wrexham as their base for a host of reasons. Our close proximity to the conurbations of the North West of England is certainly an advantage but we also have access to the rest of Wales, an expanding skills base and a great quality of life." ]



Over 5,000 businesses are located in the County Borough which boasts an enviable diversity of exciting companies

specialising in modern technologies. For example, Japan's Brother Industries chose Wrexham as the base from which to manufacture some of the world's best sewing machines, printers, fax machines, machine tools and related products. Sharp, now the world's number one solar panel manufacturer, meets the growing European demand for clean solar power from its successful plant in Wrexham. In 2006, IMC combined its entire manufacturing activity for commercial bar and catering equipment into one Wrexham site, relocating from the South East of England to better serve its markets. Global technology player Cytec have made their base here producing carbon fibre body tubs for Formula One. NU Instruments make hi tech instruments such as mass spectrometers (they're high end optical instruments) and accessories. Charles Owen have for many years created hard hats for horse riding, supplying an international market whose clients include the Bermuda police. That's without mentioning longstanding household names who all have a presence here such as Kellogg's, Cadbury's and JCB.

Councillor Rodney Skelland, Lead Member for Regeneration and Corporate Governance, says: "Businesses choose Wrexham as their base for a host of reasons. Our close proximity to the conurbations of the North West of England is certainly an advantage but we also have access to the rest of Wales, an expanding skills base and a great quality of life."

It would certainly seem that more businesses are likely to follow, attracted by the range of services on offer, and the easy access to both UK and world markets. Wrexham businesses can choose the convenient Liverpool John Lennon Airport—just 40 minutes' drive from the town—for flights to mainland Europe and a selection of UK destinations, or the major international hub at Manchester (approximately 45 minutes' by road) with its frequent services to the U.S., Europe and beyond. The airport offers businesses a state-of-the-art purpose-built world freight terminal which is one of the largest in the world.

Wrexham is also served by two rail companies operating daily services to London, augmenting the excellent rail



Wrexham General Station

and road links to all other major UK cities including Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester and Glasgow. Sustainable transport has been boosted by the development of a new freight consolidation centre at the Port of Mostyn, only 30 miles from Wrexham. Additionally, access to Wrexham Industrial Estate, where so many top corporations are located, has been greatly expanded by improved road links.

The skills base in North Wales is strong and getting stronger. The renowned North East Wales Institute was granted full university status in 2008, becoming Glyndŵr University. Glyndŵr accommodates over 8,000 undergraduate students and has one of the largest international student bodies in the UK. A partnership between three Welsh Universities and two NHS trusts, the North Wales Clinical School excels at teaching medical students and conducting groundbreaking research. Yale College, meanwhile, is the main provider of education for students over 16, and when recently examined by the Welsh Assembly Government, was awarded the highest possible assessment grades across the board.

Wrexham boasts the best of urban and countryside experiences. Since 2006, when Wrexham won a Safer Business Award for crime reduction in the town centre, a number of first class leisure options have been added, including a new shopping centre, cinema and restaurants. Cllr Skelland adds: "Many people know Wrexham as a town but our total area is 94% rural, so as well as having all the modern facilities you'd expect, the County also has great countryside to explore and enjoy. Tourism is worth over £74m to our local economy and continues to grow each year." Particular draws to the area for the visitor include two National Trust properties; Erddig is an atmospheric eighteenth century country house, set in 12,000 acres of beautiful Welsh countryside and Chirk Castle is a magnificent medieval fortress which has survived seven hundred years on the same stunning site amongst the rolling Welsh hills. In addition, the towering Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and its Canal has been put forward as the UK nomination for UNESCO World Heritage Status in 2009 which, if successful, will confirm Wrexham's position as a World Class destination.



**Wrexham County Borough Council**  
Economic Development Department  
Lampit Street  
Wrexham LL11 1AR  
Tel: 01978 292010  
Email: [worldclasswrexham@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:worldclasswrexham@wrexham.gov.uk)  
[www.wrexham.gov.uk/business](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/business)