

A RHYL countryside event will be the launch pad for two new projects focussing on children and wellbeing.

Wild Rhyl – a joint Rhyl Town Council and Denbighshire Countryside Services event which encourages people to explore the great outdoors – will return for the third year.

This year's gathering of crafts and outdoor activities to be held at Glan Morfa, off Marsh Road, will be the biggest yet. And it will also herald the start of two new schemes.

The Welsh Government's Plant! Programme began in January 2008, in partnership with the Woodland Trust, with a tree planted for every child born or adopted in Wales. For the past five years, the project has been delivered by Natural Resources Wales on behalf of the partnership. In 2014, the commitment was extended to plant an additional tree in Uganda for every child. Wales and Mbale work together through the Welsh Government's Wales for Africa Programme and the Ugandan project is run by the Size of Wales charity. Glan Morfa will be home to a new Plant! site which will be unveiled on the day of Wild Rhyl.

A Denbighshire County Council Housing *Nature for Health* initiative, which aims to encourage local people to discover their countryside in an effort to boost their wellbeing, will be unveiled at the same time as Plant!

Rhyl Mayor Cllr Win Mullen-James said: "As an event, Wild Rhyl has been a force of nature in its own right. Every year, hundreds of youngsters and their families, come along to have a go at crafts, take a trip on a bike track, make baskets and badges, try their hand at music, look for wildlife and generally discover another side of Rhyl.

"The fact that two major new projects will launch here is testimony to the importance of Rhyl's countryside and the impact such spaces have on people's health and wellbeing. This year's event has additional activities such as cycling, beekeeping, wildflower games, a special four-wheeled 'tramper' enabling those with mobility problems to explore the countryside, a very special stilt walker, and so much more."

Cllr Tony Thomas, Denbighshire County Council's Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment, said exploring the countryside had a positive effect on people's health.



He added: “This year’s Wild Rhyl brings together more activities than ever before and offers people the chance to discover new skills and explore the countryside on their doorstep.

“But it’s also the opportunity to launch two special initiatives. Glan Morfa has been identified as the first Denbighshire site for the Plant! programme which will see 11,000 native trees rooted here.

“Alongside this, Denbighshire Housing, supported by the Countryside Service, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Bangor University will be launching *Nature for Health*.

“This 18-month pilot project will run in Bruton Park and The Marsh, Rhyl, Morfa Gateway, Prestatyn, Pengwern, Llangollen, and Corwen, and help individuals and communities connect with the countryside and adopt healthy habits for life. Protecting the environment and encouraging young people to develop behaviours that contribute to good health and well-being are both priorities for the Council and these projects help us achieve this. Launching these two projects during Wild Rhyl means the event’s legacy will go on long after the day itself finishes.”

Wild Rhyl will be held on Saturday September 22 11am-4pm at Glan Morfa, Marsh Road, Rhyl.

Ends

