

## Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

**Committee Room 1 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:

**9 December 2014**

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Meeting time:

**09.00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

**Steve George**

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

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### Agenda – Supplementary Documents

#### Member's Brief and additional correspondence for items 2.2 and 3.1

Please note the documents below are in addition to those published in the main Agenda and Reports pack for this Meeting

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#### **1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions (Pages 1 – 35)**

**P-04-607 Call for the welsh government to purchase Garth Celyn (Pages 36 – 39)**

**P-04-541 Support for the Mentrau Iaith (Language Initiatives) (Pages 40 – 43)**

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## Messages of support

### Note #1

I would like to take this opportunity to send a brief word asking you to encourage the Government to take advantage of this unique opportunity to save one of the most important sites in Wales for the nation. There is an urgent need for a Trust to ensure that Garth Celyn belongs to the nation, and the only way of ensuring that this happens is for the Government to spend public money to ensure that one of the most important buildings in our history is enjoyed for generations to come.

Despite current financial restraints, there is, from time to time, a need to look at the bigger picture and remember that things that are currently within our grasp are, potentially, at risk of being lost forever. Garth Celyn is in jeopardy, and the people of Wales need to protect their property.

Tudur Dylan Jones

### Note #2

William Powell AM

Petitions Committee Chair

National Assembly for Wales

Dear Sir

I write to you regarding the future of Garth Celyn, the historical home of the Princes of Wales in Abergwyngregyn.

For a number of years, I have been annually leading groups of young people as part of Urdd Gobaith Cymru on a trip to North Wales to learn about our history and heritage as part of their A level course in Welsh second language. As part of the course, they study Saunders Lewis's drama – Siwan. Kathryn Gibson, the owner of Garth Celyn, who is also an important historian, has given many years of her life to conduct detailed and comprehensive research on the history of Garth Celyn. She has proved beyond all doubt that this was the headquarters of the Welsh Princes. Other

historians in Wales and a large number of individuals and organisations in our country have supported this research and have noted the importance of this ancient building to our history.

Kathryn has been opening doors of her home and welcoming people of all ages from all over Wales and beyond into her home for a long time. Her commitment to reporting the important background of Garth Celyn is unique and valuable. The history of the Princes of Wales is extremely important and every school in Wales should be transferring this important piece of our history to our future generations. Therefore, it was very sad to hear that the future of our Princes' home is in danger, but it was good to hear about Kathryn's campaign to secure the future of the house. I strongly believe that bodies such as Cadw, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales,

Gwynedd Council, and certainly the National Assembly for Wales, have a duty to secure the future of Garth Celyn for generations to come.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of the Petition Committee's discussion in the Assembly and hope that this is just a start and that the National Assembly for Wales will ensure that Garth Celyn is protected and developed as a site of historic importance for everyone in Wales in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Greenwood,

Gwent Region Development Officer

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Swyddfa'r Urdd (Rhanbarth Gwent), Tŷ'r Ysgol, Stryd Holland, Glyn Ebwy, Blaenau Gwent. NP23 6HT. Ffôn: 01495 350155 / Ffacs: 01495 306867 / E-bost: [HelenG@Urdd.org](mailto:HelenG@Urdd.org)

### **Note #3**

I write this letter to support the call on the Welsh Government to buy Garth Celyn to protect it for generations to come. The site is part of our heritage and it is crucial that it is safeguarded. Unfortunately, the site is at risk of being sold and developed.

We, as a school, frequently travel to the north to visit important sites in Welsh literature. Garth Celyn never fails to offer students a glimpse of a special way of life. They can imagine the drama of 'Siwan' taking place before their very eyes in this unique place.

It is our duty to ensure that our young people learn about the history of this special place.

I urge you to support the petition.

With thanks,

Lowri Davies,

Head of the Welsh Department

Ysgol y Strade,

Llanelli

### **Note #4**

Dear Petitions Committee,

I would like to support the call on the Welsh Government to purchase Garth Celyn. The site is in danger of being sold and developed. As a valuable part of the history of our nation, the site should be bought so that it can be protected for generations to come and to ensure that its stories are remembered.

Yours sincerely

Dylan Nicholas

## **Note #5**

Dear Petitions Committee,

I support the call for the Welsh Government to acquire Garth Celyn in order to preserve the place for future generations. The site is at risk of being sold and developed. We need to ensure that young people in the future are made aware of the history.

Yours sincerely

Fflur Mathias.

## **Note #6**

I understand that a petition had been presented to the Government, encouraging it to buy the land at Garth Celyn.

I would like to support this aim, bearing in mind that the site is of national significance to Wales. Securing the future of this site is in the interest of our national heritage.

Thank you.

Aled Williams

Penrhos

Heol Maesyffynnon

Carmarthen

SA31 1DZ

## **Note #7**

Dear Committee Members,

I understand that you will be discussing the situation affecting Garth Celyn over the coming days. I have no doubt that you will be familiar with the site's significance to our history, but I wish to draw your attention to its more recent role as an attraction for hundreds of schoolchildren. Over the past few years, busloads of children have been thrilled by visits to the site and the opportunity to learn about their heritage in such an unforgettable manner. This is a home that can open many doors to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, and it offers a unique opportunity for visitors to gain a direct understanding of the ways of life of the people of Wales in an exciting way. I hope that you will do everything in your power to save this treasure for the nation.

Yours sincerely

Mererid Hopwood

**TO DDO  
DYFO**

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*Llais i'r Iaith*

William Powell AM

Petitions Committee Chair

Tŷ Hywel

Cardiff Bay

Cardiff

CF99 1NA

3 December 2014

Dear Mr Powell

**Petition: P-04-541 Support for the Mentrau Iaith (Language Initiatives)**

I would like to thank you and the Committee for giving detailed consideration to our petition to support the work of the Mentrau Iaith, and to try to ensure that they receive adequate funding that corresponds to the demands of language planning in the context of restoring the Welsh language.

I attach a letter from Mentrau Iaith Cymru, noting the progress made in discussions over the last few months.

We happily accept the First Minister's view that Mentrau Iaith play a key linguistic role, and we appreciate his offer to meet with us to discuss this further.

I will contact the First Minister to arrange a meeting to continue the discussion at ministerial level.

Many thanks again, I look forward to hearing the outcome of your Committee's discussions on the petition.

Yours sincerely,



Heini Gruffudd

Chair

Dyfodol i'r Iaith

Mr William Powell, Petitions Committee Chair, National Assembly for Wales

Dear Mr Powell,

We write in response to recent correspondence between the Petitions Committee and the First Minister, namely the letter dated 17 November 2014.

We would like to start by responding to the proposal in the First Minister's letter on commissioning an independent review of Mentrau laith structures as part of the funding package for 2014–15. There was a unanimous decision to reject this proposal for the network of Mentrau laith by the Executive Committee of Mentrau laith Cymru in the Mentrau laith Cymru national meeting in July 2014 for two main reasons. First, the proposal did not include conducting an independent assessment of the resources required by Mentrau to develop and implement their full potential; instead, it focused specifically on the structures, which was within the scope of the review carried out in 2012. Secondly, the Welsh Government provided an estimated cost of £150,000 for the work, which would be deducted from the additional funding for the Mentrau (total of £750,000) announced in June 2014.

Because of the above points, the Mentrau decided not to accept the proposal, as it did not respond to our real needs, and more seriously, it would mean less resource for the Mentrau, for their crucial work in supporting and promoting the Welsh language in their communities.

As the First Minister mentions in his letter, we are currently discussing the funding package for the additional resources with Welsh Government officials and we will continue to discuss and work together to ensure the best use of those resources.

We also welcome the First Minister's comments about the role of Mentrau as an

integral part of the communities they serve. We agree entirely that there is a need to strengthen the role and influence of the Mentrau as language planning in Wales develops. To this end, the additional funding of £750,000 over two years represents additional investment to be welcomed as a *first step* in the process of strengthening and developing our work. Further resources are needed in the long term, along with long-term financial security, for the Mentrau to develop and grow to meet the challenges that the Welsh language will face, and to prepare them to play a full role in the field of language planning in Wales, as the First Minister has mentioned. In our original response to the review of the work of the Mentrau Iaith, we called for additional investment of £3.1 million over three years. We still strongly believe that this resource is needed in order to develop Mentrau with sufficient influence to act for the Welsh language and Welsh speakers in all parts of Wales, with the ability to work with the Welsh Government to achieve the goal of seeing the Welsh language thrive and achieve the aims of the Welsh language strategy.

Mentrau Iaith Cymru will be discussing the issues that have arisen as a result of the petition by Dyfodol i'r Iaith directly with the First Minister and the Welsh Government from now on, as we are in discussions with them already.

We would like to thank the Petitions Committee and Dyfodol i'r Iaith for their work in submitting the petition and the correspondence that has followed. We sincerely hope to work with you again in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Meirion Ll Davies

On behalf of Mentrau Iaith Cymru's Executive Committee

