

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
2 June 2015

Meeting time:
09.00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Steve George
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Agenda

- 1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions** (Pages 1 – 33)
- 2 New Petitions**
 - 2.1 P-04-629 Review and Enforcement of Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 (Pages 34 – 39)
 - 2.2 P-04-635 James Bond at the Welsh Assembly (Pages 40 – 44)
 - 2.3 P-04-621 Stop Closure of Consultant-led Maternity Unit at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd (Pages 45 – 47)
- 3 Updates to previous petitions**

Natural Resources

- 3.1 P-04-546 Rearing of Animals in Unnatural Conditions (Pages 48 – 50)
- 3.2 P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure (Pages 51 – 53)

3.3 P-04-579 Reinstate Funding for Skomer Island's Guillemot Monitoring (Pages 54 – 55)

3.4 P-04-422 Fracking (Pages 56 – 57)

Education

3.5 P-04-628 To Improve Access to Education and Services in British Sign Language (Pages 58 – 65)

3.6 P-04-548 The Reintroduction of Welsh Classes in Rennes (Pages 66 – 67)

Health

3.7 P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of e-cigarettes in Public Places (Pages 68 – 71)

3.8 P-04-600 Petition to Save General Practice (Pages 72 – 91)

3.9 P-04-560 Provision of IBD Services in Wales (Pages 92 – 94)

3.10 P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service (Pages 95 – 100)

The following three items will be considered together

3.11 P-04-564 Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital (Page 101)

3.12 P-04-466 Medical Emergency – Preventing the Introduction of a Poorer Health Service for North Wales (Pages 102 – 110)

3.13 P-04-479 Tywyn Memorial Hospital X-ray & Minor Injuries Unit Petition (Pages 111 – 115)

3.14 P-04-523 Protect the Elderly and Vulnerable in Care Homes (Pages 116 – 118)

3.15 P-04-501 Day Centres for the Elderly in Wales to be Made Statutory (Pages 119 – 122)

3.16 P-04-587 A Dedicated Support Team for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome & Fibromyalgia Sufferers in South East Wales (Pages 123 – 126)

Communities and Tackling Poverty

3.17 P-04-618 Protection of Banking Services in Vulnerable Communities (Pages 127 – 130)

3.18 P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission (Pages 131 – 132)

Assembly Commission

3.19 P-04-613 AMs Should Reject Recommendation for a 18% Payrise (Pages 133 – 134)

Economy, Science and Transport

3.20 P-04-565 Revive Disused Railway Lines for Leisure (Pages 135 – 138)

3.21 P-03-240 Road Safety on the A40 in Llanddewi Velfrey (Pages 139 – 142)

3.22 P-04-626 De-Trunk the A487 Through Penparcau, Trefechan & Aberystwyth TC (Pages 143 – 144)

3.23 P-04-607 Call for the Welsh Government to Purchase Garth Celyn (Pages 145 – 152)

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:

Item 5

5 Draft Reports (Pages 153 – 210)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-04-629 Review and Enforcement of Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014

Petition wording

The Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 is proving not fit for purpose and is doing nothing to improve the welfare of equines turned out to graze on common land. There is no satisfactory system of recording or controlling the numbers of horses and ponies left to suffer and die throughout the winter and early spring months, and those that survive are left to breed and compound the problems year on year. We, the undersigned feel that several additional measures need to be put in place:

- 1) Registration/freeze branding all equines belonging to those commoners with legitimate grazing rights
- 2) No colts to be grazed on common land if over 6 months old unless they are native and licensed (to preserve the Welsh Mountain Pony)
- 3) Registered charities to have the right to remove equines on welfare grounds by agreement with the police, and to place the ponies with pre-approved foster homes while owners are being traced. Where possible ponies to be re-homed after a given amount of time.
- 4) All equines that are "gathered" and found to be illegally grazed, if owners cannot be traced then an attempt should be made to re-home them in the first instance, before any decision to PTS (this is not the current procedure)
- 5) The entire procedure should be transparent and councils answerable to the public.

Lead petitioner: Lynne Tamblyn

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 502 online signatures, 660 paper signatures.

Total = 1,162 signatures

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-629
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/00314/15

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

(9) May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 12 March about the petition submitted by Lynne Tamblyn seeking a review and greater enforcement of the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014.

The Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 was introduced in response to calls for urgent action by local authorities, equine charities and the Police to tackle the issue of fly grazing, abandonment and straying. The Act gives local authorities in Wales more effective legal powers to tackle the problems of fly grazing. It is one of a number of tools available to local authorities wishing to address fly grazing issues but should not be regarded as a panacea. In the event of action being necessary to resolve welfare cases local authorities have the Animal Welfare Act 2006 at their disposal.

All horses in Wales are required to have a passport and since 1 July 2009 all horses issued with a passport are required to have a microchip implanted as part of the passport application process. The exceptions to this rule are those ponies managed by the Hill Pony Improvement Society of Wales and the Cymdeithas Merlod y Carneddau. Both organisations have a derogation in place that allows specific populations of ponies to remain on their designated areas without a passport and microchip until such time as they are moved from these areas. Only those ponies belonging to members of these two organisations are able to work under the terms of the derogation and the organisations are required to submit detailed management plans to the Welsh Government in respect of the ponies grazing on these areas. All other horses and ponies, including those grazing on common land outside the terms of the derogation, must be identified by a passport which after 1 July 2009 is linked to the animal through a microchip.

The European Commission requires the unique identification of equines, with micro-chipping providing the necessary guarantees, the requirements of which are set out in the Equine Identification (Wales) Regulations 2009. In addition to micro-chipping, owners may also choose to additionally identify their horses by other means including freeze branding. Those that choose to own an animal have a duty of care to look after it and that includes those who have rights to graze stock on common land. In addition Commoners Associations who manage the day to day running of individual commons have responsibilities and may well include within the rules of their Association those practices that benefit the identification and management of commoner's ponies.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@wales.gsi.gov.uk

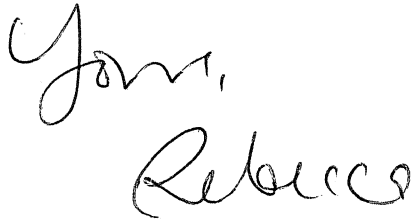
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The Commons Act 1908 provides the powers for the removal of scrub stallions. This legislation is still in force and may be used for the purposes of the removal of unlicensed / illegally grazed stallions from common land.

Many of the equine welfare charities have worked alongside the local authorities (using the Animal Welfare Act 2006) to assist in removing those animals with serious welfare issues - the Animal Welfare Act being the appropriate legislation for resolving welfare issues. In addition local authorities have powers under the Animals Act 1971 and the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 to deal with those animals found straying, dumped, abandoned or fly grazing.

Local authorities and the welfare charities have done their utmost to re-home many of the horses seized however the charities are now at saturation point and only have room for a limited number of the worst welfare cases. It would be unlikely that enough foster homes could be found and even if they could be found many of the animals seized are not only semi-feral but also have health and welfare issues that need considerable time, commitment and expertise, something that may well be beyond the average horse owner. Humane destruction is very much the power of last resort and for those local authorities that have seized horses under the Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 every effort has been made to either return them to their owners or rehome them through recognised welfare charities.

Local authorities have a duty to follow procedures laid down in legislation and where members of the public are of the view that this duty has not been met may refer the matter to the complaints department at the relevant local authority or the Public Services Ombudsmen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food

**P-04-629 Review and Enforcement of Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 –
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking team, 20.05.2015**

Dear Ms England,

Thank you for the opportunity to add comments to the petition.

I would like to suggest that, although it would appear that the structure is in place to improve the welfare and problems around fly-grazing, very often the procedures are not being put in place.

The Act for the control of horses is an excellent tool for equines that have been abandoned in fields etc and can be easily caught and identified however, this does not alleviate the problems on the commons where most of them are semi-feral and not easily identifiable. And while the Welfare Act places a duty of care upon owners, again that is difficult to enforce if owners cannot be traced.

It is simply unacceptable that ponies are being allowed to starve to death on the Welsh commons. The numbers of ponies on commons such as Cefn Golau and Gelligaer have become more than those areas can sustain without intervention from local charities.

Although I note that the option to freeze brand is down to the Commoners, I fail to see why this cannot be made a condition of them having grazing rights. Surely this would also benefit responsible owners and make their animals identifiable and therefore exempt from any subsequent gatherings/disposal. Those owners who do not care for their animals would be subject to the Welfare Act, and rightly so. Other areas, such as the New Forest, use a marking system to identify their ponies and, together with regular round-ups of fly-grazed and abandoned ponies, they seem to be successful at controlling the numbers and maintaining the breed. Surely our Welsh Ponies deserve no less.

The overriding problem, however, is the indiscriminate breeding due to colts and stallions being either abandoned or left out on the common all year round and this needs to be addressed. There has recently been a contraceptive darting program carried out by the SWHP charity targeting feral stallions and colts. Another charity, The Welsh Pony Rescue and Re-homing Project has been fundraising to geld the colts and stallions they have rescued from the common to increase their chances of being re-homed and, to date, they have had a very good success rate. Both of these

charities are doing their best to address the problem, however, with additional funding they could do so much more and reduce the numbers without the need for a mass cull which would not be a popular move with the vast majority of the general public. If the numbers of ponies could be stabilised over the next 2 – 3 years abandoned ponies (easily identified if freezebranding/marking was introduced) could be gathered on a regular basis and then I believe the Control of Horses Act and The Welfare Act could be used to great effect and to the benefit of the true Welsh Ponies.

If these measures can be used in other areas in the UK why do we have to be different? The only ones suffering because of this resistance to change are the ponies and surely we all have a duty of care to those who cannot speak for themselves.

Many thanks for this opportunity,

Lynne Tamblyn

Agenda Item 2.2

P-04-635 James Bond at the Welsh Assembly

Petition wording:

Please support a petition to get the Presiding Officer of the Welsh Assembly to reverse her decision in not allowing scenes for the new James Bond to be filmed at the Assembly.

Petition raised by: Paul Glantz

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 June 2015

Number of signatures: 21 Online signatures

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Your ref: P-04-635
Our ref: PO1016/RB/MD/CC

14 May 2015

Dear William

P04-636 Petition Title: James Bond at the Welsh Assembly

Thank you for your letter of 11 May about this petition and for the opportunity to comment prior to the Committee's formal consideration of the matter.

I note in particular the wording of the petition which asks me to reverse my decision to refuse filming of James Bond scenes in the Assembly. The reconnaissance of the estate by those involved in the making of the film took place in July 2014 and the decision was made at that point, not more recently as the media coverage might have implied. I understand that the film is due to be released this autumn.

In order to provide the Petitions Committee with the complete picture about the decision making process, I attach my statement of 17 March 2015, together with my response to a Written Assembly Question. A key point is that this decision was entirely consistent with the approach that has been taken since the Senedd opened in 2006.

I am sure you will appreciate that, when I am asked to consider such requests, I have to think very carefully about the potential disruption to

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh



Llywydd
Presiding Officer

Assembly business. In this case, the interest was only in filming in the Siambr, not other parts of the Senedd. As I explained in my statement, the risk of permitting a production of this size and its likely interference with the important work that is undertaken in the Siambr was too great. That said, we have an excellent record of working in partnership with the creative industries in Wales which has enabled us to showcase other parts of the Senedd very successfully, without interference to Plenary and Committee business. We will continue to take up those opportunities to promote our landmark building and our work as a legislature.

I hope you will find the content of this letter helpful. Should you require any further information, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Dame Rosemary Butler AM
Presiding Officer

Statement from the Presiding Officer

17/03/2015

Statement from Dame Rosemary Butler AM, Presiding Officer, in response to James Bond filming in the Senedd Siambr

"There has been much criticism of my decision not to allow a scene from the forthcoming James Bond film to be filmed in the Senedd Siambr. I did not take this decision lightly when it was put to me. I fully recognise the prestige and reach of the James Bond franchise and I am enthusiastic about the Senedd continuing to play its part in supporting Wales' creative industries.

"Such decisions are my responsibility as Presiding Officer. When I am asked to make a decision I have to weigh up the factors involved in each request. In this case, as well as recognising the potential advantages, I also considered the probable scale of what was being proposed and the likely impact on the Siambr given the number of people and amount of equipment involved in a production of this type, and the adjustments to the Siambr which would have been involved. We offered other areas of the Senedd but this was not taken up.

"On balance, the risk to the Siambr and potential for disruption to business was too great. As Presiding Officer I believe that the Senedd Siambr's primary function needs to be safeguarded and maintained above all else, so the use of the Siambr has to be treated differently to rest of the Assembly's estate. This is not new; allowing such filming in the Siambr would have been a departure from the practice that has been in place since the Senedd was opened.

"I am disappointed that the discussion has portrayed the Assembly as a body that is not open to do business with the creative industries. We have hosted a number of dramatic productions such as Doctor Who, Sherlock, Caerdydd and Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year programme. We proactively seek out productions that could be interested in locating some of their activity on the Assembly estate.

"Clearly opinions differ about whether this filming should have been allowed. I stand by my decision. It is the responsibility of the Presiding Officer to take a considered, balanced decision, having weighed up all relevant factors and that is what I did."



**WRITTEN ASSEMBLY QUESTION
TABLED ON 19 MARCH 2015
FOR ANSWER BY THE ASSEMBLY COMMISSION
ON 26 MARCH 2015**

Darren Millar (Clwyd West): Will the Commission publish details of its policy in relation to requests to film drama productions in the Siambr, including the date on which the policy was first agreed by the Commission; the dates of any reviews thereafter, and copies of the minutes of meetings in which the policy was discussed by the Commission? (WAQ68511)

Rosemary Butler AM on behalf of the Assembly Commission:

Guidelines for the use of the Senedd by the media were first put in place by the former House Committee in 2006/07. Since then, the Commission's policy and approach has remained consistent and is currently set out in operational guidance used by Commission staff. The guidance was reviewed last year.

Based on that guidance, the practice throughout the Third and Fourth Assemblies has been that the majority of requests, for example to film or photograph from the public gallery or in public areas of the building, have been delegated to and operated by the Assembly's media team. The guiding principle has been that no media operation should interfere with the proper conduct of Assembly business. Requests with the potential to impact on Assembly business in the Siambr or elsewhere in the Senedd have been dealt with on a case by case basis by the Presiding Officer.

The relevant extract from the guidance on the Siambr says:

- Express permission must be granted by the Presiding Officer, through the Media Relations Team, prior to any media operations in the Siambr;
- Broadcasters (including pass-holders) must be accompanied by Assembly Commission staff at all times whilst filming in the Siambr;
- On business days, filming/photography/recording will normally not be allowed in the Siambr for security reasons but bids may be made and the full circumstances will be considered;
- On non-business days, permission for media operations will normally be granted. Non-pass holders will be accompanied for the duration of their visit. Broadcasters will be informed of any special restrictions on the area and must comply with those restrictions;
- Requests for non-Assembly related media operations in the Siambr, e.g. drama productions, would not normally be allowed but the Presiding Officer may grant permission at her discretion. Applications should be made through the Media Relations Office.

Agenda Item 2.3

P-04-621 Stop Closure of Consultant-led Maternity Unit at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd

Petition wording

We the undersigned request that Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board stop its planned closure of the Consultant-led Maternity Unit at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. We believe its closure will be detrimental to the welfare of expectant mothers and their families, and will endanger lives. We do not believe it is right or fair for patients to have to travel upwards of 30 miles for treatment, particularly in case of emergency. We believe that the additional pressure placed on staff at Ysbyty Maelor and Ysbyty Gwynedd will be detrimental to maternity services at those hospitals. We ask that the BCUHB consider other options (such as closure of unit to elective procedures) and retain consultants at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd for the safety of expectant mothers.

Lead petitioner: Rebecca Roberts

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 562 online signatures.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-621/622
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/00600/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

13 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 13 February on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petitions P-04-621 and P-04-622 in relation to the temporary changes to consultant-led maternity services at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board made the decision to temporarily suspend consultant-led maternity services at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd on the grounds of safety. This decision was taken against the background of two Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' reports in 2014, which described a dysfunctional culture among senior medical staff at the unit. The health board was also unable to sustain the middle grade medical staff rota following a decision by the Wales Deanery in August 2014 to withdraw obstetric trainees from Ysbyty Glan Clwyd because of concerns about the quality of training they were receiving.

However, following feedback from clinicians and the public, the proposed service model now shows some important changes to the original plans submitted to the bBoard in February. The Special Care Baby Unit will now be retained with round-the-clock paediatric services at the hospital. Inpatient breast surgery will be centred at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd with breast day case surgery retained at Ysbyty Gwynedd and Wrexham Maelor Hospital. Additionally, day case gynaecology will stay at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd so that patients having low-risk procedures can continue to have their care locally. The Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit will also be retained at the hospital as a nurse-led service.

The legal challenge against the health board's temporary changes was heard on 7 – 8 May. The Judge has made an injunction to stop the changes taking place until she has handed down her judgement.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i Fflack Page 46

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The hearing will now be reconvened at a later date (June at the earliest) and you will appreciate that it would not be appropriate for me to comment in the meantime.

I hope the committee finds this information helpful.

Best wishes,
Mark

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Agenda Item 3.1

P-04-546 Rearing of Animals in Unnatural Conditions

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to prevent the rearing of animals in unnatural conditions and environments.

Man has interfered with our food chain too much for too long. If the government & supermarkets acted more responsibly and abandoned this cruel and absurd idea we would find our own levels naturally. This is all coming about for one reason mans greed.

Petition raised by: Jeanii Colbourne

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 29 April 2014

Number of signatures: 23

Rebecca Evans AC / AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-546
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/00290/15

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

5 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 09 April, regarding a petition from Jeannii Colbourne about the rearing of animals in unnatural conditions.

The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework published at Royal Welsh Agricultural Show in July 2014 sets out our vision for continuing and lasting improvements in standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals. The overarching objectives of the Framework are to build on the progress made in Wales to raise standards of animal health and welfare by:

- using an approach focussed on delivery to achieve shared outcomes
- working in partnership to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, underpinned by a strong evidence base.

To help do that, there are two main delivery authorities responsible for conducting animal health and welfare inspections on farms. Local Authorities are responsible for enforcing animal welfare provisions in Wales and the Animal and Plant Health Agency is responsible for providing professional veterinary advice on the health and welfare of animals.

The Welsh Government's Rural Inspectorate also carries out on farm inspections to monitor compliance with the Welsh Government Rural Development Programme under the single farm payment scheme.

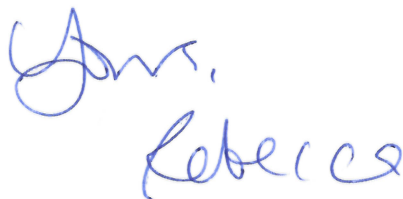
The Welsh Government has been at the forefront of implementing higher animal welfare standards domestically, and has also been active on a European and International level in trying to improve standards.

In response to increasing demands for farm animal products, traditional methods of livestock production have changed to increase productivity. However, in doing so farmers are required to provide for the 5 needs of animals included in the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007. These are:

- Need for a suitable environment
- Need for a suitable diet
- Need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and
- Need to be protected from pain suffering, injury and disease.

These needs apply equally to sheep farmed on extensive open grassland and to cattle or poultry in all year round housing.

The Welsh Government continues to invest in research and development programmes that review farming methods and husbandry systems.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca'.

Rebecca Evans AC / AM

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Ffermio a Bwyd
Deputy Minister for Farming and Food

P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reverse the decision of Natural Resources Wales to close the Cwmcarn Forest Drive indefinitely on 2nd November 2014.

Additional Information

NRW have stated that the Cwmcarn Forest Drive will be closed indefinitely in November and that this is necessary because of the infection of the Japanese larches in the forest. I am not convinced as there are inconsistencies with NRW approach. There are ample harvest roads which can be used to facilitate removal of the trees. What needs to be removed via the drive could be done during its annual winter closure; however NRW say that removing the trees will not be completed until 2018 and after this the drive may not reopen due to funding issues. Other forest parks are only facing minimal disruption to their facilities as a result of tree removal. To single out users of the drive is unfair and unnecessary when other users will face only temporary disruption. We should save the drive for its users, many of whom are elderly, disabled and from our ethnic minority and immigrant communities. This deprives those people who are our most deprived of their main facility for health and well being.

Petitioner : Robert Jeffrey Southall

First considered by the Committee:

Number of Signatures: 2,392 electronic signatures and 602 paper signatures. Total 2,994

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-605
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00632/15

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

5th May 2015

Dear Bill,

I refer to your letter regarding the petition from the Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive. I can confirm that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) will (through the use of contractors) be starting to undertake significant felling work within Cwmcarn forest around the Drive in early May 2015.

Some preparatory civil engineering works have already been undertaken to enable the felling to take place. This has included the removal of sculptures and playground equipment some of which have been restored and relocated to other visitor sites for the public to enjoy.

The large scale felling is necessitated as part of the work to address the impact of larch disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) on Welsh forests. The Forest Drive which runs through the forest, has been closed since November 2014 and will remain so until the felling work has been completed. This is in order to protect the public from the hazards posed by felling operations and timber haulage.

NRW have indicated that they cannot guarantee reopening the Forest Drive upon completion of the work as the road is likely to be damaged by the forestry operations and the cost of reopening may be prohibitive. However, NRW staff are committed to exploring options for the road's future and to this end, they will consult with local groups including the Residents Association and the Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive.

NRW aims to gather ideas for future use and potential sources of funding to deliver these. This element of stakeholder engagement will be timed so that the operational forestry work is in full swing and the nature of the felling work can be demonstrated to those who are interested, albeit from a safe distance.

NRW will also be carrying out work on the private access road to the visitor centre. This work aims to improve the safety of the road, particularly whilst timber haulage operations are taking place over the next two years. During this work visitors will still be able to access the visitor centre and other attractions via using the public highways.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a final upward stroke.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-579 Reinstate funding for Skomer Island's Guillemot monitoring Wording

Natural Resources Wales have cut the £12,000 annual funding they provide for the on-going Guillemot monitoring study on Skomer Island. This is a hugely important study, and gives valuable insights into seabird life and what affects their populations. Not only is it a shame to end such a long running (and therefore valuable) data set, but the cut couldn't have come at a worse time, considering the huge impact the recent storms have had on seabird populations (current death toll 25,000 and rising). This is a very bad decision on the part of Natural Resources Wales, and we'd like to see it amended.

Petitioner: Cardiff University Ornithological Society

Considered first by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 1687

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-579
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00635/15

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

12th May 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter dated March 2015 and received on 21 April 2015 regarding the Cardiff University Ornithological Society's petition on monitoring of the guillemot population at Skomer Island. I have noted the concerns raised by the petitioner about the data collected by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

The guillemot monitoring undertaken by the JNCC and the Wildlife Trust, who carry out the work on its behalf, is part of a comprehensive study of seabird species on the island. In response to the 2011 report to which the petitioner refers, I am assured that the methodology used to monitor guillemots has been reviewed and improved. As I mentioned in my previous reply, Natural Resources Wales will continue to keep seabird monitoring needs under review.

I view the health of all seabird populations at Skomer, including guillemots, as important in understanding the condition of our marine environment. I am sure that the recent colony extensions at Skokholm and Skomer will further safeguard these populations and that the results from this monitoring survey will continue to track their growth.

Yours sincerely

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-422 : Fracking

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development to produce a Ministerial Interim Minerals Planning Policy Statement as well as a new technical advice note to strengthen the precautionary principle with regard to planning applications for onshore oil and gas, including fracking. All reasonable scientific doubt that there is any risk of adverse impacts must be eliminated, and strongest consideration must be given to the urgent need to mitigate climate change.

Petition raised by: Friends of the Earth Cymru

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: Approximately 1000

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-422
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00631/15

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

 May 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 21 April regarding a moratorium on fracking in Wales.

A moratorium is defined as a temporary prohibition of an activity. The Notification Direction I issued in February 2015 provides that where local planning authorities are minded to approve planning applications for the exploration, appraisal or extraction of unconventional oil and gas which would utilise unconventional techniques (including hydraulic fracturing) they must be referred to Welsh Ministers. Therefore, the Notification Direction that I have issued prevents planning applications from being approved by local planning authorities which equates to a temporary prohibition.

Yours sincerely



Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol
Minister for Natural Resources

Agenda Item 3.5

P-04-628 Access to BSL for All

Petition wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to improve access to Education and services in British Sign Language to improve the quality of life for Deaf people of all ages.

Improve Access for families to learn BSL: When a child is diagnosed as being Deaf/hard of hearing parents should be offered free/subsidised BSL lessons (BSL level one costs approximately £300 per person). By using speech alone, Deaf children struggle/fail to develop communication skills missing important milestones. Learning other languages through BSL (English/Welsh) will improve the child's understanding and comprehension.

Introduce BSL on the National Curriculum: Deaf Children and young people who are taught BSL at an early age will have better access to their education and an improved wellbeing. BSL should be available in schools and taught by qualified Deaf teachers, for all to learn as this would achieve better access for all in society. We believe that BSL should be offered as a language for all learners as a qualification. GCSE Welsh (and other modern languages) are not always offered to Deaf students: this also needs to be improved.

Improving access to Education in BSL for Deaf Children and Young People: currently they have limited access to Education in BSL, and often experience under qualified support. There is a massive gap in the education of Deaf children, as many are wrongly treated as having a Learning Disability. This has a negative impact on their development in life, reducing independence with poor education, resulting in under-employment. They need adequately qualified Communication Support Workers available in school.

Making Services and resources accessible in BSL for Deaf young people: enabling BSL users to access information in their preferred language via digital resources to services such as Education, Health care, Social Services and public transport, giving them equality to access as an equivalent to Welsh Language access.

Organisation: Deffo!

Lead petitioner: Cathie Robins–Talbot

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 502 online signatures. 660 paper signatures . total
=1162 signatures



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-628
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00792/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

6 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for the letter of 23 April seeking further comments regarding the petition: *P-04-628 - To Improve Access to Education and Services in British Sign Language (BSL)*.

The Welsh Government is committed to meeting the educational needs of all learners. The responsibility however to provide suitable educational provision for all children rests with local authorities. This will include the provision of any language support required, such as BSL, to assist them in achieving their educational potential. The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities via the revenue support grant (RSG) to allow them to meet their statutory duties to provide special educational needs (SEN) provision. The RSG allows local authorities the flexibility to deliver services to meet local needs and the discretion to fund specific support as required.

We acknowledge that the current system for SEN can sometimes be challenging for learners and their families. We also appreciate there is pressure on mainstream services to deliver educational provision across a range of learning needs. With this in mind the Welsh Government is reforming the current legislative framework for supporting learners with SEN. We believe that the new legislation will enable us to improve the planning and delivery of additional learning provision and ensure it is much more focused on a child's or young person's individual needs. We expect to introduce an Additional Learning Needs Bill before the summer recess.

With regard to Deffo's view on BSL in the National Curriculum, the Welsh Government has recently published a report into a fundamental review of curriculum and assessment arrangements from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. Whilst acknowledging the real strengths in Wales, it also identifies the shortcomings of the current curriculum arrangements and has made a series of recommendations to address these and improve how children in Welsh schools are taught and assessed. The Welsh Government is currently consulting on the recommendations of the report to seek the views on the

proposed vision and purposes for Welsh education. This report, entitled *Successful Futures*, can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/curriculum-for-wales/?lang=en>

In relation to the matter of access to qualified support, I would like to draw your attention to the Welsh Government's recently published review into the skills of the general education workforce in Wales in relation to the provision of support for children and young people with SEN. In view of this report, we are working with local authorities, as the bodies responsible for providing suitable education for children in their areas, to consider what action we will be taking at a local level. The link to the report can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/reports/an-assessment-of-special-educational-needs-workforce-development-requirements/?lang=en>

I understand, as is highlighted in the Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE) annual report, that there can sometimes be difficulties in accessing specialist or qualified teachers for those with hearing impairments. You may be interested to know that the Welsh Government is currently undertaking a study of Workforce Planning for SEN Specialist Services which includes qualified teachers of the deaf. The report is expected to be published this summer, at which point the Welsh Government will consider what actions need to be taken forward.

With regard to BSL provision for parents and siblings, I appreciate that the range of BSL courses and training may be varied across Wales and the reduction in funding to the adult sector may have had an impact on this. We allocate funds to Further Education colleges who have the authority to plan and deliver learning provision which they judge as appropriate to meet local needs and the Welsh Government's priorities. Each college is expected, therefore, to offer learning that is relevant to, and based on local need, and is within their budget allocation.

Furthermore, in delivering the Families First Programme which I referred to in my previous response, local authorities should use a Team Around the Family (TAF) model that oversees the interventions families receive. This TAF aims to pull together the right people from the right agencies to ensure that a family receives the right advice, help and support in a timely manner. It could be determined that support for BSL provision for the family is required and the local authority therefore should put in place the appropriate arrangements in place.

I trust that this information emphasises our commitment to creating an inclusive education system for all learners, regardless of their needs. We recognise that more can be done to help learners with hearing impairments to reach their full potential and we will continue to take the action required to ensure that this happens.

Yours sincerely



Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

Document is Restricted



Deffo!
57a Neath Road,
Hafod
Swansea
Wales
SA1 2HW

The voice for Deaf youth in Wales

William Powell AM
Chair – Petitions Committee

20th May 2015

Dear Mr Powell

P-04-628 Petition – Deffo! Access to BSL for All

Thank you for forwarding the response from the Minister Education and Skills, Huw Lewis in relation to the petition submitted by us and I have pleasure in enclosing our response.

- 1) *With reference to the revenue support grant allocated to local authorities across Wales to allow them to meet their statutory duties.*

Our response:

We note your comments in relation to Revenue Support Grants (RSG), and the role that this is intended to play in assisting local authorities to meet their statutory duties to provide special education needs (SEN) provision. We also note the comments that the responsibility to provide suitable education provision, including language support rests with local authorities.

Our concern with this rest in the fact that engagement with BSL is a choice for many, rather than a response to an identified medical need. This is despite of the evidence of the long-term benefits for young people engaging with BSL. There is significant pressure on RSG funding particularly at a time of budget constraints, and we would respectfully argue that the flexibility referred to by the Minister does in effect work against those seeking support for BSL. As such we would like to see funding for BSL ring fenced.

- 2) *In regards to the reforming the current legislative framework for supporting learners with Special Educational Needs.*

Our response:

We welcome this news, and we hope that children, young people and parents' views are included when developing the proposed reforms. Equally we would hope that the views of the Deaf community could feed into this

reform. Deffo would gladly work with Welsh Government to assist in this process.

3) *In reference to the fundamental review of curriculum and assessment by Graham Donaldson*

Our response:

We also welcome the fundamental review of curriculum and assessment by Graham Donaldson with the publication of the 'Successful Futures' document. We note that the first phase of 'The Great Debate' is now closed. Unfortunately the response from Welsh Government (6th May 2015) did not allow us the time to respond by 8th May 2015. It is not obvious as to the level of engagement that was achieved with the Deaf community and would welcome the opportunity to be involved at the next stage or to still be allowed time to respond.

4) *The recent publication on the review into the skills of the general education workforce in Wales to the provision of support for children and young people with SEN.*

Our response:

We are pleased that review has taken place however this raises our concern similar to that outlined in respect of point 1 above that BSL is often omitted or side-lined. SEN covers a broad base of under-lying conditions and we believe that reviews such as this should explicitly consider BSL moving forwards.

5) *Regarding provision for parents and siblings to access BSL training*

Our response:

Evidence from our members suggests that siblings and parents really struggle to access training. This creates a real divide in family members not in a position to effectively communicate with each other.

The Minister acknowledges that cuts in Adult Learning have affected provision, none of the users we represent recall engagement with Families First. Those courses that are available are delivered by the third-sector and often require financing by the learner or third parties.

We do not doubt that the Team Around the Family Model is supposed to achieve solutions such as this, but the evidence suggests to the contrary, this may well be again linked to the fact that BSL is a choice rather than a response to medical needs, and as such risks getting lost at times of financial pressure.

In concluding this letter there seems to be some recurring themes, In particular those seeking / needing BSL are often unmet or unidentified. This is often due to

the fact that the need to engage with BSL is a choice (with proven long term educational, economic and emotional benefit) rather than an immediate need. It would feel that this needs review in order to improve the life chances for Deaf young people and their families.

I hope that this information is useful in respect of consideration of this petition.

Yours sincerely

Cathie Robins Talbot
Deffo! Principal Petitioner

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-548 The Reintroduction of Welsh Classes in Rennes University

Petition wording:

We are visitors from Brittany and we would like the National Assembly for Wales to discuss the reintroduction of Welsh classes in Rennes University.

Petition raised by: Cedric Choplin

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 29 April 2014

Number of signatures: 14

13 May 2015

William Powell
Chair
Petitions Committee
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Powell

**P-04-548 The Reintroduction of Welsh Classes in Rennes/Gohebiaeth gan Y
Pwyllgor Deisebau**

We note the above petition. We have no locus in funding provision at overseas universities and could not, therefore, provide funding for this activity.

Yours sincerely



David Blaney

Agenda Item 3.7

P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of E-Cigarettes in Public Places

Petition wording

We call upon the Welsh Government not to proceed with their proposed ban on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces, substantially enclosed public places, and places of work in Wales. This proposal, if implemented, can only lead to fewer people using e-cigarettes and more people smoking cigarettes.

Additional Information:

Already 100,000 people in Wales are using e-cigarettes. These people are smoking fewer or no cigarettes; this should be a cause for celebration, not concern. A recent BBC poll found that 62% of the public opposed a ban on the use of e-cigarettes in public. In Spain where a ban on the use of e-cigarettes in public was introduced, there was a 70% decline in the use of e-cigarettes and a rise in the rate of smoking. We fear the same will happen in Wales if the Welsh Government implements their proposed ban. With a ban on the advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes soon to be introduced, following the passing of the Tobacco Products Directive, where are smokers to find out about e-cigarettes, particularly if they are banned in public places? Smokers need to see people using e-cigarettes in public, they need to be able to go up and speak to e-cigarette users so that they can find out further information and then hopefully make the switch to a safer alternative.

Petitioner: Simon Thurlow

First considered by the Committee: 7 October 2014

Number of Signatures: 1,196 electronic signatures



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-601
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01345/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

7 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-04-601 - Proposed Ban on E-Cigarettes in Enclosed Public Spaces.

I note the comments the petitioner makes with regards to the positions taken by the organisations cited in the correspondence. In particular, the petitioner references the Scottish Government's approach to e-cigarettes. The Scottish Government's analysis of the responses to their recent consultation on 'Electronic Cigarettes and Strengthening Tobacco Control in Scotland' was published on 5 May, and can be found at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/7711>

The analysis paper reiterates their position that 'the Scottish Government currently has no plans to legislate and is open-minded on the question of whether to take action on this issue. The consultation paper invited views on whether intervention is required on the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed public spaces and sought suggestions for evidence to be considered when developing future policy in this area.'

The Scottish Government's response to this consultation analysis can be found at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/5856/downloads>

As far as public engagement goes, we understand that the round table session on e-cigarettes in the meeting of the Scottish Parliament Health and Sport Committee on 18 November 2014 was organised by the committee themselves who wanted a hearing on e-cigarettes. Whilst it fell during the consultation period the Scottish Government had no role in organising it and it is not classed as part of the formal consultation.

In Wales, we have engaged with the vaping community on the White Paper proposal to restrict the use of e-cigarettes in public places. In addition to the formal consultation response process, a series of three public consultation events across Wales were held during the consultation period which provided an opportunity to discuss all the proposals contained in the White Paper. A range of organisations were also approached with an invitation to attend combined meetings specifically focussed on the tobacco, e-cigarettes and alcohol proposals in the White Paper. These included representatives from the local government sector, health organisations, universities, third sector organisations and industry representatives and meetings were held in Caernarfon and Swansea.

As you are aware, the petitioner met with my officials in January to discuss their concerns. My officials took the opportunity to explain the legislative process and so the petitioner is aware of the opportunities for continuing dialogue on this matter.

We continue to review the evidence on e-cigarettes as it emerges.

Finally, as the First Minister announced on 28 April the Public Health Bill is due to be presented to the National Assembly before summer recess.



Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Care Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



William Powell AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

12 May 2015

Dear William,

P-04-601 Proposed Ban on the Use of E-Cigarettes in Public Places

Thank you for your letter relating to the above subject, received on 22 April 2015.

You will be aware that the Welsh Government's consultation on the Public Health White Paper asked whether electronic cigarettes should be banned in enclosed and substantially enclosed public and work places. It is anticipated the Welsh Government will introduce a Public Health Bill before the summer recess which may propose primary legislation to implement such a ban.

In response to your letter, subject to the proposed Public Health Bill being referred to the Committee for consideration, and subject to such a ban on the use of electronic cigarettes being proposed in the Bill, the Committee will consider the petition as part of its scrutiny of that Bill.

Yours sincerely,

David Rees AM

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Bae Caerdydd
Cardiff Bay
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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

Agenda Item 3.8

P-04-600 Petition to save general practice – Wales

Petition Wording

Despite carrying out 90% of all NHS patient contacts, general practice only receives 8.39% of the NHS budget in the UK — an historic low. By 2017, this is projected to plunge to just 7.29%

As a result, general practice is facing a growing crisis.

Due to the sheer volume of GP workloads, in this year alone, patients will have to wait longer than a week to see their GP on at least 27m occasions.

And, according to a poll carried out in March, more than three fifths of the public now believe that the number of patient consultations carried out by GPs — up to 60 per day — is threatening the level of patient care.

To protect high quality services for all patients, I call on the First Minister to increase the share of the NHS budget spent on general practice in Wales to 11% by 2017.

This shift in funding would enable general practice to deliver: Shorter waiting times for appointments and more flexible opening hours

Longer consultations, especially for people with long term conditions.

More opportunity for patients to see a GP who knows them

Better care co-ordination and planning, especially for the elderly and those with complex needs

Positive benefits for the NHS as a whole, reducing pressure on hospitals

GP surgeries sit at the heart of local communities. I demand that the Welsh Government acts now to ensure practices have the resources they need to continue to provide the high quality care patients deserve.

Petitioner: Royal College of General Practitioners.

Lead petitioner: Eurwen Petitti

First Consideration: 7 October 2014

Signatures: 15,000 paper signatures and over 500 electronic signatures collected on an alternative e-petition website.



Mark Drakeford AM
Minister for Health and Social Services

20 February 2015

Dear Mark,

Health and Social Care Committee: inquiry into the GP workforce in Wales

I am writing to provide details of the outcomes arising from the Committee's short inquiry on the above topic. The Committee's aim is to help inform the development of your primary care workforce plan.

As a Committee, we recognise the pivotal, but changing, role played by GPs in the Welsh NHS. This role now involves being a leading member of a primary care team offering services to the community as well as the assessment and management of complexity. We welcome your recent [announcement](#) of further investment in 2015–16 for primary care, and your intention to reform the performers list to provide greater opportunities for doctors to come to work in Wales. We also look forward to the publication of the health professional education investment review. However, we have identified concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the GP workforce. Therefore we set out, through this inquiry, to consider issues in urban and rural Wales relating to:

- barriers to GP recruitment and retention;
- whether the commissioning and delivery of medical training currently supports a sustainable GP workforce; and
- the actions to be taken to ensure the sustainability of the GP workforce.

Bae Caerdydd
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We understand from the Welsh Government's recently published [plan for a primary care service in Wales up to March 2018](#) that you intend to publish a primary care workforce development plan by March 2015 and we hope that the outcome of our inquiry will inform that plan.

We sought, and received, [written evidence](#) for this inquiry from BMA Cymru Wales, the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), and the Wales Deanery. We then heard [oral evidence](#) from representatives of all three organisations on 29 January, and the Deanery provided further information [in a letter of 6 February](#). We are very grateful to these organisations for their participation in our inquiry.

There was a good deal of consensus among witnesses about the key challenges ahead for creating a more sustainable GP workforce, and on the potential solutions.

In summary, the Committee would bring to your attention the following recommendations for consideration in the development of the primary care workforce plan:

Training: Witnesses indicated that insufficient training places have been commissioned to meet increasing demand for GP services across Wales. However, it was recognised that currently not all places have been filled and thus vacancies exist for GP training. Additionally, training provision needs to keep up with the increasing complexities of the job which could require extending the period for GP training to ensure appropriate knowledge and experience is gained. Our recommendations to the Welsh Government in this field for further consideration are:

1. Consideration should be given to whether the number of training places on offer should be increased to address concerns expressed to the Committee about an anticipated shortfall of qualified GPs.
2. Formal mechanisms should be established to annually review the number of post graduate training places.
3. The Committee would welcome further information about what consideration has been given to extending GP training from three to four years, and what discussions have taken place with counterparts across the UK on this issue.

Recruitment and Retention: The Committee was informed that not enough trainee doctors are applying for training in the post graduate GP specialty. Additionally, those who do train as GPs are less likely to accept jobs in more rural and deprived parts of Wales. Our recommendations to the Welsh Government for further consideration in this field are:

4. The Deanery and Welsh medical schools should be encouraged to collaborate in the development of a programme that will increase exposure to general practice during undergraduate and foundation training.
5. As part of the wider offer for GPs, consideration should be given to providing incentives to attract trainees, targeted at areas where recruitment problems are most acute, and conditional upon a reasonable length of service in the target area.
6. An analysis of the likely impact on Wales of the recent announcement of financial and training incentives for trainee GPs in England should be undertaken.
7. Working with the medical schools, a strategy to encourage more Welsh-domiciled students to train and work in Wales should be established.

The Committee also identified that no formal mechanism was in place to identify why medical students did not choose to follow the GP training pathway. The Committee believes that it would be beneficial for the Welsh Government to work with the Wales Deanery to establish a means by which this data can be collected.

A significant proportion of the GP workforce is approaching retirement age. We also note that increasing numbers of GPs are choosing to retire early, emigrate or change specialty which could cumulatively reduce the number of practising GPs in Wales. Our recommendations to the Welsh Government for further consideration in this field are:

8. Pre-exit interviews should be introduced to ensure that GPs approaching retirement are aware of options for continuing to work in the Welsh NHS on a more flexible basis.

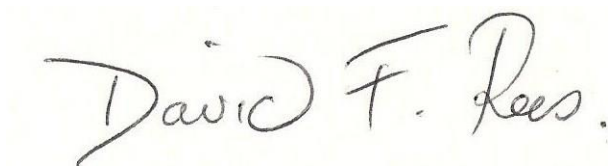
9. Consideration should be given to what support the Welsh Government can offer to GPs who are approaching retirement that could enable more to retain their licence to practise and continue to be an active member of the primary care workforce.

The analysis underpinning this summary can be found in the annex to this letter.

Following the publication of the primary care workforce plan I would be grateful if you could provide details of how the plan has addressed the challenges identified and the Committee's recommended actions.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, who asked to be kept informed in the context of his Committee's consideration of the "Petition to Save General Practice" (reference [P-04-600](#)).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Rees." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'D' and 'R'.

David Rees AM

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Annex

Training

Witnesses provided evidence indicating that insufficient training places have been commissioned to meet the expanding demand for GP services. As demand for GP services is increasing and greater emphasis is placed upon care in the community, we expect an increase in the workload of GPs, both in terms of the number of consultations and the complexity of patients' needs. In the future it is likely that GPs will need to focus on the assessment and management of that complexity, as well as leading an ever wider team of other specialists to deliver appropriate care. The ageing population has more long-term conditions and multi-morbidity, as well as higher expectations. However, spending on general practice as a proportion of the total NHS budget has reduced over the past decade.

The Wales Deanery reported that the recruitment target for Wales of 136 GP training places was set by the Welsh Government ten years ago and has remained static ever since. BMA Cymru Wales and the RGCP agreed with the Deanery's assessment that the number of training places commissioned was inadequate to address long term sustainability of the workforce. This was partly due to the tendency for older full-time GPs to be replaced by younger GPs whose preferred option was to work part-time. Furthermore, it was reported that the current ratio of GP places to population is much lower than in other parts of the UK. The Deanery commented that they have been raising this issue with the Welsh Government with "increasing frequency", although they could not confirm whether there was a formal review mechanism.

The BMA estimated that "Wales needs at least 200 GP specialty trainees each year". The Deanery quoted a similar number: they considered 50 extra places as being enough to bring Wales broadly into line with Scotland. Although the BMA cited evidence from Powys that GP practices wanting to offer training did not have space to accommodate trainees, the Deanery were confident, based on their own survey data, that there was capacity.

Recommendation 1: Consideration should be given to whether the number of training places on offer should be increased to address concerns expressed to the Committee about an anticipated shortfall of GPs.

Recommendation 2: Formal mechanisms should be established to annually review the number of postgraduate training places.

Training of the medical workforce needs to keep pace with the increasing complexities of the job. The RCGP stated that “three years to be a highly trained professional in primary care practice is inadequate”, because although the current training offer is of a high quality, it does not prepare trainees to “meet the needs of the patients and the expectations of the service from them”. The RCGP argued that an extra year would allow for more time on mental health, child health, safe prescribing and quality improvement methodology. The Deanery supported a four-year proposition, and mentioned rural healthcare, specialisms and leadership as topics for inclusion. The BMA highlighted the impact on the availability of newly-qualified GPs during the transition from three to four years, and the RCGP acknowledged that this would need to be carefully managed.

Recommendation 3: The Committee would welcome Ffurther information about what consideration has been given to extending GP training from three to four years, and what discussions have taken place with counterparts across the UK on this issue.

Recruitment and Retention

It was reported that not enough trainee doctors are applying for the GP specialty, and an increasing number of GPs are choosing to retire early, emigrate or change specialty. Reasons provided by witnesses for this included the following:

- Negative perceptions held by prospective trainees: The RCGP gave a typical example of attitudes in secondary care to general practice as being: “You’re far too clever to go into general practice”. This contrasted starkly with the RCGP’s description of the role as “very intellectually satisfying” and “the best job in the world”: “the opportunity to share with people over a period of time, their life journey through their health, through their ups and downs is just wonderful”.
- High demand for services creating high workload and causing increased stress amongst GPs: It was claimed that this had been exacerbated by pressures being experienced in secondary care, with GPs feeling under

pressure not to refer their patients or to follow-up referrals for patients on waiting lists.

- The partnership model: The BMA said that although this model offers “great value”, the demands on partners have “increased exponentially” with “paperwork coming at us from all angles”. The RCGP expressed a view that the partnership model was not appropriate for every community or indeed every GP. The consensus was that GPs needed flexible and innovative career options, with a variety of contracting models, to include hybrid arrangements which could combine general practice with out of hours and hospital specialties.
- Lack of facilities and support: The BMA emphasised the importance of decent accommodation for consulting, and called for a robust premises strategy for primary care. The BMA, the Deanery and the RCGP were supportive of GP clusters. These were considered as having the potential – with more autonomy – to deliver the kind of broad support package which would enable GPs to delegate non-core work and make general practice a more attractive career option. Clusters could, for example, take on population health, budget management, oversight of community teams, back-office functions and care co-ordination. The RCGP noted that it was possible for a community model to co-exist with independent contracted GPs, for example in Bromley-by-Bow.

Exposure to general practice appears to be a key factor in addressing some of these points. The BMA highlighted that Wales has the lowest number of foundation year 2 GP posts. The Deanery reported by way of comparison that in the North West of England, 95% of students are exposed to general practice in their second year of foundation training. They believe that this had led to an increase in the number pursuing the GP speciality and thereby increasing the supply.

Recommendation 4: The Deanery and Welsh medical schools should be encouraged to collaborate in the development of a programme that will increase exposure to general practice during undergraduate and foundation training.

It was reported that those who do train as GPs are less likely to accept jobs in more rural and deprived parts of Wales. Again, perceptions were cited as an

important factor, including what the BMA called “myths around mandatory use of the Welsh language”. The RCGP confirmed that, as the inverse care law postulates, it is often harder to find support services in more deprived areas and this was another factor. The BMA advocated financial incentives, which could be targeted at areas of low recruitment. It was noted that these should be conditional upon a reasonable length of service in the area. The Deanery and the RCGP argued that a wider package of inducements needed to be in place, including job satisfaction, high quality of life and good schools to encourage families into those areas.

Recommendation 5: As part of the wider offer for GPs, consideration should be given to providing incentives to attract trainees and practising GPs, targeted at areas where recruitment problems are most acute, and conditional upon a reasonable length of service in the target area.

The Committee fully understands that Wales is competing to retain heavily indebted graduates not just with other parts of the UK (in particular England, where new incentives have recently been announced), but also with other countries such as Australia and New Zealand. We believe that such incentives will have an impact upon recruitment for the Welsh NHS and it is important that the Welsh Government should be able to assess this impact.

Recommendation 6: An analysis of the likely impact on Wales of the recent announcement of financial and training incentives for trainee GPs in England should be undertaken.

The Deanery also suggested that because Welsh-domiciled students were arguably more likely to stay in Wales after qualification, it was important to encourage more Welsh-domiciled students to pursue a future in medicine, preferably in Welsh medical schools. The BMA joined the Deanery in promoting quotas for those who have proof of residence, like those used in Australia.

Recommendation 7: Working with the medical schools, a strategy to encourage more Welsh-domiciled students to train and work in Wales should be established.

A significant proportion of the GP workforce is approaching retirement age. . The RCGP identified a major reason as exhaustion of GPs. However, no apparent process exists to meet with those GPs who decide to take this option

in order to both discover reasons and discuss viable options to remain in the workforce. The BMA reported that “at no point does an exit discussion or interview happen with those GPs who indicate a want to retire”, and that “a lot of GPs aren’t aware of the options available to them to enable them to continue contributing to the NHS”. The Deanery argued for one possible solution by allowing GPs approaching retirement age to continue to practise without being partners in a practice. This would enable GPs to “get back to the job that they saw themselves entering into, which was seeing patients in the first instance”.

Recommendation 8: Pre-exit interviews should be introduced to ensure that GPs approaching retirement are aware of options for continuing to work in the Welsh NHS on a more flexible basis.

Revalidation was cited as another barrier to GPs’ continuing to practise. At no point did the witnesses advocate a removal of revalidation process. However, they indicated that they would welcome a more streamlined process to support GPs to continue to practise. Witnesses noted that the loss of practising GPs through their decision not to renew their licences has added to the reduced numbers available to serve the Welsh NHS. The BMA highlighted the missed opportunity to help tackle pandemic flu by using “an enormous swathe of people who were quite happy to come in and help” but who couldn’t do so “because of the challenges of reintroducing them to the workforce”. The RCGP reported that “a lot of GPs are handing back their licence to practice and can no longer pick up the odd session”. The RCGP works with GPs intending to come off the performers list by offering them support to remain licensed and encourage them to do some out-of-hours sessions. The RCGP commented that more administrative and ICT support from local health boards to help GPs through the revalidation process would be beneficial.

Recommendation 9: Consideration should be given to what support the Welsh Government can offer to GPs who are approaching retirement that could enable more to retain their licence to practise and continue to be an active member of the primary care workforce.



Ein cyf/Our ref: SF/MD/0659/15

David Rees AM
Chair
Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

19 March 2015

Dear David,

Response to the Health and Social Care Committee's short inquiry into the GP workforce in Wales

I would first of all like to express my thanks to you and all members of the Health and Social Care Committee for considering matters affecting the GP workforce in Wales in such a short time and for providing your recommendations to me by letter so that they may inform the development of the primary care workforce plan. As the committee will be well aware, the GP workforce in Wales and across the UK is confronted with a complex series of challenges which will only be overcome by number of partners working together.

You will be pleased to see therefore that I intend to accept all 9 of the committee's recommendations. I have set out in an annex to this letter a summary of my response to each along with the way in which I expect to see them progressed. I am clear that the significant majority of the recommendations must be progressed to a conclusion in the next 12 months or sooner in recognition of the immediate nature of these pressures. The primary care workforce plan will be a key vehicle for doing this and undertaking further consultation where this needs to happen.

During the course of its work the committee focused on two main areas, GP speciality training and recruitment and retention. I would like to take the opportunity to state my broad position here, ahead of the publication of the workforce plan.

The committee were clear, as were those who brought forward ideas and evidence, that we do not at present fill the 136 GP training places we provide each year. This is, in part, a result of general practice medicine being perceived as less attractive than other specialisms, something that greater exposure to the stimulating and varied work of general practice during training could help address.

With regards to recruitment and retention, you highlighted the need for more work to be done to retain those who do qualify, including through the use of a range of incentives, and to help others who already work here to remain in, or return to, the workforce on a more flexible basis. This is particularly important for those who may be considering early retirement and whose experience we cannot afford to lose.

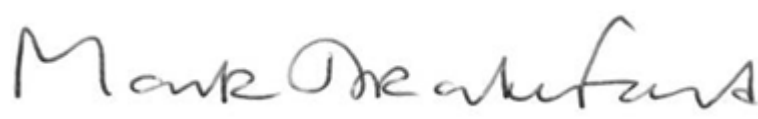
I believe that our primary focus must therefore be to make the case for general practice in Wales with the twin aims of increasing entry into training and improving recruitment, on retaining more of those who train and practice in Wales and also making return to practice as easy as we can safely make it. A number of your recommendations focus precisely on these points and I very much welcome that.

Since you wrote to me on 18 February I have agreed the details of a new two-year GP contract with GPC Wales. Changes to the contract will mean that since 2014-15, around 40% of the total QOF points associated with red tape have been removed. I feel this directly responds to some of the administrative burdens that your committee discussed. The contract is, however, only part of the answer. We must now build upon this by exploring fully the benefits the application of prudent healthcare can bring, not only in relation to access to primary care services, but to GPs themselves.

It is through working as part of multidisciplinary teams that GPs can best be supported by the increased clinical capacity of other professionals (such as pharmacists and physiotherapists working either directly in GP practices or elsewhere in the community). It is this way of working that will deliver the real step change in freeing up time for GPs to care for those who have the most complex needs and for whom the care of a GP will result in the best possible outcomes.

As indicated, my recent announcements on investment for primary care services relate directly to this ambition to help GPs to deliver the care that they feel is needed. This will have the dual impact of improving patient outcomes and creating a much more productive and professionally satisfying working environment. Whilst there is much to do, I am confident that the integrated, patient-centred prudent system of care that we are creating will be increasingly attractive to GPs and to doctors in the training years.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Mark Drakeford', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Short inquiry into the GP workforce in Wales: Summary of responses to the Health and Social Care Committee's Recommendations

#	Committee Recommendation	Response from the Minister for Health and Social Services	Explanation	
1	Consideration should be given to whether the number of training places on offer should be increased to address concerns expressed to the Committee about an anticipated shortfall of qualified GPs.	<i>Accept in principle</i>	<p>The number of GP specialty training places funded by the Welsh Government will remain at 136 for 2015-16. As the Committee notes, the supply of places is currently greater than the number of candidates appointed.</p> <p>This position must however be kept under review and further consideration will be given to the overall number of places funded in time for the next intake in 2016/17.</p> <p>Significant progress before then on other recommendations made by the committee, as well as the prudent healthcare agenda, will be necessary in strengthening the case for such a significant financial investment in the training for one profession as any such increase will inevitably have an impact on other areas of education and training at a time of ongoing financial pressures.</p>	To be progressed under recommendation 2 and through the Primary Care Workforce plan and response to Health Professionals Education Investment Review
2	Formal mechanisms should be established to annually review the number of post graduate training places.	<i>Accept</i>	<p>I am in agreement with the committee that a more formal mechanism for reviewing training places would be beneficial.</p> <p>This would increase transparency around the level of interest in GP speciality training, the uptake of the 136 places currently offered in any year and the number of GPs who receive their Certificate of Completion of Training each year, amongst other factors.</p>	Primary Care Workforce Plan & response to Health Professionals Education Investment Review

			It would also facilitate better alignment between medical and non-medical commissioning processes which I consider necessary in order to take a system wide view on education and training in line with the principles of prudent healthcare.	
3	The Committee would welcome further information about what consideration has been given to extending GP training from three to four years, and what discussions have taken place with counterparts across the UK on this issue.	Accept	<p>Consideration of the extension of GP speciality training to four years is being taken forward as part of the Welsh Government's response to the Shape of Training Review.</p> <p>I am keen for this work to be progressed on the basis of a consensus between the four UK nations under the governance of the Shape of Training Steering Group (STSG). A joint announcement on this group's approach to taking forward the wider recommendations of the Review was made on 19 February. I will supplement this with a letter to the committee.</p>	By letter to Committee
4	The Deanery and Welsh medical schools should be encouraged to collaborate in the development of a programme that will increase exposure to general practice during undergraduate and foundation training.	Accept	<p>I expect this recommendation to be responded to through actions to be taken under the primary care workforce plan and for the partners listed in the recommendation to work together with each other and with the Welsh Government to deliver it.</p> <p>The issues raised by the Committee are reflective of the more general approach to education and training which results in a greater proportion of the training available being delivered in hospital settings. The emphasis of training overall must therefore be refocused to ensure a wider number of care settings are included and that students and trainees are exposed to the significant challenges of providing care in the community.</p>	Primary Care Workforce Plan and response to Health Professionals Education Investment Review

			<p>The implementation of the innovative C21 curriculum by Cardiff University for medical students is a new approach, with greater emphasis on theoretical learning combined with hands-on experience of a wide range of care settings. It is aimed at ensuring students are clear about the need to treat the whole person rather than simply considering a specific condition.</p> <p>The new £2.8m academic centre at Kier Hardy University Health Park will support students from Cardiff University's School of Medicine and other education providers and has a strong emphasis on community medicine and direct patient contact through exposure to the care settings around Merthyr Tydfil and the Cynon Valley, including GP practices.</p> <p>Any such programme will need to be further supported by the development of a national recruitment campaign that highlights the essential contribution made by general practice and the opportunities a career in Wales provides.</p>	
5	<p>As part of the wider offer for GPs, consideration should be given to providing incentives to attract trainees, targeted at areas where recruitment problems are most acute, and conditional upon a reasonable length of service in the target area.</p>	Accept	<p>The role of incentives in the education and training of the workforce in Wales is a matter I asked the Health Professional Education Investment Review, chaired by Mel Evans, to consider during the course of its work. I will shortly be responding to that review.</p> <p>Where these are used they need to be more than a short term fix and must lead to those in receipt of them providing a service to that community for a reasonable length of time, as the committee have suggested.</p> <p>Similarly we should not see incentives as just financial and the response to this recommendation will need to take into account a wide range of</p>	<p>Primary Care Workforce Plan & response to Health Professionals Education Investment Review</p>

			educational and employment incentives that do not result in additional payment being made directly to individuals.	
6	An analysis of the likely impact on Wales of the recent announcement of financial and training incentives for trainee GPs in England should be undertaken.	Accept	This analysis is already underway and will be shared and further developed with key delivery partners so that it may inform the position to be taken in respect of recommendation 5.	Welsh Government research with links to Primary Care Workforce Plan
7	Working with the medical schools, a strategy to encourage more Welsh-domiciled students to train and work in Wales should be established.	Accept	<p>Encouraging Welsh students to pursue a career in general medicine is important in addressing some of the negative perceptions of general practice that the committee heard about and in addressing a lack of trainees in rural areas.</p> <p>Outreach programmes targeted at students in secondary education, which are already within the remit of the Wales Deanery and medical schools, are also key to achieving this and I will be looking to this mechanism to form the basis for a focused rural practice training or accreditation schemes that considers the additional support and training that is needed to encourage students from rural areas in the first instance.</p> <p>It is however only part of a wider effort that must be made to make Wales a more attractive proposition for training and practice for those who meet the standards necessary, irrespective of their place of domicile upon application for medical training or prior to taking up practice.</p>	As part of the Primary Care Workforce Plan and the development of a 10 year strategy for the NHS Workforce.
8	Pre-exit interviews should be introduced to ensure that GPs	Accept	Exit interviews of the type recommended by the committee ought to become part of a wider local	Primary Care Workforce Plan

	approaching retirement are aware of options for continuing to work in the Welsh NHS on a more flexible basis.		health boards led employment offer to practices. It should also be broadened so that it applies to any GP who is considering leaving general practice in order for viable options for retention on a basis other than full time can be considered by local health boards.	
9	Consideration should be given to what support the Welsh Government can offer to GPs who are approaching retirement that could enable more to retain their licence to practise and continue to be an active member of the primary care workforce.	Accept	<p>In meeting this recommendation, the existing retainer scheme which aims to support GPs who have family or other commitments that restrict their working patterns must be reviewed to make it more supportive of GPs who are approaching retirement.</p> <p>In considering how this can be done I expect officials to explore with local health boards and other delivery partners, the potential for the experience and expertise of this group to be used in supporting the out of hours service provision, making a contribution to the work of Primary Care Support Teams, working with primary care clusters as they develop or becoming part of a salaried service where that is appropriate to local need.</p>	Primary Care Workforce Plan

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-600
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01244/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

30 April 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding Petition: P-04-600 Save General Practice from the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP).

I responded to the issues raised in the petition in correspondence dated 29 October 2014. This was acknowledged by Paul Myres, chair of the Wales RCGP, in a letter to the Petitions Committee on 14 January 2015. I note you subsequently wrote to the chair of the Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC) on 22 January 2015 enclosing a copy of my letter and the letter from RCGP Wales. I would be happy to follow up any further queries HSCC may have at our usual committee meetings.

As I have said in previous correspondence, I support fully general practice as an integral part of the NHS and recognise that GPs, along with other healthcare professionals across Wales, are facing increased daily pressures. You should be aware of a new two-year deal for GPs in Wales agreed by the Welsh Government and the GPC Wales.

As part of this, a number of changes and commitments for 2015-16 and 2016-17 have been agreed, which underpin the reform agenda set out in the Welsh Government's plan for primary care services in Wales. GPs will be able to spend more time caring for the most vulnerable people with complex care needs, in particular, the frail and elderly. It also strengthens cluster arrangements to deliver more effective local services, as well as a framework to assess the sustainability of GP services for people living in rural and deprived communities in Wales.

The Welsh Government is committed to continuous investment in the health service and ensuring health boards align their services to provide the maximum benefit for people within the resource available.

Investment in primary care is essential for the service. You will be aware of my announcement last year to invest £3.5m in primary healthcare services in 2014-15. In November 2014, the Welsh Government launched a new national plan for primary care. The new plan, based on the principles of prudent healthcare, aims to help to reshape the NHS by developing, and increasing the primary care workforce to provide the majority of care close to people's homes, accelerating the transfer of services from hospitals to the community, and improving the way people can access services.

The national plan recognises the importance of having a wider range of skilled staff within primary care and a workforce model where the use of the clinical skills and the abilities of all members of the primary care team is maximised. GPs will continue to have a critical and central role in the delivery and coordination of local healthcare. In addition, the leadership role of the GP will be vital in strengthening primary care clusters as agents for change in the delivery of local services.

The national plan is backed by a new investment of £10m, with £6m allocated to the 64 primary care clusters across Wales.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-560 Provision of IBD Services in Wales

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call upon National Assembly for Wales to encourage the Welsh Government to continue its commitment to improving standards of treatment and care for people with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis, through the development of a gastroenterology delivery plan. This will ensure that people with these conditions receive the highest standards of care wherever they are in Wales."

Additional information – Standards of care for people with Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis have improved in Wales, following the launch of the Standards for the Healthcare of People who have Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) in the Welsh Assembly in 2009. However, an independent audit of IBD care has shown that quality has not risen as quickly as other UK countries. There is therefore a need to encourage further improvement through the development of a Gastroenterology Delivery Plan, which will address variation and ensure that basic standards of treatment are being met.

Petition raised by: South Wales IBD Patient Panel

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 664

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-560
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01374/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

14 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 24 April regarding the case for a national delivery plan for gastroenterology services. I have read the responses you enclosed, which appear to show two health boards would welcome a plan and another would welcome further national action. I note one health board would not welcome a plan and three health boards have either not expressed a preference or not responded.

I recognise the need to continue to improve gastroenterology services in Wales and particularly the need for health boards to work toward meeting the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) standards and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline. Health boards are currently using the findings of the 2013 IBD audit, which assesses compliance against clinical standards, in order to improve their services.

The Welsh Government participated in a recent all-Wales IBD audit workshop, where all health boards agreed to develop their own action plans. As a result of the workshop, each health board identified a number of key priorities to be taken forward. Given an improvement process is underway, led by the relevant clinicians, I see no need at this time to consider the development of a delivery plan.

I hope this response is helpful.

Best wishes,
Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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Back Page 93

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence: Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk
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P-04-560 Provision of IBD Services in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21.05.15

SOUTH WALES IBD PATIENT PANEL

Comments on National Assembly for Wales Petition Correspondence

- As a Panel we welcome constructive feedback from both the Welsh Government and a number of Wales' Local Health Boards (LHBs) with regards to our petition's call for an All-Wales Gastroenterology Plan.
- In view of the call from patients and a number of LHBs supporting the establishment of such an All-Wales Plan, we are disappointed that the Minister for Health and Social Services does not agree with such clinical expertise and patient experience.
- In formulating a strategy for future inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) services in Wales, we urge the Minister to listen to the views of patients, clinicians and campaigning organisations when they call for an improved and more consistent standard of IBD care and services in Wales.
- We welcome the recent Assembly Written Statement of Opinion, tabled by Jocelyn Davies AM, calling on the Minister to develop a pan-Wales approach to meet the National IBD Standards 2013, developed by national professional bodies and patient organisations.
- As a Patient Panel representing the views of people with IBD in South Wales, we will continue to engage with clinicians, Assembly Members, organisations such as Crohn's & Colitis UK and other interested parties to hold the Welsh Government to account and drive forward an improvement in the standard of IBD services in Wales.

P-04-408 : Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to fund the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service in Wales to the same degree as the Adult Eating Disorder Service in Wales.

It has come to my attention that there is a disparity in funding between Adult Services and Child and Adolescent Services as regards funding for Eating Disorder Treatment. At the present time Adult Eating Disorder Services receive £1 million per year from the Welsh Assembly, as well as 4 specialist trained provider groups.

Sadly research points to the fact that Eating Disorders, especially Anorexia Nervosa, are predominantly first experienced around puberty. Historically puberty was around 12–15, however, puberty is becoming younger and therefore statistics are beginning to show the prevalence of Anorexia Nervosa starting at younger ages is apparent. Bulimia Nervosa is generally a disease with an onset age of 18–25, however as with Anorexia this may differ from person to person. The fact that in both disorders, and indeed all diagnosable Eating Disorders, early intervention is the key to a quick recovery, therefore preventing long term financial implications for the WAG, makes this plea more pertinent.

I therefore implore the Assembly to consider this a priority for debate and to mend this disparity by giving equal finances and services to the Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder service in Wales as already given to Adult EDS.'

Petition raised by: Helen Missen

Date petition first considered by Committee: 17 July 2012

Number of signatures: 246

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-408
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01340/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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10 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 22 April on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-04-408 about Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Services (CAMHS ED).

I wrote to you in March with information regarding eating disorder treatment, the proposed refresh of the 2009 Eating Disorders: A Framework for Wales and the review of Tier 4 (inpatient) eating disorder services undertaken by Cwm Taf University Health Board. You will have seen the summary of the review which I provided with the letter, it noted the improvements in adult eating disorder provision arising from the implementation of the community teams and, for children and young people, that child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services already have considerable expertise in managing eating disorders. This should be further improved as a result of our £250,000 CAMHS investment. As such the review suggests that it may not be clinically or financially viable to develop a Tier 4 service within Wales.

With regard to the petitioner's comments regarding the funding disparity between adult and CAMHS services and our investment of £1m to improve specialist adult eating disorder provision, I have been clear in the past that CAMHS has always seen the treatment of eating disorders as part of its core business. This is evident from the review and the fact that around 40% of inpatient CAMHS admissions are related to eating disorders. Adult services have not previously had the same level of expertise and the £1m investment was to bring adult provision up to the same standard as CAMHS. I would also add that the costs of CAMHS provision cannot be compared directly with adult mental health provision as the

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Page 96

numbers of inpatient beds required to meet the clinical needs of adults are of a different order to that required for children.

I have asked the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) to provide an update on the £250,000 investment for CAMHS eating disorder services and will share this with the National Assembly in due course.

You will also be aware that to ensure sustainability of CAMHS the NHS is leading a reconfiguration of the service. This work is being supported by the Welsh Government, which has commissioned Professor Dame Sue Bailey to provide the external advice and scrutiny to the NHS as it seeks to embed a cultural and organisational change within CAMHS and its partners. As this work progresses there will be opportunity to engage in the consultation process for all stakeholders, including those with an interest in eating disorders.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

P-04-408 Child and Adolescent Eating Disorder Service – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21.05.2015

Dear Mr Powell

May I thank you once again for keeping this important petition in the arena, and for keeping the Minister for Health to account regarding financial provision for CAMHS Eating Disorder Services in Wales.

I find myself nearly three years on from the initial submission, pleased with what has been achieved, though frustrated by the heel digging that remains. I am also slightly weary of the constant ignoring of the problem at hand, and assume you might be too!

I note with interest the Minister has once again brought up tier 4 provision, which has never been part of my petition; though he perhaps sees the in patient figures as important to the discussion.

The fact that the figure 40% of in patient care is for Eating Disorders, shows that investment at tier 2 and 3 is paramount to keeping these figures lower.

I would be very interested, under the freedom of information, to see these figures and their relation to the geographical distribution in Wales. I suspect that the unit in Abegale is picking up a great many of this percentage. In which case surely the need for further investment at CAMHS level throughout Wales is needed?

I remain unmoved on the fact that the extra funding requested for an equal service throughout Wales at CAMHS level, would indeed shift these figures in the right direction.

I remain resolute that the provision of £250,000 is whilst useful, not going to cover the entirety of Wales. North Wales and Mid Wales should still be given the same investment. The service created by the funding is part time, with the lead clinician only working 3 days a week. The extra £750,000 requested over these past 3 years, would be a drop in the vast ocean of need. Though a useful step on the road to good provision of care.

CAMHS are, by admission in Mr Drakeford's response, due to the review in place (as mentioned), under huge strain here in Wales, and failing in many areas. These failures are both due to the ever increasing number of children needing mental

health services and understaffing, both of which will I'm sure be highlighted in Professor Dame Sue Bailey's findings.

The CAMHS historical 'expertise' in eating disorders, quoted by Mr Drakeford in his letter, would I'm sure be due to numbers of children diagnosed around puberty with an eating disorder. The provision of a specialist team in South Wales actually proves the point that CAMHS need to be brought up to speed on how to treat eating disorders. That historically the treatment has not been robust enough, therefore children and adolescents have been severely let down by the service, due to an inept treatment process at CAMHS level. This will change with the implementation of the Maudsley and family based therapy, which I applaud.

I am aware that new and improved services for CAMHS, especially around provision for eating disorder services have been requested already throughout Wales. These are going to be extremely useful, however the service has, as yet, no extra funding to provide these. Thus the strain continues, which results ultimately in good clinicians having to stretch themselves further, and children and families not having the immediate care needed.

I do not have to reiterate how dangerous and long term a problem an eating disorder becomes if left without early intervention. This fact will be backed up by any of the lead clinicians both within CAMHS and adult services, plus numerous research papers as well as general medical experts.

My understanding is the same, if not slightly more focussed, as is Mr Drakeford's around the framework for Eating Disorders. I am not making this personal, rather an absolute.

I am certain that adult mental health services, prior to the framework for eating disorder services, also had eating disorders as one of their main time and energy consumers (excuse the pun).

I suspect that their inpatient numbers were also high due to Eating Disorders, which is why the funding was released then.

I suspect that this remains in CAMHS due to the fact that eating disorders, especially Anorexia, have the highest mortality of any mental health diagnosis. They are complex to treat and hard to recover from if not given the early intervention with the specialist care required.

The funding should and ought to be the same as provided for adult eating disorder services at community level.

For children and adolescents across Wales and their families, I remain steadfast in my request.

£750,000 remains outstanding to bring the provision of eating disorder care to the same level as provided for Adult services. This provision should be made for the entirety of Wales.

As far as I am aware there is no North/South divide here in Wales, a fact that should be considered in this.

The waters should not be muddied. I am not asking for tier 4 provision, rather investment for the whole of Wales at CAMHS level. This would bring into line the provision given at adult level.

If the expertise due to the investment provided in South Wales was rolled out across Wales the costs at tier 4 would be lower.

I remain steadfast.

Mr Drakeford has, by admission due to the provision of £250,000 and the new service in South Wales, acknowledged that the provision in CAMHS eating disorder services is not robust enough across Wales.

It is time that he stood up for the whole of Wales and provided the remaining £750,000 requested nearly three years ago when this process started.

At the moment he is failing children and adolescents across Mid and North Wales with eating disorders who have the same urgent needs as those in South Wales.

I hope that you are in agreement.

With thanks again

Helen Missen

P-04-564 The Restoration of Inpatient Beds, Minor Injuries Cover and X-Ray Unit to the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital

Petition wording:

Until the Health Minister has had time to consider Prof Marcus Longley's recommendations on rural healthcare in Wales – a study that was commissioned by the Minister himself in January of this year – we, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Labour Government to delay decision on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's Business Case aimed at downgrading our Memorial Hospital to a mere 'Memorial Centre'.

Petition raised by: Geraint Vaughn Jones

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 2,754

Agenda Item 3.12

P-04-466 Medical Emergency – Preventing the introduction of a poorer Health Service for North Wales

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the proposals contained within the Betsi Cadwalader University Health Board consultation– **“Health Care in North Wales is Changing”** does not result in poorer health provision and unnecessary deaths and suffering.

The proposals will have a detrimental effect on most areas of health provision and emergency services and in no way can the proposals be an improvement as is intimated. Already experiencing meltdown, the Health Service in Wales will head towards collapse, if these proposals are implemented in their present form

The current BCUHB consultation proposals in relation to Health Care in North Wales appear to be detrimental to general health provision and the safety of our communities. Accessibility, X-ray provision, Minor Injuries ,Mental Health, the Ambulance Services, the Out of Hours service and the ability of GPs to deliver an integrated service are going to be particularly hard hit by the proposals – as they are diametrically at odds with the Welsh Govt’s vision in relation to the documents **“Together for Health”**, **“Setting the Direction”**, and **“Delivering Emergency Care Services”** – it appears also to be at odds with the **“Compact”** announced by the Health Minister on the 25th of September 2012.

Petition raised by: Mike Parry

Petition first considered by Committee: 19 March 2013

Number of signatures: 306

P-04-466 Medical Emergency – Preventing the introduction of a poorer Health Service for North Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Chair, 21.05.2015

Dear Mr Powell,

Please find enclosed comments and evidence that further supports our petition – the wording of which was intentionally crafted to be very specific.

It is also significant that BCUHB in its latest report confirms what we have been saying all along for the last year or so in relation to the health care offer in North Wales.

Sincerely,

Michael Parry
Petitioner



WEST

NORTH WALES' BEST READ NEWSPAPER

www.dailypost.wales


No: 50,510
Thursday, May 14, 2015

65p

Three arrests over fire on Great Orme

THREE people were arrested on suspicion of arson after a huge fire on the Great Orme, Llandudno. Police confirmed that two teenagers and a man in his early 20s were picked up by officers after fire swept across 500 square metres of land near Hautfe Gardens. They were released on police bail, said a spokesman. **PAGE 5**

KEATES: WHY I NEARLY QUIT FOOTBALL IN NOVEMBER



Former Wrexham skipper speaks out
POST SPORT

Couple jailed over Tesco voucher fraud

A COUPLE who defrauded Tesco out of thousands of pounds buying computer tablets, electronic goods and drink using loyalty vouchers have been jailed. Justine White, 44, and Joseph Robert McDermott, 45, went on a spending spree across North Wales but were caught by a suspicious Tesco worker in Abergele. **PAGE 16**

JIMMY THE OSPREY KILLED IN POWER LINE TRAGEDY

Rare bird's death triggers blackout
Farm&Country



FALLING GP SERVICE PUTS LIVES AT RISK



■ **Blast** Darren Miller AM

By RACHEL FLINT

OUT-OF-HOURS GP services in North Wales have been branded "unsafe".

An independent report reveals the service failed to meet every single Welsh standard last year. AM for Clwyd West Darren Millar said the report was "horrific" and lives are being put at risk.

FULL STORY - PAGE 6

Government slammed over out-of-hours shambles

balietcymru



venue cymru

Dydd Llun 18 Mai // Monday 18 May
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■ May Malam

Celebration as ex-cinema worker May hits 100

A WOMAN who met her future husband whilst working at the Old Cosy cinema in Colwyn Bay is celebrating her 100th birthday.

May Malam was born in May 1915 in Bradford, and was one of five children. Her parents left Bradford during the First World War to live in Colwyn Bay where her mother ran a boarding house.

May met her future husband James Malam in 1940 during the Second World War. James was a projectionist at the old Cosy cinema in Colwyn Bay, and an army Sergeant in the Transport Division, travelling to Malaya and Singapore during the war.

May met James when she worked as a cashier at the Cosy Cinema.

She worked there until she started a family.

James passed away in 2001 at the age of 89 - May has one son called Peter and two grandsons.

Peter said: "My mother enjoys watching snooker and until recently liked to potter about in her garden.

"She will celebrate her 100 birthday on May 19."

The Cosy Cinema in Colwyn Bay was owned by M. A. Kenyon, who also owned the Princess cinema at the time.

In 1954, faced with the cost of installing Cinemascope, the company chose instead to close the cinema, stating it was economically unviable, and the premises were soon turned into a hardware store, which remains open.

Out of hours GP service 'failing'

BY RACHEL FLINT
Welsh Affairs Correspondent
rachel.flint@nfmirror.com

THE Welsh Government has been accused of sticking its head in the sand over "unsafe" out-of-hours GP services in North Wales.

A leaked report commissioned by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board reveals the service failed to meet every single Welsh standard last year. The independent review shows 84% of staff said at times they felt the service was "not safe."

One of the 117 doctors or nurses who responded to the staff survey said it was at times only safe "by the skin of its teeth."

Staffing issues, poor leadership and extensive waiting times were highlighted by staff working at the centres in Wrexham, Maelor, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, Bod-

SHADOW MINISTER BLASTS WG OVER LEAKED REPORT AND SAYS 'LIVES ARE AT RISK'

elwyddan, and Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor.

AM for Clwyd West Darren Millar branded the report as "horrific", accusing the Welsh Government of sticking their heads in the sand "like an ostrich" over the issues in North Wales. The performance of the out-of-hours service is reported weekly to the Welsh Assembly, but this report failed to meet all 10 of the Welsh Standards in 2014.

All "very urgent cases" should have a face-to-face consultation within an hour under Welsh standards, but this was only met

half the time in North Wales.

Deputy Health Minister Vaughan Gething was criticised for a lack of action during a heated session at the Senedd yesterday. Tory Shadow Health Minister Millar said the report made it clear the North Wales service was "unsafe, understaffed and failing".

His concerns were shared by AMs Janet Finch Saunders and Aled Roberts, who expressed shock that three nurses had been suspended on full pay for three years - costing the service £240,000.

Mr Millar said: "This is yet another example of the people of North Wales being let down

by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and indeed being let down by you, and that they are putting patients' lives at risk."

Mr Gething said Betsi should be given credit for addressing the issues in this independent review. He said: "I do think there should be some confidence that staff have taken part in it, and their comments are informing the action the health board is taking."

A Betsi spokesperson said: "The Health Board commissioned this report. The process was transparent throughout and out-of-hours staff contributed to the report, and staff have had sight of the final report. We welcome the report which made a number of recommendations. These formed the basis of an action plan which is being implemented."

■ DAILY POST SAYS: PAGE 8

YOUR ANGRY BIRDS DON'T SCARE ME

SEAGULLS are making their feelings known about Angry Bird scare balloons recruited to frighten them off. One reader snapped this picture of a gull standing right next to one on Rhyl High Street.

The Daily Post reported how the idea was thought up by Denbighshire council, who insisted they worked. But the seagull in the latest image - posted in a Facebook group called R.R.R. Restoring Rhyl's Reputation by Rhian Harris - begs to differ.

Rhian said: "I thought the Angry Birds deterrent was a joke at first. When I realised the council had actually spent funds to do this, I realised it really is a joke."

Commenting in the group, David Gallon said: "If you didn't laugh you would cry at the stupidity of some of the ideas they come up with." And David Bevan said: "Perhaps DCC should send this photo to the company they bought the balloons off and demand a refund on behalf of taxpayers."

The scare balloons were dotted around the High Street in a bid to stop the pests swiping food from shoppers. A council spokesman said: "We have anecdotal evidence to say that it has been a success the majority of the time. We will consider all the feedback to see whether we carry on or whether we need to look at doing something different."



■ A seagull stands next to an Angry Birds balloon designed to scare them off. The real thing (inset)



Old explosives factory getting new lease of life

GWERN y Coed, an organisation for young people, is bringing life back into the Cookes Explosives factory site at Penrynndudraeth. On Saturday an exhibition of old photos and memorabilia will take centre stage at Penrynndudraeth's Memorial

Hall as part of the annual Greenshoots Fair. The children and young people will also launch a brand-new project for the site's future and their plans to bring life back into Gwaith Powdwr.

Now a nature reserve owned by the North Wales Wildlife Trust, Gwerin's young people have already used the site for a range of outdoor activities over the past four years.

Linnos Griffin, the New Groups Officer for Gwerin y Coed said: "This exciting project will see young people revisiting the past through filming

interviews with former workers. This will enhance the skills and opportunities for of the young people by bringing local experts and volunteers to Gwaith Powdwr to make full use of the amazing wildlife at the site as well as creating outdoor opportunities. We are currently

- Noticeboard**

» **Nantlle Valley May Festival**

IN their 20th year, and having raised over £100,000 for charities, the Nantlle Valley May Festival holds its Fun Day on Saturday, May 16, at the Memorial Hall.

Penygroes Charities benefiting this year will be the Hospice at Home and The Brian Tumour Fund (Awyr Las). Stalls £5 for community groups and charities, and £10 for businesses. For more details: Beryl Fretwell beryl@fretwell@hotmail.com or 01286 880304.
- » **Society night**

ANGLESEY Antiquarian Society and Field Club AGM at Oriel Wyys Môn on Friday, May 15, 7pm

General Meeting, then refreshments. 8pm Gwralll Llewellyn Jones on: Anglesey's Historic Heritage and the Island's Economy? Non members £2. hanesmon.org.uk
- » **Coffee morning**

PENTRE Mawr Sheltered Housing Abergele resident are holding a Coffee Morning Sale and Grand Raffle, on Saturday, May 16, 10.30am-noon. In aid of The Residents Christmas Funds.

Admission 50p, includes tea/coffee/biscuits
- » **Appeal event**

FRIDAY, May 29, at 7pm, a Grand Fundraising Event, for Nepalese Earthquake Appeal. Table top, cake stall, raffle, games, and refreshments. Any groups who would like to run a stall at this event, contact Janet Pierce 01492 640443.
- » **Christian Aid**

ST Asaph events for Christian Aid week. May 15, 10.30am to noon, a coffee morning and raffle at 13 Lon y Parc. £1 admission. May 17 at 3.30pm, Closing Service in the Parish Church followed by refreshments.
- » **Market day**

ANGLESEY Farmers Market is on Saturday, May 16, in Ysgol David Hughes, Menai Bridge. From 9am to 1pm.

■ If you are a group, charity or organisation hosting an event in North Wales, let us know on our Daily Post Communities Facebook page - facebook.com/northwalescommunity - or email joy.burgess@trinitymirror.com



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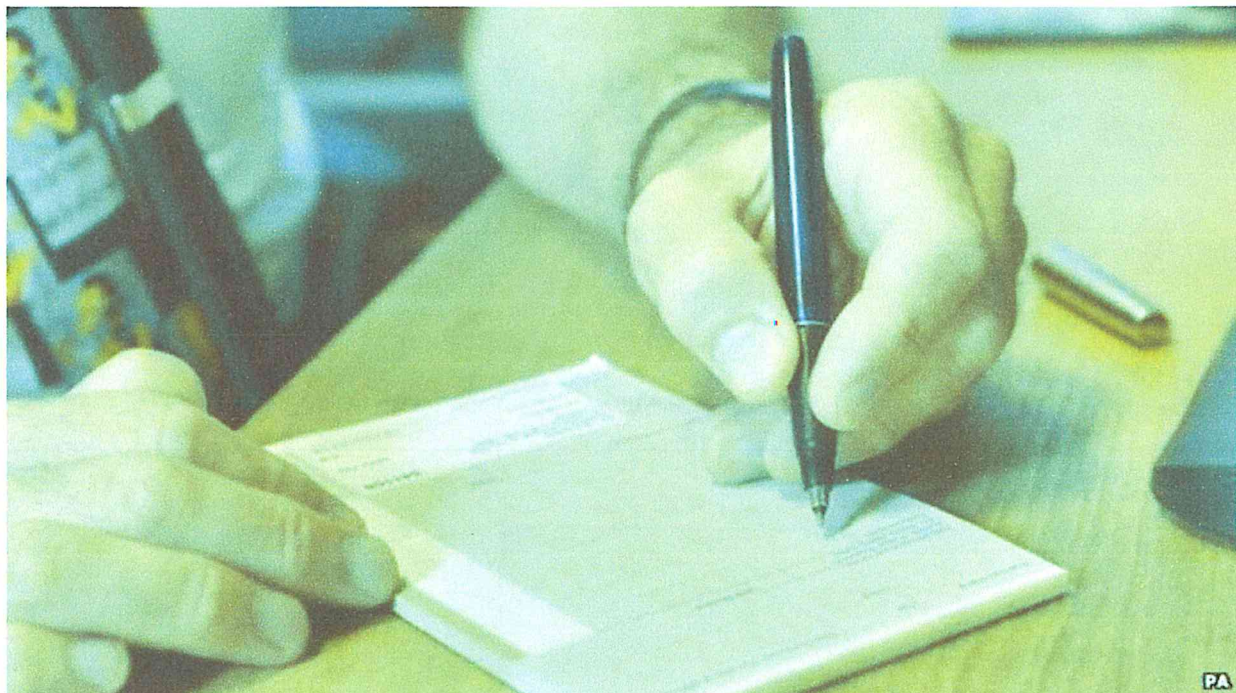
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GP out-of-hours service 'not safe' in north Wales, say staff

12 May 2015 **Wales**



Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board said it welcomed the report and its recommendations

The GP out-of-hours service in north Wales is understaffed and has a number of management issues, according to a report seen by BBC Wales.

The leaked document includes responses from 117 staff and 84% said at times they felt the service was "not safe".

The health board said it commissioned the report as the basis of an action plan which was being implemented.

However the report also identified "a clear sense of pride" in the service and the dedication of staff.

The report by a team of consultants in March compared the north Wales service against recognised Welsh standards.

All "very urgent cases" should have a face-to-face consultation within an hour but, last year, that was achieved only half the time in north Wales.

The standards say 100% of urgent calls should have a definitive assessment in 20 minutes. The service managed 80%.

Concern was raised about unfilled shifts resulting in long waits for help on the phone and lack of leadership.

The **out of hours service**, which operates when GP practices are closed, is delivered from three centres at the district hospitals in Wrexham, Bodelwyddan and Bangor.



Clwyd West AM Darren Millar said the report exposed "serious failings"





Prestatyn GP Dr Eamonn Jessup: "The problem is down to recruitment"

The service at Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor is said to be the most effective.

Prestatyn GP Dr Eamonn Jessup, who is on the out-of-hours GP rota based at Glan Clwyd Hospital, Bodelwyddan, said staffing was a key issue.

"The report is very heavy on the management and how management can be improved but I do concern myself that you can get as many managers in as you would wish but, at the end of the day, they can't magically make up that number of nurse practitioners and doctors," he said.

"The problem is down to recruitment."

In a statement, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board said it had commissioned the study and that "the process was transparent" with staff having had sight of the final report.

It said: "We welcome the report which has made a number of recommendations. These formed the basis of an action plan which is currently being implemented."

Clwyd West AM Darren Millar, shadow health spokesman, said he had not seen any proof that action was being taken.

"You can see that these problems go back a long time and have not been addressed," he said, while studying the report.

The Welsh government said it did not comment on leaked reports.

Key findings

"There was an almost total lack of understanding regarding performance amongst all staff members in the survey and clinicians in both the interviews and site visits.

"Performance is perceived as a management issue, not a clinical one," the report said.

BETSI CADWALADR - OUT OF HOURS GP SERVICE		
MEASURE	TARGET	PERFORMANCE
1. NOT MORE THAN 5% OF CALLS ABANDONED AFTER 60 SECONDS	5% OR LESS	NOT MEASURED FAILED
2. 90% OF CALLS MUST BE ANSWERED WITHIN 60 SECONDS IF USING INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE	90% OR MORE	NOT MEASURED FAILED
3. ALL CALLS ANSWERED WITHIN 180 SECONDS	100%	NOT MEASURED FAILED
4. DEFINITIVE CLINICAL ASSESSMENT OF URGENT CALLS WITHIN 20 MINS	100%	80% FAILED
5. DEFINITIVE CLINICAL ASSESSMENT WITHIN 60 MINS ALL OTHER CALLS	100%	83% FAILED
6. IDENTIFICATION OF LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS WITHIN 3 MINS	100%	NOT MEASURED FAILED
7. FACE TO FACE CONSULTATIONS		
• VERY URGENT WITHIN 1 HOUR	100%	50% FAILED
• URGENT WITHIN 2 HOURS	100%	69% FAILED
• LESS URGENT WITHIN 6 HOURS	100%	NOT MEASURED FAILED

Full report on **BBC Wales Today** on Tuesday 12 May from 18:30 BST

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No more hanging on the telephone for GP appointments

Thursday, 16 June 2011

The First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, joined Health Minister Lesley Griffiths at a GP practice in Caerphilly today (Thursday 16 June) to see how improvements in booking systems can benefit patients, doctors and staff.

Tonyfelin Medical Practice in Caerphilly is the latest GP practice in Wales to introduce the "My Health Online" system, which allows patients to book and cancel appointments and request repeat prescriptions, without having to telephone the surgery. Website users are also able to get advice and information to help them manage health conditions.

"My Health Online", backed by £1.7m from the Welsh Government, is part of a wider programme improving patient safety and the quality of health and social care through digital technologies.

The First Minister and Health Minister were visiting Tonyfelin Medical Centre, Caerphilly, on the day of publication of the GP Access Survey 2010-11, which shows that 92 per cent of patients in Wales are either "very satisfied" or "fairly satisfied" with the care they received at their surgery.

Carwyn Jones said: "The GP practice is often a patient's first port of call, and making an appointment should therefore be as straightforward as possible.

"The Welsh Government is committed to speeding up the development of online appointments for flexible GP booking, which for many patients is more convenient, and reduces administration for the GP practice."

Lesley Griffiths added: "As today's survey results show, the majority of people are reasonably happy with the services offered by their GP practices, but there is room for improvement.

"We are committed to making GP services much more accessible. In addition to online booking systems, we want to see more appointments available during the evenings and on Saturdays so that working people are able to see their doctor at a time that is most convenient to them. This will help reduce pressure on other health services, such as Emergency Departments.

"We are also committed to introducing a programme of annual health checks for people over the age of 50, enabling doctors to intervene early and, ultimately, save lives. This will also help to relieve pressure and costs to the NHS in the long-term. I intend to work closely with doctors in developing these proposals."

Source: [Welsh Assembly Government](#)

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Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board is the operational name of Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board

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P-04-479 Tywyn Memorial Hospital X-ray & Minor Injuries Unit Petition

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to stop the withdrawal of X-ray facilities & the reduction in provision of services by the Minor Injuries Unit as a matter of urgency.

Petition raised by: Tywyn & District Health Care Action Group

Date petition first considered by Committee: 14 May 2013

Number of signatures: 4486



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-466/479/564
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01243/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

7 May 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petitions P-04-466, P-04-479 and P-04-564 relating to health services in North Wales.

In your letter you asked that the committee be kept informed regarding the new health facilities for Blaenau Ffestiniog and of progress health boards are making in responding to the Mid Wales Healthcare Study report. The latest position on each of these matters is given below.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has submitted a business case for capital funding to develop an integrated health and social care centre at Blaenau Ffestiniog. The business case has been scrutinised by my officials and as a result of issues raised, the business case will need to be amended. I understand the health board is planning to submit the revised document to its board for approval in June. In terms of the capital funding, I have made provision within the forward NHS capital programme, subject to the successful completion of the business case.

I have asked my officials to continue to support the health board in delivering this new and much needed facility for the people of Blaenau Ffestiniog as soon as possible.

In February I announced the appointment of Dr Ruth Hall and Mr Jack Evershed as the independent co-chairs of the Mid Wales Health Collaborative which has been established through the three health boards Hywel Dda, Powys and Betsi Cadwaladr and the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust. This formally set in motion the first key recommendations made in Professor Marcus Longley's report.

A high-level conference was held in Mid Wales, bringing together leading experts in planning and delivering healthcare services for rural populations in order to discuss the report's recommendations and how to move forward. The Mid Wales Rural Healthcare Conference, hosted by Dr Hall and Mr Evershed, was held on 12 March. This provided an excellent opportunity to bring together people with a stake in the future of their health services to highlight the most successful examples of solutions to rural healthcare problems and to discuss what lessons could be applied to mid Wales.

The collaborative will hold its first meeting in May, which will outline its ambitious work programme to take forward further recommendations from the Mid Wales Healthcare Study. I hope the committee finds my response informative.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Mark Drakeford'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Mr William Powell A.C/A.M Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF99 1NA

Tywyn and District Health Care Action Group
C/O Miss Jennifer Windsor
7 Cantref, Tywyn, Gwynedd, LL36 0BW

15th May 2015

Petition P04-479 Tywyn Memorial X-ray and Minor Injuries Unit

Dear Mr Powell,

I am writing firstly to apologise for the fact that I, as the petitioner, failed to respond to a notification, received from the committee, which indicated that the petition P 04-479 Tywyn Memorial X-ray and Minor Injuries Unit was to be included on the agenda of the hearing to be held on the 28th of April 2015. I would secondly like to ask whether you would kindly consider, at the next hearing of the Petitions Committee, the response which I am now sending. I am aware that you have received the letter of the 31st of March from Mr Trevor Purt, Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board in which he informed you of the number of attendances at Tywyn and other hospitals in North Wales, during 2014, made by Tywyn residents in order to access Minor Injuries Services. The use of this data has apparently enabled the Health Board to estimate that the level of demand remains relatively low in Tywyn although we are not sure whether any other information was considered at the same time such as the range of population density in parts of Gwynedd (144 perKM) and South Merionnydd (22 per KM), the age and status of the population, the difficulties of accessing services and the impact and knock on effect that the unavailability of minor injuries services produces for other emergency out of hours services. The concern that we have is that the Health Board are indeed using this type of monitoring as a stepping stone to further reduce rather than to supply the level of Minor Injuries Service that is required in Tywyn. We would, again, like to raise the following points that we feel should not be neglected by the Health Board in estimating the level of demand.

1. In January 2013 the C.H.C urged the Health Board to reconsider it's proposal to close the Minor Injuries Unit at Tywyn at 6pm rather than 8pm in line with Ysbyty Alltwen and Dolgellau Hospital. Their objection to 6pm closing was that it was exactly the time when the service may be needed as general practice minor injury services also close at that time.
2. The Health Board itself, during the consultation stages, issued concerns that different opening hours of Minor Injuries Services at different Hospitals could present a problem by causing confusion to the public as to the availability of the service.
3. We are concerned that the confusion over differing hours of availability will, in itself, have an impact on the numbers of people who are able to successfully access the service when required. The further concern is that this will also be reflected in the monitoring of the level of attendance and demand for the service.
4. We are concerned that the effect of the unavailability of the service will encourage people to use the Out of Hours, Emergency Ambulance and Accident and Emergency Services for minor injuries while there is no other choice.
5. We feel that consideration should be given to the difficulties of accessing services in other areas that are presented through poor infrastructure of the south Gwynedd, north Powys and north Ceredigion areas where public transport is sporadic, on poor roads, often affected by adverse weather conditions and even less available during the evening and at weekends.
6. Surveys during the last five years have revealed that of the population in South Merionnydd 20% were aged sixty five or over and living in single households and that 24% had no access to private transport.
7. Part of the Health Board's plan for the Tywyn Hospital Redevelopment scheme is to ensure that primary and community services are developed to meet the needs of the local population and to ensure that services are provided as close to the patient's home as possible,

we hope that the delivery of the Minor Injuries Services in the Redevelopment will meet these requirements.

At a meeting of the South Merionnydd Older People's Forum, which was held on the 29th of April 2015, Dr Higson, the Chair of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, was invited to speak. Afterwards the members were also invited to ask questions and the first question of the inequality of opening times of the different Minor Injuries Units was raised. Dr Higson expressed concern about Tywyn and said that it would be something that he would be looking in to. The Chair of the Forum stressed how important it was to Tywyn to have the Minor Injuries Service in place from 8am until 8pm, in line with other hospitals, as soon as possible this year in order to prevent confusion for the public. We would be very grateful for your support in following up this matter, with the Health Board, as you have very generously supported the petition thus far. We hope that this item may be included in the next hearing of Petition P04-479 Tywyn Memorial X-ray and Minor Injuries Unit.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer M Windsor (petitioner on behalf of Tywyn and District Health Care Action Group)

Agenda Item 3.14

P-04-523 Protect the elderly and vulnerable in care homes

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to hold a Public Inquiry into the events that led to Operation Jasmine, which investigated alleged neglect of older people in nursing homes in Wales.

Additional information:

With the collapse of Operation Jasmine, where the police investigated more than 100 cases of alleged neglect and spent more than £13 million, it has meant that those affected have had no justice and those responsible for the neglect have not been held accountable. We call for a Public Inquiry to take place to ensure that all aspects of the cause of neglect are fully investigated and that new legislation is passed to make certain that people in nursing homes will receive a higher standard of care and if they do not, that they can then obtain redress via the appropriate agencies and the legal system.

Petition raised by: Justice for Jasmine

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Number of signatures: 4216



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-523
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00369/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

13 May 2015

Dear William,

I am writing in response to your letter dated 23 April titled "Petition P-04-523- Protect the Elderly and Vulnerable in Care Homes".

Firstly, I would like to once again thank the Committee for their patience in waiting for Dr Margaret Flynn to produce her independent report into the circumstances surrounding Operation Jasmine. I am happy to provide an update on the revised timetable.

I had originally requested that the report be submitted to me by the end of 2014, but at the beginning of December 2014, Dr Flynn received a significant amount of vital new evidence that needed detailed review. During my meeting with Dr Flynn in January to discuss the progress of her report, she requested an extension to allow her time to consider and analyse the new evidence. I therefore agreed with Dr Flynn that she present her report to me in May.

Following my decision to extend the deadline, I met with members of Justice for Jasmine, a group of families and friends closely affected by Operation Jasmine, to explain the reasons behind my actions and to outline this revised timetable.

I should also inform you that in December 2014, Dr Flynn separately submitted a letter outlining proposals in terms of legislative change. I met with Dr Flynn and the Minister for Health and Social Services to discuss her thoughts at length with regard to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill.

Yours sincerely

CARWYN JONES

**P-04-523 Protect the elderly and vulnerable in care homes –
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerking team, 21.05.15**

Hi Jessica

Thank you for your email advising that our petition will be reviewed. As you know we put our request for a Public Inquiry on hold whilst the Independent Review by Dr Flynn was being undertaken. The Independent Review has yet to be published so we would ask that you put back your review of our petition for a few more months to allow time for the Independent Review to be published.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Kelvyn Morris

Secretary

Justice for Jasmine Group

P-04-501 Day Centres for the elderly in Wales to be made statutory

Petition wording:

We call on the Welsh Government to make Day Care Centres for older people a statutory requirement for the whole of Wales.

Petition raised by: Pamela Hughes

Date petition first considered by Committee: 24 September 2013

Number of signatures: 1 240

**P-04-501 Day Centres for the elderly in Wales to be made statutory –
Correspondence between the Petitioner and the clerking team**

Query from the Petitioner

FOR THE ATTENTION OF KATHRYN THOMAS:

Dear Kathryn Thomas,

Thank you for your e-mail of 16 April 2015,

In line with the above petition we seek advice whether Statutory Day Centres could be implemented in Stage 3 of the

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

We look forward to your reply and thank you for all your assistance.

Kind regards,

Pam Hughes.

Response from clerking team

Dear Pam

Thank you for your e-mail below.

It might be possible for us to put your request to the Committee when it next considers your petition. As a legislature, we wouldn't be able to provide an interpretation of a piece of Government law.

However before we can consider how best we can help, I would be grateful if you could provide further information on what you mean by your reference to 'Stage 3 of the Act'.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Kathryn Thomas

Response from Petitioner

Thank you for your e-mail of April 22nd.

We (SPADC Committee) would ask for your guidance please, – I am not sure at which stage the Bill is at .

Whatever Committee discusses the provision of Day Centres for the elderly, we stress that with the privitization

of Residential Homes, (this is happening in Ceredigion), this will increase the work of unpaid carers at home, looking after elderly relatives. At present, in Aberystwyth, people attend the two Residential Homes for assisted bathing (Basement Day Centre does not have bathing facilities) and some attend to socialise.(on a daily basis).

Under the Section of "Prevention" in the Bill – will this be discussed at a forthcoming meeting? Day Centres would ideally come under that heading.

I note that Mark Drakeford said "day care would be in third place ..not ruling them out..pressing priorities ... in front of day care." Can the above be included in any future discussions?ats.

If provision is not standardized throughout Wales, it will be a Postcode Lottery. All Authorities should be providing the same facilities.

I am having difficulty in finding the relevant documents. Any information you think would be beneficial to our cause! could please send in alternative form. A Big Thank YOU.

What more can this Committee do?

Best Regards,
Pam Hughes
SPADC Committee

Final response from the clerking team

Dear Pam

Thank you for your e-mail below. I'm very sorry that it's taken a while to respond however I wanted to speak to colleagues to see how best the Committee can help you to progress matters.

We will include your comments below in the information that goes to the Committee for its next meeting on Tuesday 2 June. If you have anything further to add at this time I would be grateful if you could let me have any comments by next Thursday, 21 May. If not we will be in touch once they have discussed the petition to let you know what actions they have agreed to take.

Please let me know if you have any further queries at this stage.

Kind regards,

Kathryn Thomas

P-04- 587 A Dedicated Support Team for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome & Fibromyalgia Sufferers in South East Wales

Petition Wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that a dedicated Consultant/Clinic and medical support team for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome & Fibromyalgia sufferers is set up in South East Wales. I request that this petition be treated as an official voice of M.E. sufferers, their families, carers and interested parties.

Currently, sufferers of the above ailments are not being supported, with a few exceptions, by the medical profession. They are unable to work but the government bodies assessing them do not appear to understand their problems. This is the basis for this petition.

Petition raised by: M.E.S.I.G. (M.E Support in Glamorgan)

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of signatures: 368 electronic signatures and 826 paper signatures.
1,196

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04- 587
Ein cyf/Our ref MD/01067/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

16 April 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your further letter of 17 March on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-04-587 – a Dedicated Support Team for Myalgic Encephalitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) and Fibromyalgia (FM) Sufferers in South East Wales, and the report and recommendations of the ME/CFS and FM task and finish group.

With regard to the petitioners' concerns that ME/CFS and FM are viewed as psychological as opposed to neurological conditions, the consensus of the task and finish group was that the clinical lead for these conditions should not sit in mental health. The group noted that, although mental health services have transferrable skills and understand case management, placing the lead in mental health services is inappropriate, causes stigmatisation and has tended to lack the multi-disciplinary team approach which is required. Psychologists on the group stressed their role was in supporting patients to manage the impact of the illness, and not about treating it as a psychological disorder.

Together for Health – a Neurological Conditions Delivery Plan for Wales was published in May 2014 and, although ME/CFS is not mentioned specifically in the delivery plan (along with a number of other neurological conditions), it is covered by it and is recognised as a neurological condition by the World Health Organisation.

A copy of the plan can be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/publications/health/strategies/neurological/?lang=en>

The establishment of an all-Wales implementation group to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach is under way. Clinical leads nominated by each health board at the request of my officials will be attending the first implementation group meeting on 13 May.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford @wales.gsi.gov.uk

In line with the recommendations from the task and finish group report, health boards must produce a draft three-year action plan for 2015-18 by June 2015, and a final plan by September 2015. Annual progress reports will also be required by the end of each financial year.

I hope the Petitions Committee finds this information helpful.

Best wishes,

Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Our Ref P-04-587

Your Ref MD/01067/15

Date 18.5.2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Response to Mark Drakeford's letter dated 16.4.15

Apologies for not responding before committee date on 12.5.15. We didn't, for some reason, receive your email until after the deadline.

Following on from our previous correspondence, we are sad to report that the woman with ME we referred to, has died. She required urgent medical treatment that could take into account her needs as a person with ME. Instead she suffered at home in a totally unsuitable situation, in pain, fear and isolation. She was finally found unconscious, taken into hospital and died a week later. We are now in touch with two more people who have severe ME, in similar critical unresolved situations. They do not have time on their side to wait for Services to catch up with their needs.

Last week we were disappointed to hear that Cardiff and the Vale Health Board has not yet appointed a Champion for ME. It is ironic that in the very area of Wales where we have been asking for an ME Clinic and a dedicated Team for ME, no-one has been appointed to be an ME Champion. It is sad that Cardiff, the Capital of Wales and the Mecca for medical expertise is not able, in this regard, to keep up with most of the other Health Boards in Wales.

We are aware of the Neurological Conditions Plan. However, although you state that ME is included under Neurological Conditions and therefore the Plan, we have recently heard that ME patients are not to be seen by Neurology Clinics in Cardiff. For example, one patient referred to a clinic last year, waited 6 months but the Neurologist was absent on the day of the appointment. He was subsequently removed from the Clinic's list. Another patient was recently refused an appointment via her GP, "as the Neurology Clinic is no longer seeing patients with ME". Other ME patients are not being referred on by their GPs (even if they are unable to recognise or give a diagnosis of ME themselves).

It is unclear to us what the actual role of these Champions for M.E. will be, once they are in place. Will GPs be able to refer patients to see them at a Clinic or will they educate others about the condition?

Yours Sincerely

Miriam Wood (MESiG board member)

Agenda Item 3.17

P-04-618 Protection of Banking Services in Vulnerable Communities

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to recognise the increasing withdrawal of banking services from vulnerable communities and urge the Welsh Government to work with representatives of the finance and banking sector to ensure that all communities in Wales have and retain local access to financial services, including alternatives such as community banking and credit unions.

Additional Information

I have indicated that I'm unwilling to give evidence, but this is purely because I'm disabled and cannot endure travelling long distances.

Lead petitioner: Martin Crumpton

First considered by the Committee: 24 March 2015

Number of signatures:13

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-618
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/0538/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

18 May 2015

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 23 April regarding the petition on Protection of Banking Services in Vulnerable Communities.

I will ensure due regard is given to the petition in the work of the group which has been established to look at the refresh of the Financial Inclusion Strategy for 2016. My officials will work with colleagues from the Department for Economy and Transport on this issue.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

**P-04-618 Protection of Banking Services in Vulnerable Communities –
Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21.05.2015**

Please accept the considered points of members of the community in Llangollen as listed below for your consideration. Thank you.

1. It is detrimental to small businesses when local branch managers are stripped down to being little more than clerks because local knowledge of circumstances and, indeed, of long-term relationship within the community – ie trust – has been factored out and dehumanised, even though one of the key components of programmes such as Dragons' Den and The Apprentice are founded on evaluating the business people above the business ideas.
2. It's a UK-wide strategic vulnerability to abandon both personal and business finance to supermarkets who would undoubtedly identify a gap in the market in providing personal service in favour of their own financial services. My nightmare is towns with homes and a supermarket – and nothing else. We're heading that way.
3. On the issue of paying in. Years ago my bank had a paying in box for when the bank was closed. Basically you put the cash or cheque in a special envelope, filled in the details on the outside and posted it. Stan's post office counter uses the same principle you give them an envelope and they forward it to right bank, and give you a receipt.
4. The difficulty for small communities is making sure we are not disadvantaged by the decisions taken by money men who rarely set foot outside a major city unless it is to play golf or hunt something, and in either case they will have people to care to the boring things like actually paying cash to peasants.
5. Speaking as a member of the public, it really wouldn't bother me if all banks shut all their branches, provided that there are plenty of ATMs and there is a facility to pay in cash/cheques. The post office does this well, in fact with Stan's longer opening hours it is more convenient.
6. However, there is another issue that affects small towns that the minister and the bankers with their city-based lives haven't considered Small businesses.
7. For some reason the post office will not accept payments into business accounts, doesn't bother me my business is so small I use a personal account for it, but closing HSBC has caused some local businesses real problems. They have a choice, take the day's takings to Chirk, or change banks.
8. Maybe some have changed, but that's a nuisance and what guarantee have they that the bank they choose will not close in the near future. Pledges

about 'the last bank standing' don't guarantee it will be your bank, and actually put pressure on banks to close their branch before it is the last one.

9. Some businesses that are part of a group have a bigger problem, their banking arrangements are determined at head office level. North Wales Tourism for example (the group that runs the Tourist Info Centre) banks with HSBC and isn't going to change. Previously the TIC manager could nip across the road to HSBC with their takings, now she has to send a member of staff in a car to Chirk. This means staff out of the office for much longer, the need to have a car available and for the company to pay expenses. Some staff are unhappy about parking in Chirk and walking to the bank with a sackful of cash and will only go in pairs. But it is also not good practice these days to leave an office with only one member of staff on duty.

P-04-519 Abolition of Park Homes Sales Commission

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly For Wales to urge the Welsh Government to remove from Legislation the right of Park Owners to demand commission on the private sale of park homes now that they are no longer involved in the selling process.

Petition raised by: Caerwnon Park Residents Association

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-519
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00518/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

5

May 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 23 April, regarding Petition P-04-519 Abolition of Park Home Sales Commission.

We are currently developing a research proposal for the review of the economics of the park homes industry and it is my intention to gather information from both site owners and site residents as part of the process.

I will keep the Committee informed of progress of the review.

Regards

Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

P-04-613 AMs Should Reject Recommendation for a 18% payrise

Petition wording

With those working on the frontline in the public sector having pay cuts in real terms, I urge AM's to reject recommendations to increase their pay by 18%. By accepting this or any pay rise whilst the vast majority of public sector workers are faced with pay cuts and redundancies AM's would be communicating to those that they represent a message of "'We're alright Jack, keep your hands off my stack' (Money, Pink Floyd), with their "stack" being paid for by public sector cuts, pay freezes and redundancies. I would propose that AM's pay rise, freeze and cuts mirror those working in education, NHS, Police and social services.

Petitioner : David Swain

First considered by the Committee:

Number of Signatures: 12

Bwrdd Taliadau Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol Cymru

—
Remuneration Board of the
National Assembly for Wales

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

8 May 2015

Dear William,

I wrote to you on 17 April regarding the petition on the Board's proposals for Assembly Members' salaries in the Fifth Assembly (Ref: P-04-613). The Board had previously discussed the petition during its consideration of the responses to the dedicated consultation on Salaries. We did so again during our final review of all our proposals in the draft determination at our meeting on 24th April and included consideration of your letter.

We intend to publish the final Determination and the accompanying report on 22 May and we will ensure that you receive a copy.

Regards,



Sandy Blair CBE DL
Cadeirydd / Chair
Bwrdd Taliadau/Remuneration Board

Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

P-04-565 Revive disused railway lines for leisure

Petition wording:

The Welsh Government should look turning the hundreds of miles of disused railway lines (axed under Beeching) into high quality cycle/walk ways. The lines cover the whole of Wales and this scheme would: encourage healthy activities and lifestyle; provide a safe way to travel for those who want a green alternative; provide safe cycling for children and encourage use for going to school, clubs etc; reduce traffic on our roads; boost Welsh tourism especially by cyclists and walkers; enable the establishment of a vast number of varied, small businesses along the routes – shops, B&B etc. Rural areas will benefit. The potential good for the health of the population of Wales and its economy is unlimited and the return in this investment can be understood before it even starts.

Petition raised by: Albert Fox

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 14



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-565
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/01864/15

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

7 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of Albert Fox regarding the revival of disused railways for leisure and whether the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 could provide a mechanism for addressing the issues raised in Mr Fox's petition.

The Active Travel Act places duties on local authorities to improve infrastructure to enable people to make active travel journeys only. An active travel journey is classed as a journey to or from a workplace or educational establishment or to access health, leisure or other services or facilities. The route itself must be suitable for active travel journeys which are for everyday purposes i.e. journeys for utility not recreation. The scope of the Act therefore does not extend similar duties for improving recreational and leisure routes.

Active tourism opportunities such as these are however an area that can bring significant economic and social benefits for local communities where that is feasible and I am giving further consideration to how we might assist local communities maximise those opportunities in this area.

Edwina Hart

YMUNWCH Â'R MUDIAD

sustrans

JOIN THE MOVEMENT



William Powell, AM
Chair of Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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Caerdydd Cardiff
CF10 5AE CF10 5AE

T: 029 2065 0602
F: 029 2065 0603
Info/Gwyb: 0845 113 0065
sustranscymru@sustrans.org.uk
www.sustrans.org.uk

24 April 2015

Ref P-04-565

Dear William Powell AM, Chair of Petitions Committee

Petition Title – P 04-565 Revive Disused Railway Lines for Leisure

Thank you for approaching Sustrans to provide our views on the petition that suggests reviving disused railway lines as walking and cycling routes for leisure. We received this request on 22 April.

Members of the committee will be aware of Sustrans and our work in Wales, but I thought it would be useful to set this out in responding to the petitioner.

Sustrans, as the UK's leading Sustainable Transport Charity - was initially formed in the 1970s with exactly the vision of what is being called for- to convert former railway routes into vibrant community assets as shared use walking and cycling paths. Sustrans articulates the economic, social and environmental benefits of walking and cycling through our advocacy work but also our practical projects, the most well-known of which is the National Cycle Network which this year celebrates its 20th Anniversary.

There are now 14,000 miles of the Network across the UK, with about a third of the routes being traffic free sections, many of which are former railway lines. The network is used by over 5 million people every year. The Network in Wales extends to approximately 1,400 miles, with the South Wales Valleys having the highest concentration of routes thanks to our recent European Funded Valleys Cycle Network project. Our website www.sustrans.org.uk is a useful resource for finding out more and to download route maps and leaflets.

Sustrans works in partnership with local authorities and other land owners to identify routes and to plan network expansion, and we also take a leading role in securing funding for the

Registered Office, Sustrans, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol BS1 5DD. T: 0117 926 8993

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Back Page 137



necessary regeneration and construction work. A separate organisation, Railway Paths Ltd manages the estate function and has in its ownership many former railway lines yet to be converted into community routes.

Former railway lines often feature within network development plans that we discuss with local authorities, but these days the most important driver for bringing forward new routes is their potential for use by walkers and cyclists for everyday journeys. The process for selecting a former railway line would primarily be determined by location and proximity to communities, and usefulness to serve everyday journeys, for example the route to work or school. Tourism remains a factor, and some of Wales' most popular routes like Lôn Las Cymru consist of a series of local routes which join up together to be marketed as a long distance challenge route.

The Active Travel (2013) Wales Act is now the primary means for active travel network planning in Wales. The approach determined by the legislation requires local authorities to plan for and continuously improve a network of walking and cycling routes in designated areas. Within this provision councils will be consulting with residents and interested stakeholders to find out where people think new routes need to be developed to serve the needs of local communities.

Sustrans also engages with Visit Wales and Welsh Government about strategic network planning and promotion of walking and cycling for visitors to Wales. We have a popular series of maps and promotional materials which are aimed at the tourist market and we work with tourism destinations to promote walking and cycling and public transport as an alternative to the car for accessing key sites.

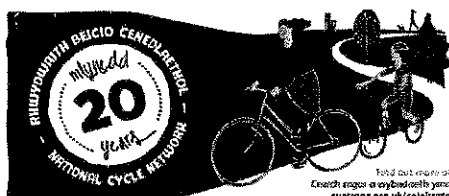
I trust my response provides sufficient information to outline Sustrans view. There are already systems in place to bring forward the conversion of disused railway lines for use as walking and cycling corridors. If the petitioners have specific sections of infrastructure in mind then they are very welcome to get in touch and we will be happy to share our knowledge of whether these former railway lines have been identified for future development.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Lorimer

National Director, Sustrans Cymru



P-03-240 Improvements to the A40 in Llanddewi Velfrey

Petition Wording

Due to the increasing levels of traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles, on the A40 and due to the inadequate provision of safe pavements and pedestrian crossings acknowledged by the Trunk Road Agency through research on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government we, the undersigned, hereby demand the Welsh Assembly Government, as a matter of urgency, improve road safety in the village of Llanddewi Velfrey, Narberth, Pembrokeshire through implementation of the following measures:

1. Improve the inadequate pavement along the southern side of the A40 between Llandaff Row and the far eastern end of the village to ensure that it meets current safety standards, that it is sufficiently wide for the safe use of pedestrians, pushchairs and wheel chair users taking into consideration the proximity of heavy goods traffic passing by at speeds often in excess of the current limit of 40mph.
2. Install speed cameras at the eastern and western ends of the village.
3. Utilise the existing electrical installation for road crossing signs to provide flashing warning lights at times when children will be crossing the A40 to catch their school bus.
4. Install traffic calming measures at each end of the village and at road junctions to emphasise the need to reduce speed.
5. Reduce the speed limit to 30mph.

Petition raised by: Llanddewi Velfrey Community Council

Date petition first considered by Committee: September 2009

Number of signatures: 154

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-240
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/01952/15

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

5 May 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 23 April regarding petition P-04-240 Road safety on the A40 in Llandewi Velfrey.

The study is progressing to programme and will be completed in May. I will be reporting the results at the end of the month.

Edwina Hart

Cartrefle
Llanddewi Velfrey
Narberth
Pembrokeshire
SA67 8UR

William Powell AM
Chairman of Petitions Committee
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA

19th May 2015

Dear Mr Powell

Ref: Petition P-03-240 Road Safety on the A40 at Llanddewi Velfrey

In November last year the Minister promised to accelerate the upgrading of the A40 and that the initial work would be completed in 6 months. We are therefore hoping that the results of the investigations that she has said will be completed by the end of May will finally produce a timescale for provision a much needed by-pass and to address serious safety issues in Llanddewi Velfrey.

Members of the Community Council have voiced their concerns about the number of consultations and studies carried out over the past 40 years with no change to the situation. They will be greatly relieved if the Minister now approves taking immediate steps towards provision of a by-pass. However even if that process starts now the safety concerns will remain a real and pressing issue for several years. If the by-pass is delayed even further the safety issues will be an on-going concern.

While, in the past we have raised the issue of narrow pavements and a safer crossing we realise that cost will be an issue if money is to be invested in the by-pass. The simplest and most cost effective way of taking these issues into consideration and reducing overall risks to pedestrian and road users is to rigorously enforce the speed limit. This could be done by installing speed cameras above the speed limit warning signs, as penalising offenders seems to be much more of a deterrent than simply telling them they are over the limit. Slower speeds would reduce the dangers on the narrow pavements, on the pedestrian crossing and at the three road junctions.

Whether the by-pass is imminent or not we hope you agree that action still needs to be taken to improve safety for road users and pedestrians on the A40 through Llanddewi Velfrey.

Yours sincerely

Lynda Hill

Clerk to Llanddewi Velfrey Community Council

P-04-626 De-Trunk the A487 Road Through Penparcau, Trefechan & Aberystwyth Town Centre

Petition wording

We call on the Welsh Government to take all necessary action to initiate the 'De-Trunking' of the A487 (the removal of 'trunk road status') on a specific section of road that runs through the residential and urban communities of Penparcau, Trefechan, and Aberystwyth town centre. This action would encourage the alleviation of traffic congestion and enhance road safety within these communities and town centre, and as a consequence would facilitate wider social, environmental, economic and health & well-being benefits within an area that the Welsh Government has already deemed necessary of significant regeneration investment and support.

Additional Information

Penparcau Community Forum, a community development partnership providing a strong collective voice for the community of Penparcau, are actively campaigning for the section of the A487 road running through Penparcau, Trefechan and Aberystwyth town centre to be removed of its 'Trunk Road' status. This would enable greater local accountability and provide enhanced flexibility for the provision of traffic calming measures and enhancements, which would promote a safer road and environment, and encourage alternative activities such as cycling and walking. The A487 'trunk road' currently runs through Great Darkgate Street, the main shopping street within Aberystwyth town centre, which is part of a Welsh Government, sponsored Strategic Regeneration Area.

Penparcau Community Forum

Lead petitioner Dylan Jones

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 65 online signatures.

**P-04-626 De-Trunk the A487 Through Penparcau, Trefechan & Aberystwyth
TC - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05.05.2015**

We would just like to add that the A487 Trunk Road is a very busy road that still runs through our village whilst the decision is being considered.

Therefore, our main concern is the timescale for the Minister's decision and, that hopefully this will not take too long.

For us it feels that every minute counts and a decision needs to be made sooner rather than later. In addition, this decision is not only important to our village but also to the centre of Aberystwyth as well.

Diolch

Bryn

P-04-607 Call for the welsh government to purchase Garth Celyn

Petition wording

This historic building and grounds are up for sale.

Such is the importance of this building/grounds to wales and its history we call upon the welsh government to do whats right and secure Garth celyn for the welsh people once and for all.

About the year 1200, Prince Llywelyn ap Iorwerth constructed a royal home on Garth Celyn. To the east of the Llys was the newly endowed Cistercian Monastery of Aberconwy; to the west the cathedral city of Bangor. Between Garth Celyn and the shore the fertile farmland provided food for the royal family, members of the court, and the local community. The sea and the river had fish in abundance and there was wild game to be hunted in the uplands.

The village of Aber Garth Celyn on the west side of the river was a bustling, thriving place. Travellers negotiating the dangerous Lafan Sands were given food and lodging in the valley. Goods brought by sea to the Port of Llanfaes were being distributed to other points on the mainland from here. Animals were herded along this routeway to and from the mountains. Grain was carted to the mill. The community came to attend services in the church. Pilgrims from far and wide walked the trackway and paused for refreshments. Bards came to recite poetry recalling the deeds of the heros, the great defenders.

Additional Information

Part of a Letter from Llywelyn, Prince of Wales to John Peckham, archbishop of Canterbury. November 1282

Garth Celyn.

To the most reverend father in Christ, the Lord John, by the Grace of God, Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, from his humble and

devoted son Llywelyn, prince of Wales, lord of Snowdon, greetings and filial affection, with all manner of reverence, submission and honour. For the heavy labours which your fatherly holiness has assumed at this time, out of the love you bear to us and our nation, we render you grateful thanks, all the more since, as you have confided to us, you come against the king's will. You ask us to come to the king's peace. Your holiness should know that we are ready to do so, provided the lord king will truly observe that same peace as is due to us and ours.

We rejoice that this interlude granted to Wales is at your instance and you will find no impediments placed in the way of peace by us, for we would rather support your efforts than those of any other. We hope, God willing, there need be no occasion for you to write anything to the pope concerning our pertinacity nor will you find us spurning your fatherly entreaties and strenuous endeavours, indeed we embrace them with all the warmth of our heart. Nor is it necessary for the king to weigh his hand yet further against us, since we are fully prepared to render him obedience, always saving our rights and laws, a reservation legally permitted to us.

Petitioner : Kevin Bates

First considered by the Committee: 9 December 2014

Number of Signatures: 650

William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee

20 May 2015

Petition: P-04-607 Call for the Welsh Government to purchase Garth Celyn

Dear William

Thank you for your letter asking the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee ("the Committee") to consider the above petition as part of its work on the Historic Environment (Wales) Bill ("the Bill"). The Committee noted the letter at its meeting on 6 May 2015.

While the subject matter of the petition is relevant to the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill insofar as it relates to an historic monument, we are not in a position to consider individual cases, or how best to protect specific monuments such as Garth Celyn.

The Committee's agreed terms of scrutiny include consideration of the general principles of the Bill and whether it meets the Welsh Government's stated aim of improving the existing systems for the protection and management of the Welsh historic environment. In this context, if the petitioner would like to submit evidence about the general principles of the Bill to help inform our work, we will, of course, consider it along with all other evidence received.



Details of the Committee's public consultation on the Bill can be found on its website. I attach a link for ease of reference.

<http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?id=176&RPID=637441&cp=yes>

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Chapman AC / AM

Cadeirydd / Chair



P-04-607 Call for the Welsh Government to Purchase Garth Celyn – Correspondence from the Owner of Garth Celyn to the Committee

The Petitions Committee.

I am writing in a last desperate attempt to ask that the National Assembly does everything possible to safeguard the future of Garth Celyn.

The documents and the letters of support submitted by the Petitioner Kevin Bates help to explain the meaning of Garth Celyn, some of the issues involved, but now there is the need for the greatest urgency.

Many schools, groups and organisations, and hundreds of individuals have contacted the Garth Celyn Trust and myself in recent months asking who they can lobby to make their voices heard and highlight the matter. We did not want to turn this into a media circus and have refused all interviews with the press and television as we felt that any intervention in any way would be unhelpful at the present time. Please do not see that silence as apathy. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is overwhelming public support and goodwill.

The late Gwynfor Evans described Garth Celyn as **"a place that holds the Soul of the Nation"**.

Huw Edwards in the BBC production "The Story of Wales" described it as **"in all likelihood the most significant site in the history of Wales"**

The late Dr John Davies described the letters written from Garth Celyn by Prince Llywelyn and his Ministers in November 1282 as **'the most sublime compositions of the Welsh nation'**.

The promontory of Garth Celyn overlooking the Menai Strait is the setting for the play 'Siwan' by Saunders Lewis. Each year A-level students from all parts of Wales and further afield visit the site, as do others interested in Welsh history, language and culture. (John Ogwen and Maureen Rhys come each year to do readings from 'Siwan' to members of Yr Urdd. There have been poetry readings, musical performances, art exhibitions. The list goes on and on.....)

The individuals who signed the Petition (and those who did not know about the Petition until after it was closed) have asked that the property be purchased and then placed in the hands of Trustees and a Management Committee to become a Welsh Cultural Centre, as a permanent, thriving memorial to the Welsh Princes and their families. (Siwan died here in 1237, Prince Dafydd ap Llywelyn died here in 1246, Eleanor de Montfort, Lady of Wales, died here in June 1282 giving birth to

Gwenllian. The last letters that Prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd wrote in November 1282 were dated from 'Gardd Kelyn'.....)

The site is situated just off the A55 coastal highway, between Conwy and Bangor, overlooking the Menai Strait. It is highly accessible in an area of natural beauty.

I have owned the property since 1988 and since that time have had a opened the house and grounds willingly and freely to those interested. Thousands of people from Wales and further afield have walked through the doors. No-one has been charged.

I now understand that if the National Assembly does not come forward immediately to find a positive solution, the property will, due to personal circumstances totally beyond my control, be sold by public auction on the open market.

It has been suggested that a future purchaser might have the same open door policy as I have done. Can I say that that is highly unlikely. The individuals who have looked round the house as perspective private purchasers have done so with a view to having it solely for their own personal use, some wanting it simply as a holiday home.

Following acquisition, I am told, there are potential grants available from the Heritage lottery Fund and others to take the project forward in a sustainable way for public benefit.

The house and cottage are Grade II* Listed and stand in a Scheduled enclosure, and as such are protected by law from damage. But that does not give or guarantee public access.

It could be argued that Garth Celyn is not under threat from development and therefore does not need to be owned by an official body. That misses the point entirely. The promontory of Garth Celyn is, as Gwynfor Evans said, "**a place of special meaning to the People of Wales.**" That fact alone surely overrides all else. Though I have been fortunate enough to live here for 26 years, I have always carried the responsibility that it belongs to "us" and not "me".

There are doors that can be opened to make this happen. Please, please do so.

Kathryn Pritchard Gibson

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