

Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date:
2 October 2012

Meeting time:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

- 1. Introduction, apologies and substitutions 09:00 – 09:00**
- 2. New petitions 09:00 – 09:40**
 - 2.1 P-04-409 Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales (Page 1)
 - 2.2 P-04-410 A Permanent Memorial to Wales's Workers (Page 2)
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3. Updates to previous petitions 09:40 – 11:00

Local Government & Communities

- 3.1 P-03-144 Guide Dogs for the Blind – Shared Space (Pages 18 – 41)
- 3.2 P-04-391 Llandeilo By-pass (Pages 42 – 46)

The following three items will be considered together

- 3.3 P-04-361 Free bus passes for students under 25, and in full-time education (Page 47)
- 3.4 P-04-371 Reduced fares on public transport for all children up to the age of eighteen (Page 48)
- 3.5 P-04-382 Student fares on public transport (Pages 49 – 57)
- 3.6 P-04-393 Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group (Pages 58 – 61)

Health & Social Services

- 3.7 P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre (Pages 62 – 75)

Housing, Regeneration & Heritage

- 3.8 P-03-263 List Stradey Park (Pages 76 – 79)
- 3.9 P-04-322 A call to revise Cadw's hold upon churches (Pages 80 – 81)
- 3.10 P-04-381 Restoration for North Wales Hospital (Pages 82 – 86)
- 3.11 P-04-407 Save Kennard Court Sheltered Accommodation (Pages 87 – 94)

Environment & Sustainable Development

- 3.12 P-04-378 Extend the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Pages 95 – 98)

- 3.13 P-04-324 Say No to Tan 8 – Windfarms & High Voltage Power Lines (Pages 99 – 101)
- 3.14 P-04-383 Against NVZ Designation for Llangorse Lake (Pages 102 – 111)
- 3.15 P-04-390 Designate Penrhos Holyhead Nature Reserve (Coastal Park) a National Reserve (Pages 112 – 115)
- 3.16 P-04-399 Slaughter Practices (Pages 116 – 117)
- 3.17 P-04-406 Against Proposed MCZ zones in North Wales (Pages 118 – 119)

4. Papers to note

- 4.1 P-03-221 Improved NHS Chiropractic Treatment (Page 120)
- 4.2 P-04-401 The Welsh Language in our Assembly (Pages 121 – 122)

Agenda Item 2.1

P-04-409 : Welsh names for new trunk roads in Wales

Petition wording:

We call upon the Welsh Government to ensure that all new trunk roads in Wales have names in Welsh. Not only does this help preserve the identity of our cities, towns and villages. It also helps non Welsh speakers learn basic Welsh pronunciation and spelling.

Petition raised by: Stuart Evans

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 47

P-04-410 : A Permanent Memorial to Wales's Workers

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to fund, either directly or through the Arts Council of Wales, a permanent workers memorial.

Last year, eleven people died at work in Wales. Death and injury at work loom large in Wales's history. The tragedy at Gleision last year was a reminder for many of the horrors of the past. Yet despite the way that workers' deaths have shaped Wales's past and continue even today, there is precious little to show that we remember them. Some trades unions marked the International Workers Memorial Day with rallies and so on, but it was just a day, soon over and forgotten. It is surely time for a permanent memorial for all Welsh workers. Some sites of past disasters have memorials, such as Senghenydd and Gresford, but there is nothing to mark the lives of the many others who have died at work. A permanent workers' memorial would show our respects to all these workers, and it would also be a salutary reminder of the importance of much-maligned health and safety.

It's the fifth anniversary of the 2007 Corporate Manslaughter Act this year – how good it would be for the Welsh Government to announce, this year, that it was establishing a permanent memorial to be revealed in 2014, the 40th anniversary of the Health and Safety at Work Act. The Bevan Foundation is an independent charity (no. 104191) concerned with social justice in Wales. We are changing Wales through research, debate in our publications and events. For more information see www.bevanfoundation.org

Petition raised by: Bevan Foundation

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 23

Agenda Item 2.3

P-04-411 : Petition Against Marine Conservation Zones in Pembrokeshire

Petition wording:

I call upon The National Assembly of Wales, to urge the Welsh Government to not include the three proposed Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones in Pembrokeshire to be designated as no Take Zones for the inshore fishing industry

I believe that the wrong decision has been made in only planning to designate HPMCZ, prohibiting all extractive activities, this decision appears to have been made politically, rather than scientifically which is a key aspect of the MCZ process.

Petition raised by: Stephen De-Waine

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 586

P-04-412 : A Call to Abolish Collective Worship

Petition wording:

As it stands, the law requires all schools to hold an act of collective worship every day. Even in schools that aren't 'faith' schools, this must be 'broadly Christian' in character. In a society which is increasingly diverse, this is an affront to the rights of young people to express their beliefs freely. Although there is the opportunity to opt out, this is reliant on parental permission and is not respected by all schools. The law is extremely unpopular, with opinion polls showing teachers don't want it, parents don't want it, and children don't want it. As such, it is long past time for the daily act of collective worship to be replaced with inclusive assemblies that add to cohesion and a sense of community within the school. We petition the Government to repeal the requirement for compulsory collective worship in schools and to encourage schools to hold educational assemblies that will include all children, regardless of religion or non-religious belief.

Petition raised by: Richy Thompson, British Humanist Association

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 828

Agenda Item 2.5

P-04-413 : Maternity Services in the Cynon Valley

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call upon the National Assembly for Wales to reinstate maternity services in the Cynon valley by completing the Tair Afon birthing centre as originally planned in Ysbyty Cwm Cynon.

Supporting Information:

Ysbyty Cwm Cynon was designed to house a midwife-led birthing centre. Although the space is available at the hospital and much of the work has been completed the decision has been taken not to have the birthing centre. As a consequence the women of the Cynon valley must travel to Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil or opt for a home birth. This withdrawal of services to the people of the Cynon valley is unacceptable.

Petition raised by: Sarah Rachel Gait

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 406

P-04-414 : Welsh Jobs

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to encourage employers relocating to Wales, or opening new facilities and outlets here, to recruit and, where necessary, train local staff.

Supporting information:

There are examples from around Wales of new jobs being taken by, in some instances, entire workforces brought in from outside Wales. A mutually accepted definition of a 'key worker' could help avoid these situations. It should be restricted to specialised posts for which the required skills or qualifications are not available locally and could not be acquired by locals from a short period of training. Otherwise politicians, media and others trumpeting 'new jobs', when these are effectively denied to Welsh people is, at best, misleading.

Petition raised by: Royston Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 65

Agenda Item 2.7

P-04-415 : Support for Designation of Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones

Petition wording:

We endorse the Welsh Government's policy to designate highly protected MCZs and urge the Government to adhere firmly to that policy. We note the pressures our seas are under, Wales' failure to meet the 2010 biodiversity targets and the robust scientific evidence of the need for much improved marine conservation measures. We acknowledge the strong global evidence for the benefits of highly protected marine protected areas and anticipate comparable benefits to accrue in Wales following designation of HP MCZs. In particular, we request that NAW strongly support Skomer MNR, Wales' only Marine Nature Reserve, which currently enjoys very limited protection, being redesignated as highly protected when it becomes an MCZ on commencement in Wales of the MCZ provisions of the Marine & Coastal Access Act.

We have nowhere in Welsh waters that has been ever been fully protected from direct human impacts. We need highly protected MCZs to: provide marine wildlife with a few places it can exist and thrive unmolested by us – we do this on land, there should not be a lower standard for the sea; enable marine ecosystems to recover from direct human impacts and increase their resilience; protect the marine ecosystem for the goods and services it gives us which we cannot exist without; help us understand the effects of human pressures on the marine environment and better understand what an unimpacted marine ecosystem is like. The purpose of highly protected MCZs is to safeguard and enhance the ecosystems within them, not simply fish and shellfish populations.

Petition raised by: Blaise Bullimore

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 298

P-04-416: North-South Rail Services

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to work with Arriva Trains to increase the number of direct express rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff.

Petition raised by: Neil Taylor

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 19

Agenda Item 2.9

P-04-417: Save Morfa Beach and Prevent the Closure of Public Footpaths 92 and 93

Petition wording:

Morfa Beach is a stretch of coastline lying between Port Talbot Steelworks and Sker Beach, adjacent to Kenfig Nature Reserve. Access to the beach is only possible on foot or bicycle, so it has become a precious place of peace and solitude. In 2011 the community group, Save Morfa Beach (Friends of Morfa), was formed in response to a threat via TATA Steelworks seeking to discontinue access to the beach. This includes the closure of two historically significant & well used public footpaths that lead to the beach: Footpath 92 from Longland's Lane in Margam & Footpath 93 from Kenfig Nature reserve.

Support the campaign of the Save Morfa Beach (Friends of Morfa) organisation to preserve the rights of way along footpaths 92 and 93 & maintain access to Morfa Beach. We ask the Welsh Assembly & Neath Port Talbot Council to preserve and maintain all rights of way on Margam Burrows, & to liaise with Tata Steel to ensure that public access to the beach is continued.

Supporting information: Whether rights of way cross private or public land, Neath & Port Talbot County Borough Council and the Welsh Assembly are ultimately responsible for ensuring they are protected, available and fit for purpose. We are therefore involved in lobbying, but as an organisation we are not party-political. A Facebook Group (www.facebook.com/groups/SaveMorfaBeach/) has been created as the public profile of the organisation.

Petition raised by: Save Morfa Beach (Friends of Morfa)

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 1191

P-04-418 : Naming the A470 'Prif Ffordd Tywysog Owain Glyndwr'

Petition wording:

We the undersigned, call upon the Welsh Assembly Government to name the entire A470, 'Prif Ffordd Tywysog Owain Glyndwr' in memory of the long campaign of the greatest of our national heroes and his Cymric compatriots to re-establish Cymric Independence.

Supporting Information: The A470 is a spine road that runs from Cardiff in South Wales to Llandudno in the North. Embassy Glyndwr launched a campaign in the year 2000 to name it 'Prif Ffordd Owain Glyndwr' in memory of the greatest of our national heroes Prince Owain Glyndwr and his compatriots who fought a great War of Independence from the year 1400 – 1421. The National Assembly of Wales ignored our request then and now, in the light of a campaign being launched to name a part of the road 'The Royal Welsh Way' in recognition of the Royal Welsh Regiment who swears allegiance to the English royalty and the English State who still occupies Cymru, Embassy Glyndwr has decided to re-launch the campaign initiated in the year 2000 by means of this proposed petition.

Petition raised by: Sian Ifan

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 111

Agenda Item 2.11

P-04-419 : Wind Farm Moritorium

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to ask the Welsh Government for a moratorium on wind farm and wind turbine developments for which it has devolved responsibility. The moratorium will be used as a period of reflection, during which time a cross party committee will be convened to examine the effects of operation of wind turbines upon the health, social well-being, property value, effects on tourism, and the local economy within 15Km of installations.

We ask that the all party committee be allowed to commission independent research on the devolved issues of Health, Social Well Being and Tourism with respect to wind turbines, and to agree a set of standards for devolved wind energy, which will prioritise the care of local environment, amenity land, habitat and nature.

We also ask that all devolved wind turbine installations be subject to the approval of a local (5Km) referendum.

This petition excludes wind power controlled by National Infrastructure Directorate.

Petition raised by: James Shepherd Foster

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 1332

P-04-420 : Construct an Owain Glyndŵr Monument

Petition wording:

We call upon the Welsh Government to construct a Monument to Owain Glyndwr, on the scale and grandeur of the William Wallace Monument at Stirling, Scotland. There are several locations that would be fitting including Corwen, Machynlleth to name just two. If the Welsh Government can reportedly be planning to redecorate the foyer area of the AM's Office block to the tune of 200k, then we think that the Welsh Government can invest an even bigger amount of money on the construction of a Monument to our Last Native Prince of Wales Owain Glyndwr. Once completed it would put the chosen location of the Monument on the map bringing in much needed revenue from tourism thus boosting the image of Wales even more. So everyone's a winner.

Petition raised by: Russell Gwilym Morris

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 74

Agenda Item 2.13

P-04-421 : Oppose Trident moving to Wales

Petition wording:

The First Minister Carwyn Jones has said that the UK's nuclear fleet (Trident) would be more than welcome in Milford Haven if an Independent Scotland decided that they were no longer welcomed there. We oppose having these WMDs in Wales and urge the Welsh Government to oppose the idea of allowing the UK's nuclear fleet to move to Wales.

Petition raised by: Mabon ap Gwynfor

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 1236

P-04-422 : Fracking

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Minister for Environment, Planning and Housing 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: Gareth Clubb

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 914

Agenda Item 2.15

P-04-423 : Brooklands Nursing Home

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to consider if residents of Brooklands Nursing Home would have their human rights infringed by the siting of the civic amenity site 30 metres from the home.

Supporting Information : Staff and relatives of clients at Brooklands are very unhappy. The council are proposing to put the Civic amenities from Tenby adjacent to Brooklands Nursing Home. We strongly feel that their last days should be spent enjoying peace and tranquillity and not be disrupted with noise, pollution, traffic disruption, disruption from seagulls etc. Our clients are vulnerable adults who are unable to voice their opinion and so they need your help. Would you like to spend the rest of your days with the tip as your neighbour? We wouldn't. Please help with our petition and sign below.

Petition raised by: Darren Umanee

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 115 Associated petitions collected over 4484 signatures

P-04-424 : Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to halt the decision to move all CT2 Doctors from Neath Port Talbot Hospital in the autumn, without prior consultation with the public. This decision will mean that acute medical services will not be provided at the Hospital, and patients will be forced to travel to Morriston in Swansea, or the Princess of Wales in Bridgend for such services. Neath Port Talbot hospital is a state of the art, PFI hospital, and the people of this area want such vital services to be retained at Neath Port Talbot hospital.

Petition raised by: Carolyn Edwards

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 193 signatures. Associated petitions collected over 5000 signatures

Agenda Item 2.17

P-04-425 : Team Wales

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to seek an agreement with the International Olympic Committee to amend the Olympic Charter to recognise the devolved administrations of Great Britain in their own right, in order that the Welsh Government could form a National Olympic Committee and our athletes can compete as Team Wales / Cymru in the future.

We have a rich abundance of talent in Wales considering our size, wouldn't it be great to see OUR Athletes on the podium with their Gold Medal with the Welsh National Anthem being blasted out to the World with the National Flag of Wales (RED DRAGON) being flown in the background. As it stands now they have to listen to an Anthem that's more associated with England and a Flag that does not incorporate our own Flag only the flags of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. So let's get ourselves a team in place ready to compete at the next Olympics in RIO in 2016.

Petition raised by: Russell Gwilym Morris

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 208

P-03-144 Guide Dogs for the Blind Petition Petition Wording

We, the undersigned representatives, petition the National Assembly for Wales to lay specific responsibility on local authorities to be aware of their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Equality Duty, and comply with them by not creating town centres, high streets and residential streets with shared surfaces that discriminate against blind and partially sighted and other disabled people, effectively excluding them from the street environment.

Petition raised by: Guide Dogs for the Blind

Petition first considered by Committee: June 2008

Number of signatures: 10

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau—sesiwn tystiolaeth lafar
The Minister for Local Government and Communities—oral evidence session

[181] **William Powell:** We move on now to the next agenda item, and we welcome the Minister and his team here this morning.

[182] Minister, I wish you and your team a happy new year—blwyddyn newydd dda. We will be considering a series of petitions under this agenda item: P-03-144, which is on guide dogs for the blind and the issue of shared space; P-03-162, which is on road safety in Llanspyddid; P-03-261, which is on local solutions to Newtown traffic; and P-04-319, which is the Newtown traffic petition. Minister, could you please introduce your team?

[183] **The Minister for Local Government and Communities (Carl Sargeant):** Good morning, Chair, and a happy new year to everyone. This is the first committee meeting of the year, and it is good to be with you this morning. I will let my team members introduce themselves, starting with Jeff Collins.

[184] **Jeff Collins:** I am Jeff Collins, and I am the director of transport in the Welsh Government.

[185] **Ian Davies:** I am Ian Davies, and I am the head of network operations in transport.

[186] **William Powell:** First, we will consider issues relating to guide dogs for the blind, petition P-03-144. Minister, could you please lead us off?

[187] **Carl Sargeant:** Chair, I was expecting questions from the committee.

[188] **William Powell:** If you would like to move on to questions immediately, that is okay. I thought that you might have had some initial remarks. Minister, could you please elaborate on the obstacles that prevent adoption in Wales of the UK Government guidance on shared space?

[189] **Carl Sargeant:** The committee will be aware that a report has been published by the Department of Transport in the UK Government. The Welsh Government is still yet to be convinced of a positive outcome in relation to shared space. We believe that there is still work to be done. We are not dismissing the issue, but we are saying that more evidence needs to be taken about the use of shared space in practice. As a Government, we have not endorsed the report. We are not opposed to it in principle, but we are looking at how to gather better evidence on the opportunities that may be presented for shared spaces in the future.

[190] **William Powell:** So, if equality and other issues can be addressed, do you still have an open mind on taking this forward?

[191] **Carl Sargeant:** We are taking forward the cycling Bill, and there are new opportunities to better understand the nature of how we use spaces for pedestrians and vehicles. There is little evidence, as I said, to argue either way about the dangers of a scheme of shared space. My personal view, and that of the Welsh Government, is that we must have better respect of users of infrastructure, both of road services and pedestrianised areas. There are examples of where these areas are in place, where there is a reduced speed limit in a shared space. However, it is still untested. We need to have better evidence on how these areas will develop. The Welsh Government will not be pursuing shared spaces in Wales in our schemes until there is better evidence that shows that they could prove a better solution for infrastructure in our communities.

[192] **Bethan Jenkins:** Rydych yn nodi na fydd Llywodraeth Cymru yn datblygu cynlluniau manau a rennir ar ffyrdd o fewn ei hawdurdodaeth nes iddi gael rhagor o dystiolaeth am effaith cynlluniau'r DU. Pa bryd y rhagwelwch y bydd digon o dystiolaeth ar gael?

Bethan Jenkins: You state that the Welsh Government will not develop shared-space schemes on roads within its jurisdiction until further evidence is forthcoming on the effect of UK schemes. When do you anticipate that sufficient evidence will be available?

[193] **Carl Sargeant:** I am sorry, Chair, I only got half of that through the translation, but I think that the last bit, which I heard, was the important bit, on when we intend to follow on with shared-space schemes.

[194] We are mindful of what is happening in the UK. My team will keep abreast of what is happening. I am keen to find a solution that everyone is happy with. As I said, it is about a cultural change in the way pedestrians and traffic use the infrastructure. The issue is about the respect element, because at the moment we have fixed solutions: kerbsides, barriers and so on, which separate pedestrians from traffic. Once you remove those, you would think that the risk would increase. We need to be able to evidence that. If we are to propose that we should have a shared space, we have to be assured of the cultural operation of such an area, so that pedestrians and road users have equal rights. We have to be convinced of that, and I am yet to be convinced. That is why we need to look at the evidence that is being pursued and what is happening in England.

[195] There are examples of other countries that do this as well, so we are looking beyond the UK boundary.

[196] **William Powell:** Good. Joyce, you have particular experience of this issue.

[197] **Joyce Watson:** Minister, we have had evidence from the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association indicating that local authorities are not consulting with disabled people's groups effectively. What steps will you take to ensure that local authorities follow best practice?

[198] I also raise a concern of my own. My dog is now blind and I walk him with him being completely without sight. That has given me an insight into how difficult it can be to negotiate a space and the obstacles within that space. There are boundaries that he knows, understands and follows. It has given me a completely different perspective from a position of trying to negotiate a space, albeit with a blind dog. However, it would be just the same if he was a person with absolutely no sight whatsoever. I walk him in the same place he has walked for 11 years and I have observed how he uses boundaries to good effect. Guide dogs are used to lead people who are blind and use the guidelines that they have trained to use. If we were to have shared spaces and take that legislation forward, all those dogs who have been trained to guide in the way they currently do would immediately have a problem. How would we deal with that? If the dogs have a problem, the people who rely on them have exactly the same, if not a bigger, problem.

[199] **Carl Sargeant:** It is a very complex and important question. I am sure that the committee understands the legislative nature of these proposals and my responsibility in that regard. Local authorities are highway authorities unto themselves and they have a duty to comply as a highway agency. I have my own authority with regard to Welsh Government road networks, but local authorities have authority on local roads. They have a duty with regard to the safe passage of all traffic, including all pedestrians and cyclists, so you may wish to consider approaching local authorities directly on that. They are expected to comply with those regulations. As I said earlier, I have no intention of introducing shared spaces as Welsh Government policy until I can evidence the proposal. I would expect local authorities to also consider our approach to this, but, as I said earlier, they are highway authorities in their own right. However, in order for them to pursue such a proposal, they would have to consider their statutory responsibilities with regard to safety. So, they are in the very same position as me. They need to be able to evidence right and wrong and the benefits of such an operation in the communities they represent.

[200] **William Powell:** Thanks very much. I think that concludes our consideration of shared spaces. We are now going to move to a pair of petitions coming from radically different

positions on the Newtown bypass proposals, which are petitions P-03-261 and P-04-319. Late last night, we received correspondence from one of the petitioners of petition P-03-261, Gary Saady from Newtown Traffic Solutions group. Given the late nature of this, I should read the text so that we have the context of his remarks.

Response to the Petitions Committee

Prepared by:

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This response is supported by

RNIB Cymru
Wales Council for the Blind
Sight Support
Vision Support
Cardiff, Vales and Valleys
Sense Cymru
Disability Wales

Petition ref. P0344

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Shared Space

Guide Dogs Cymru is grateful for the opportunity to respond to evidence given by the Minister for Local Government and Communities with regard to shared space schemes and their impact on blind and partially sighted people and other vulnerable pedestrians.

We are experts in the area of mobility for blind and partially sighted people. Our work has been transforming the lives of many thousands of blind and partially sighted people for over 80 years.

Our core service is the provision of guide dogs, but we also work with those who want to learn how to get about using a long cane, teaching them specific techniques including orientation and how to form a mental map of a route, negotiating obstacles such as street clutter and cars parked on pavements.

An essential element of this skills acquisition is finding a safe and reliable route using navigational clues such as kerbs, tactile surfaces, controlled road crossings, colour contrasted street furniture, almost anything in fact, which tells the individual about their surroundings and can be used as a guide, or reassurance, that they know exactly where they are within their environment. Even if a guide dog is being used for mobility, the owner must know where they are going, which direction to take at junctions and crucially, when it is safe to cross a road.

Guide dogs are trained to stop at a kerb and sit, indicating to the owner that there is a choice to be made about whether they go straight on or not. Without a kerb, there is no clear warning for a dog or a long cane user and in this way, kerbs are the foundation of orientation. Even where they are dropped, they must be marked with tactile surface to show where the pavement ends and the road begins. Without this strong clear message, both guide dog owners and long cane users can, without knowing it, step into the road.

A shared surface street is where the footway and carriageway are at the same level with no distinct pavement and in some cases the removal of controlled crossings. Some schemes also have raised junctions where the carriageway is at the same level as the footway. In these schemes, cars, buses, cyclists and pedestrians have to share the same surface. The idea is to encourage drivers to be more cautious.

Blind, deaf blind and partially sighted people find it very difficult to use shared surface streets and many avoid these areas. For people with learning difficulties they require potentially difficult choices to be made and young children, without the actual presence of the kerb, may step out into the traffic.

Kerbs are particularly for Deafblind people, who not only face the issues encountered by people with visual impairments, but also have extra difficulties hearing traffic. Therefore, judging the direction and distance of moving vehicles becomes even more difficult.

The advocates of shared surfaces suggest that pedestrians, motorists and cyclists should make 'eye contact' to decide who moves first. This compromises the safety and independence of many vulnerable people. Even if traffic is slow moving, drivers and cyclists are considerate, there can be a constant pressure of being prepared to avoid vehicles without a pavement area to rest. This is of course particularly an issue if you cannot see the traffic.

As a blind participant at a focus group in The Netherlands said:

"Nine out of ten car drivers will stop for me. How do I recognise the tenth?"

In some shared space streets the footway and carriageway are visually different but there is no difference in the level of areas of the surface intended for pedestrian or vehicle use that would be found with traditional pavements and roads. Not only is there no distinction for pedestrians who cannot see, it is also very easy for cyclists and cars to drive and park on the footway area.

The Welsh Government has adopted the Social Model of Disability, which signals their acknowledgement that disability is the result of the environment and not the fault of the individual. We would contend that shared surface streets are a real challenge to the Social Model by creating an environment which prevents disabled people taking control and excludes them for reasons which are not their fault. Forcing them to depend on eye contact for safe passage through a shared surface area means that those for whom this is impossible or unreasonably difficult, cannot move about safely and are therefore excluded for reasons related to their impairment. We would ask that the committee take this into account when considering the evidence we present in this paper.

Summary and Context

We are particularly pleased to note the Minister's reluctance to implement the UK Government's guidance on shared space, until he receives further evidence of impact. Our aim in submitting evidence to the Committee is to illustrate the problems of shared surface schemes where they have been experienced in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Europe.

The Minister's view and that of his Government, is that there needs to be

"better respect of users of infra structure, both of road services and pedestrianised areas."

In this response, we will give examples of shared space schemes where that "respect" element has been absent, resulting in accidents, including one very recent one which was sadly fatal.

The Minister goes on to say that

"The issue is about the respect element, because at the moment we have fixed solutions: kerbsides, barriers etc., which separate pedestrians from traffic. Once you remove those, you would think that the risk would increase. We need to be able to evidence that. If we are to propose that we should have a shared space, we have to be assured of the cultural operation of such an area, so that pedestrians and road users have equal rights. We have to be convinced of that and I am yet to be convinced. That is why we need to look at the evidence that is being pursued and what is happening in England. There are examples of other countries that do this as well, so we are looking beyond the UK boundary."

To answer the Minister, we will provide evidence from shared space schemes in Northern Ireland and refer to the concerns of blind and partially sighted pedestrians in Europe.

Shared space schemes in England

Policy context

With reference to the Local Transport Note guidance issued by the Department for Transport: Guide Dogs made a number of comments about the content of the document, summarised below:

We were pleased to note

- The inclusion of delineated footway areas, comfort space
- Where tactile or textured surface is to be used as a delineator, the minimum width of tactile paving should be 800mm
- Inclusion of the Equality Act 2010 in the document
- The removal of a stipulated 25mm kerb height

(Guide Dogs has conducted research to show that blind and partially sighted people cannot reliably detect this height of kerb).
(Appendix 1)

- The introduction states that there is 'no such thing as a definitive shared space design. Each site is different and the way the street performs will depend on its individual characteristics.
- Tonal contrast is also mentioned with the suggestion, (rather than the stipulation), that abstract patterns should be avoided as they may confuse any delineation messages.
- The recommendation of post scheme monitoring and the allocation of funding to cover modifications should they be necessary.

We were concerned to note

- Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is mentioned, but without mentioning its importance. It has been listed as one of the quality audits that could be, not should be, carried out
- Some parts promote a minimalist approach, which introduces features if deemed necessary. For example the provision of a comfort space is mentioned as one aspect that could be omitted in the initial design and created later if required.
- There is reference to Exhibition Road (Kensington, London) where the initial trials found that a 800mm corduroy tactile surface could be reliably detected by blind and partially sighted pedestrians. In contradiction, it goes on to say that 'an examination of the results suggests there may be scope for reducing this width to 600mm while maintaining its effectiveness as a delineator strip!' This has not been monitored for effectiveness and is not what we would recommend.
- The document does not promote controlled or uncontrolled crossing (6.20 – 6.22) as they require markings and associated street furniture which do not comply with the shared space ethos, rather informal crossings are encouraged.

N.B. Please note the Caernarfon example in the Wales shared space section in this paper for an example of where a controlled crossing was required for the safety of blind and partially sighted pedestrians.

We would refer the Committee to the appendices to this report, which provides further detailed analysis of shared space research.

Shared space schemes and experience in England

Possibly the most well known example of a shared space scheme is Exhibition Road in London.

Good progress has been made on the back of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association's Judicial Review proceedings taken against the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. The original design of a single surface environment with no delineation was redesigned and split in to pedestrian footways and a road section with a transition zone on one side for parking cars, bike racks etc. Guide Dogs has been working with the Council, who have now applied a corduroy paving strip 800mm in width as a delineator, which is detectable even at acute angles. The traffic speed has been reduced to 20mph, street furniture has been aligned and educational materials are being prepared.

One of the remaining issues in Exhibition Road is the absence of a light controlled crossing and Guide Dogs and the partner organisations of the Streets Ahead Campaign have highlighted the benefits through high profile media interviews and in meetings with the council. The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea is now considering the evidence to support a controlled crossing in Exhibition Road, but the scheme continues to be controversial:

In February 2012, a 25 year old man suffered head injuries after being hit by a delivery vehicle, just two weeks after the official opening of the scheme by the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

The local press reported,

"Exhibition Road, in South Kensington, was only reopened as a so-called shared space at the beginning of the month, despite the objections of residents groups who said it would be dangerous."

Pauline Auerbach who owns the nearby Kensington Creperie said,

"As far as I'm concerned, it was only a matter of time before something like this happened. We've seen plenty of near

misses since the road was reopened. My manager saw it and although the guy that got hit didn't seem to be too badly injured, surely it is a warning to the council. I know these people have to do their job, but delivery drivers have been known to turn or reverse where they shouldn't do. They don't care because they don't have to live here."

Emergency services were called to treat the man and he was taken to St Mary's Hospital in Paddington with head injuries.

Labour Group deputy leader, Councillor Emma Dent Coad, said:

"It is pure luck that the victim was not more badly hurt and we hope he makes a speedy recovery. But this accident was entirely preventable. The so-called shared space design for Exhibition Road is simply unsuitable for such a high volume of pedestrians and traffic. We've been saying this since the proposal was first discussed but the Council will not listen. They will have to make drastic changes to the scheme now, or suffer the consequences."

It is worth noting that the accident victim was not visually impaired.

It is our view that visually impaired people are even more vulnerable than their sighted peers in such environments

Regarding the shared surface scheme in Ashford, Kent, the BBC reported,

"Pedestrians have been avoiding crossing the 'shared space' area of Ashford, according to a study by the University of West England. (Appendix 2)

The scheme, which turned Ashford's ring road into streets where drivers and pedestrians have equal priority, has been in place since November 2008.

Signs and traffic lights were removed from the area and the scheme had been hailed as a success.

However the study showed most people wanted a return to formal crossings.

It found that people avoided the centre of Elwick Square, keeping to the edges rather than trying to cross the road.

Dr Steve Melia, from the West of England University said:

“The whole idea of shared space is supposed to be good for pedestrians, benefiting them, encouraging people to walk. When they do cross, they try to use the courtesy crossings which are marked into the ground. But people don't like those very much and they don't feel that drivers give the same amount of priority as they would on a traditional zebra crossing.”



In Blackpool, on 21 July 2011, the local press reported a car accident on the “new look” Promenade, where a shared space scheme has been introduced. Police were called to the incident outside Chubby’s Bar, near Talbot Square, at around 8.30pm the day before. No one was injured in the collision but police say they will be ‘keeping an eye’ on that stretch. A spokesman said:

“It is the first accident on that section of road. We believe the vehicles were heading north away from the Golden Mile

towards Talbot Square when the incident happened. We will keep an eye on that area. It has been changed to a 20mph zone which people need to be alert to."

There had been safety concerns ever since the Golden Mile designed around the 'shared space' concept with no road markings, or kerbs, re-opened to traffic the previous month. Some have anticipated more accidents with one local group describing the scheme as having become a "no-go area" for blind residents and visitors.

A more serious accident resulting in injury to a pedestrian had occurred earlier that month, 6 July 2011. Kevin Bradley, aged 73 was walking on what he thought to be the pavement along the new look promenade towards Blackpool Tower, when he was struck by a taxi. He was hospitalised with a broken leg and cuts to his head.

His daughter, Mrs Hinchcliffe from South Shore, told the local paper

"The council should either pedestrianise the Promenade or put in proper pavements. I have no doubt it is only a matter of time until someone is killed, the new layout is so confusing. My dad was looking at the ground because he thought he was on the pavement and this was in broad daylight. What will happen in the Illuminations when it's really busy and people are looking at the lights? I've driven down there and its hard to work out where the road ends and the pavements start, people's lives are at risk."

According to the local paper, Blackpool Council have defended the new-look Promenade saying safety precautions have been put in place.

John Donnellon, Service Director for Built Environment said:

"We will fully investigate the factors which led to Mr Bradley stepping out in front of the taxi and see how it could have

been avoided. Following feedback we have already placed signs around this junction to let pedestrians know that it's used by buses and taxis and we will consider if other alterations are needed. The new layout of the Promenade is designed to slow the speed of vehicles through the area and the measures we put in place will have helped avoid a more serious accident".

Putting aside the nature in which councils spend more council tax payers money trying to put right fashionable schemes that are not fit for purpose, the claim that the reduction in traffic speed meant that Mr Bradley's injuries could have been worse ignores the possibility that with a traditional kerb, Mr Bradley may have completed his journey without incident or injury.

Finally for England, the most tragic consequence of a shared space scheme occurred in Coventry in January 2012.

The following story is taken from a report in the Coventry Telegraph

The niece of a Coventry pensioner who died after being hit by a bus in a "shared space" has called for traffic lights to be re-introduced. David Thompson, who was partially sighted, suffered multiple injuries in the accident in January and later died in hospital.

The collision occurred in part of the city centre where both vehicles and pedestrians have an equal right of way. Margaret Thompson said that if nothing was done "another accident" would happen. She said her uncle suffered a shattered pelvis, two broken legs, a broken arm and lacerations to his lower leg in the accident that happened in Hales Street. He later had to have a leg amputated. Ms Thompson said that she wanted

"The council to put the lights back up and keep pedestrians safe. With the traffic lights there he didn't struggle at all. I think once the traffic lights had gone he would have struggled. Anybody would struggle."

Coventry City Council, which has said it will not comment about the incident until after a police inquiry, began to introduce the new-style junctions at a number of places in the city last year.

We would ask the committee to note that the common theme running through these accidents is confusion and the need for safety measures such as additional signage and educational materials to be introduced. We would contend that in a time of financial restraint, shared space schemes are a poor use of public money and we will go on to show how in Wales the same issues have arisen. It is significant that the one fatal accident involved a partially sighted pedestrian, but not surprising.

Shared Space Schemes in Northern Ireland

There are two schemes to note here: the Belfast Streets Ahead project (the regeneration of Belfast City Centre) agreed to retain the kerb in its main street, Donegal Place, until full pedestrianisation. This was a departure from the original plan to introduce a shared street until pedestrianisation took place.

The second was when a representative from the Department for Social Development (DSD) at a meeting of the Northern Ireland Vision Strategy stated that there was a moratorium on shared streets' awaiting the outcome of the DfT (Department for Transport) research.

Shared surface schemes in Scotland

The Scottish Government recognised the potential negative impact of shared surfaces on disabled people in its policy document 'Designing Streets'. This states the need for consultation with disabled people at an early stage and there are many examples of where this is happening, on a local scale, across Scotland.

Designing Streets, published in March 2010 is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design and marks a change in the emphasis of guidance towards place-making and away from a system focused upon the dominance of motor vehicles. It has been created to support the Scottish Government's place-making agenda and is intended to sit alongside the 2001 planning policy document Designing Places, which sets out government aspirations for design and the role of the planning system.

(Designing Streets is available at

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/22120652/0>)

Shared surface schemes in Europe

In February 2012, the Austrian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (BSVÖ) in cooperation with the EBU (European Blind Union) and a Belgian partner applied for funds at the EU Commission's citizenship programme to realise a project on how shared spaces in Europe can be made to work for blind and partially sighted people.

The idea is that as a first step, the exchange of experiences and knowledge between concerned citizens across the EU is fostered by workshops and mutual visits which assess already existing or planned shared spaces in the respective countries. In a second phase, best practices are identified and lastly, recommendations and guidelines based on the experience gained are developed with the objective to reach Europe-wide standards for shared spaces.

Generally, of course, shared spaces are perceived as a threat to blind and partially sighted street users. There is an official final presentation of the shared space project in the North German town of Bohmte available at

http://www.bohmte.de/pics/medien/1_1253627530/Abschlusspraesentation_Bohmte_090922.pdf (in German only) which states that there needs to be far more consideration of the requirements of vulnerable groups when developing shared space schemes.

Shared space schemes and experience in Wales

Policy context

Before giving examples, it is useful to take into account the policy context: There are 115,000 people with sight loss in Wales and 18 of the 22 local authorities in Wales have a higher prevalence of sight loss than England due to a much greater proportion of people aged over 65 years.

Research commissioned by Sense indicates that there are several thousand people in Wales who experience combined sight and hearing difficulties and who can be classified as deaf-blind. The prevalence of deaf-blindness is particularly noticeable among those over 65 years old and is highest among those over 70 years old.

The provisions of the Equality Act require all local authorities to engage with disabled people, conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and ensure that the views of those with whom they engage are clearly reflected in the published EIA. Sadly it is our experience that EIA's are not consistently understood or conducted and the consequences of that failure can be seen in the examples below.

However, the Welsh Government has undertaken to publish a Framework for Action for Independent Living. The objective supports the "Programme for Government" commitments on supporting people by promoting positive attitudes, removing barriers and strengthening advice/support and advocacy. There are opportunities to improve significantly the wellbeing of disabled people and increase their participation in employment and community life.

Within this framework, the Independent Living Project is supporting several working groups and one of these is on access to the built environment. At the point of writing this paper, the group has only met once, but already it has flagged concerns including the lack of effective "Design and Access" statements, the loss of effective Access Groups and the absence of Access Officers. More meetings are scheduled and it is to be hoped that the real experience of the disabled people who are invited will inform the programme for action to be published later in 2012.

Examples



The most concerning example of a shared space in Wales is the Maes in Caernarfon. Here the regeneration of the town square has resulted in an area where pedestrians and vehicles have to negotiate safe passage across an open space where a number of roads converge. Since the piece below was published in the local press, some adaptations have been made such as the addition of some guardrails and a controlled "Puffin" crossing in place of the Zebra crossing referred to here. There is also a recognition within Gwynedd council to learn from the scheme and much more effective discussions now take place with the Access Group.

Local Press statement:

Blind have safety concerns over Caernarfon crossing

13 August 2009

CAMPAIGNERS for the visually impaired and the disabled are calling for a "dangerous" zebra crossing to be removed from the entrance to a town square before someone is killed.

Caernarfon Blind Club members and the Arfon Access Group want a puffin crossing to be installed on Bridge Street to allow blind people to cross and enter Y Maes safely.

According to them, the current crossing offers no security or peace of mind to those blind people brave enough to enter the square as it's currently laid out.

The Arfon Access Group also accused Gwynedd Council of "completely ignoring" the concerns they raised about introducing a "shared space" scheme and cobblestones on the Maes.

The group's secretary Vin West said:

"A zebra crossing is dangerous for a blind or visually impaired person to use as there are no lights or sounds to say that it is safe to cross. A puffin crossing on the other hand indicates when it is safe to cross, the smooth flow of traffic. The council's argument is that traffic lights actually cause drivers to speed up but that frankly is a separate issue to installing a safe crossing (for blind people). The council has told us that it will continue to use the zebra crossing on a trial basis indefinitely. But that is not acceptable. Do we have to wait for an injury or worse to occur before this crossing is removed? At the minute there are members of the blind and visually impaired community actively avoiding going anywhere near the Maes because they feel it is too dangerous".

Caernarfon Blind Club members John Ellis, Ann Hughes and Morlais Williams are all calling for a puffin crossing to be installed.

John Ellis from Rhos Isaf, is blind. He said:

"With a puffin crossing you press the button and know it's safe to cross. There is so much noise and traffic down there at the moment that it's a complete minefield and there is so much uncertainty with a zebra crossing. It's only a matter of time before someone is killed or seriously injured."

He also issued a challenge to council officers:

"We've invited the officers of the council to walk blindfolded around the Maes, to simulate blindness and to show the obstacles blind people have to face there every day but they have refused to take up our offer."

Arfon Access Group also accused the council of ignoring their concerns. A council spokesman said it was "always eager" to hear the views of local access groups and would continue to hold constructive meetings with members of the Arfon Access Group, Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Caernarfon Blind Club.

The Aberdare Regeneration Scheme

In June 2011, Rhonda Cynnon Taf (RCT) council began a public consultation which sought the views of local people on proposals that would significantly impact on the town centre, including areas where elements of shared space were to be introduced. This paper will not go into detail about the process that followed, but what is important is that following discussion with local blind and partially sighted people, supported by Guide Dogs Cymru and RNIB Cymru, the need to retain the kerb was recognised by the council, along with other changes summarised below:

Summary of key achievements

- The traffic orders are to be strengthened in pedestrian zone areas, to prohibit motor vehicle access during the busy shopping hours. This will provide a safer environment for all users.
- A 20mph zone is to be introduced around the town centre gyratory to reduce traffic speeds.

- Provision of granite paving at key road crossing points will raise driver awareness to the likelihood of pedestrians.
- In many areas, a change in colour between the new sandstone footways and the black tarmac carriageway will provide good colour contrast.
- Kerb upstands are to be maintained to define the edge of the road providing assistance to guide dog and long-cane users.
- A new ramped access has been provided to allow easy access to the front of the Library.
- Appropriate use of corduroy and tactile paving.
- The project seeks to 'de-clutter' the street furniture and to rationalise its location to minimise obstructions to footpath users.
- The adoption of street furniture with good colour contrast. An example being the retention of the existing black bollards rather than the use of smaller granite bollards.
- Enhanced communications including issuing of media releases to the local Talking News service and importantly advance notice of forthcoming work areas.
- Enhanced communications including establishing close working relationships with user groups including RCT Access Group, the County Steering Group, RNIB and The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

The last point here is perhaps of greatest significance as it refers to a positive outcome and the prospect of a future productive dialogue between local disabled people and RCT council.

Abertillery Regeneration

This is a smaller scale regeneration but nevertheless significant for local blind and partially sighted people.

A guide dog owner, Mr N, who was being adversely affected by changes to his familiar environment, contacted Blaenau Gwent council. The contentious issues were fewer and simpler to resolve than in Aberdare, but we would site the council's response as a model of good practise. One particularly dangerous crossing, where there were no kerbs and where it was easy for Mr. N to step into the road, (which is busy and on a main route), will be changed from a Belisha Beacon to a Puffin or Pelican which Mr N can use in safety. In other locations, the raised crossings which again put Mr N at risk of stepping inadvertently into the road will be clearly marked with the appropriate tactile warning surface. These are not true examples of shared spaces, but several emails and one meeting resulted in a positive solution for all concerned.

In Wales, we are pleased to say that there are examples of local authorities demonstrating a willingness to take on board the concerns of disabled, blind and partially sighted people over shared spaces. This is not consistent and so cannot be taken to mean that there is a good level of understanding among highways engineers, design consultants and even those responsible for equality issues. We would therefore welcome clear guidance from the Welsh Government to ensure that EIA's are conducted, that engagement with a range of disabled people is accessible, proportionate and appropriate and that scant financial resources are not squandered on schemes that can result in "no go" areas for vulnerable pedestrians.

Conclusion

This summary of the impact of shared surfaces is presented to the Petitions Committee by Guide Dogs Cymru, supported by our partners across Wales. The appendices contain more technical and academic research, but the essence of what we are asking is simple:

That the Welsh Government takes steps to prevent the introduction of further shared surface schemes in the light of the evidence we have included in this paper.

We know that many blind and partially sighted people are isolated and that the incidence of depression caused by sight loss is high. Learning to get about safely in the external environment is hard enough and when shopping, going to the doctor, or just visiting friends involves negotiating through traffic without the reassurance of a kerb, it is not surprising that many vulnerable pedestrians, as we have seen, are too afraid to take the risk.

The level of understanding displayed by many local authorities is low and as in the Exhibition Road example, local people and the organisations that support them often have to fight hard to get their voices heard. We hope that the specific engagement duties in Wales will give that voice strength, but there is much work to be done and in the meantime there is very little to prevent local authorities introducing shared surfaces, even when they can affect the mobility of vulnerable pedestrians in such a profound way.

Appendices

1. TNS-BMRB (2010) The impact of shared surface streets and shared use pedestrian/cycle paths on the mobility and independence of blind and partially sighted people. (Commissioned by Guide Dogs)
2. Moody ,S. and Melia, S. (2011) Shared space - implications of recent research for transport policy. Working Paper. University of the West of England, Bristol. The publisher's URL is <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/transport?policy/>
3. Guide Dogs (2010) Inclusive Streets: Design principles for blind and partially sighted people. ([http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/fileadmin/gdmain/user/Help_us/Campaigns_and_petitions/Documents/Inclusive Streets Design Principles booklet Guide Dogs 2010.pdf](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/fileadmin/gdmain/user/Help_us/Campaigns_and_petitions/Documents/Inclusive_Streets_Design_Principles_booklet_Guide_Dogs_2010.pdf))

All the above are attached as separate documents

P-04-391 LLandeilo By-pass

Petition wording:

Calling for an amendment to the adopted eastern route to be along the far (south east) bank of the river Tywi, rather than along the foot of the town bank, and to cross the river near the railway bridge.

Supporting information:

See letter from petition to Carmarthenshire County Council

Petition raised by: Tim ap Hywel

Date petition first considered by Committee: 15 May 2012

Number of signatures: 31

PET(4)-13-12 : Tuesday 2 October 2012
P-04-391 : Llandeilo By-pass

Mr. Richard Workman,
Head of Technical Services,
Carmarthenshire County Council,
County Hall,
Carmarthen SA31 1JP

Tim ap Hywel

CC. Carl Sargeant AM
Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM
Councillor Ieuan Jones (County)
Councillor Edward Thomas (Town)

27th. January 2012

LLandeilo By-pass: To Lobby for a Return to the Original Eastern Route, Instead of the Refined Eastern Route.

At the 2006 public consultation, the town indicated that the eastern by-pass route as presented to them in the map we'd all had a copy of, was acceptable to them. Yet late in the consultative process a "refinement" to that eastern route was introduced; at the time looking very tentative, – with the use of dashed lines to indicate possibility. I don't think people really took it on board, and I don't think it had proper discussion. It was certainly a surprise to find, following the consultation that the eastern by-pass with the late, tentative "refinement" in, had been set in stone as the protected route.

As set out in the consultation report, the "refinement" was driven by two engineering considerations:

1. To keep the road as much as possible out of the area susceptible to flooding;
2. To avoid the expense of having to build a bridge diagonal to the river, rather than at right-angles to it.

But I don't think due weight was ever given to its impact on the town. It brings the by-pass, with its noise, fumes and headlights, right up against the properties in the south-east quarter of the town: notably, Bridge Street (south side), Quay Street and Church Street. You only have to look at the sorry impact of the Carmarthen by-pass on the properties in the Parade and the Esplanade, and then bear in mind the Llandeilo by-pass will be even closer. Additionally it means the road will run slap-bang through the middle of the world-famous view of Llandeilo, rising on its hill above the tranquil water-meadows of the Tywi; one of the treasures of Wales. I don't think anyone with a responsibility for care of the Welsh heritage should sign that off lightly.

As regards taking the road out of the flood area, I can tell you that the stretch of the "refinement" from the river to the base of the town escarpment (about 1/3 of the "refinement"'s length) crosses a field that in a bad flood goes eight foot under water. The railway on its embankment, built with victorian technology goes unabashedly straight through the middle of the area they are seeking to avoid, and has never had any trouble from floods. I guess it's all down to the expense of raising embankments. I should imagine the "refinement"

road, where it goes along the edge of the flood area, would still have to have a low embankment.

Okay, they sought to avoid the complications (=expense) of a diagonal bridge, and its possibly increased flood vulnerability (=more expense, to ensure it's sufficiently resilient).

But isn't it worth spending a few more pounds to preserve an amenity and a beauty that once lost can never be recovered, rather than saving a few quid and getting a shoddy job, - ever after to incur general reproach. The same cost argument applies of course to having to raise a few extra metres of embankment

The third reason adduced in favour of the "refinement" was that by being at the bottom of the town escarpment it will keep the road out of view of the town, and that this in turn addresses some of the concerns of the 1993 enquiry. But I reject this as spurious: merely an attempt to put a fair face on something that was actually done for engineering and budgetary reasons. Where would it be out of view from? From the Crescent Road boulevard that's all, and even there you will still hear it loudly enough. *[Actually, I just checked this afternoon: it's going to be perfectly visible from there, - and close too.]* It's going to be out of sight to RHosmaen Street and the rest of the town wherever it is. It's not going to be out of sight to the south-east quarter of the town; they're going to have it at the bottom of their gardens. It's not going to be out of sight from Llandeilo Bridge. The current beautiful prospect up the Tywi valley will be blocked by the "refinement" bridge monstrously close and the stream of traffic coming off the new bridge descending the embankment across the field.

To address this I urge a return to the pre-"refinement" eastern by-pass route that we actually signed up to. Yes, it would be visible from the boulevard, but it would be a long way off and not in-your-face, like the route right up against the town would be. Nor would it be in-your-face when viewed from Llandeilo bridge. Instead it would pass almost mid-way between Llandeilo and FFair-fach. It would be a good way off from the residential area of the town; like Llandysul by-pass is. It wouldn't desecrate nearly so much, that famous view. In fact travelling for much of its length side-by-side with the railway would minimize its amenity impact, - insofar as it wouldn't cut a fresh scar of its own through the beauty of the Tywi valley.

Now, I know the town and the town council subsequently assented to the "refined" eastern by-pass, as proposed. But the main concern and anxiety of the town (particularly those, obviously, not directly affected by it) was, and is, to have a by-pass, rather than no by-pass. They were, and are, extremely anxious not to rock the boat in any way that might impact or derail a by-pass roll-out. But I really don't believe that they are passionately wedded to the "refined" eastern route, or opposed to the original eastern route. They just want a by-pass, - some by-pass, to happen as quickly and in as hitch-free a manner as possible. In fact I suspect that secretly many of them think the original eastern route is preferable.

Could I therefore humbly ask you to at least give this proposal an airing at your meeting with Llandeilo Town Council to discuss the by-pass, provisionally arranged I believe for some time early in February.

Yours faithfully,

Tim ap Hywel (Leadbeater)

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-391
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/06282/12
William Powell AM

Chair of the Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Der Bill.

20th
June 2012

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2012 regarding petition P-04-391 from Mr Tim ap Hywel, which asks for an amendment to the adopted eastern route to be along the far (south East) bank of the river Tywi, rather than along the foot of the town bank, and to cross the river near the railway bridge.

The current Protected Route for a bypass of A483 Llandeilo and Ffairfach was announced in June 2007 following a Public Consultation Exercise (PCE) in 2006. Four options for a bypass were taken to the PCE and are shown on Figure 3 of the 'Statement of Results of Public Workshop and Consultation on the Review of the Protected Route' (SOR) a copy of which is attached.

This figure also shows the "Refined Protected Route" which was developed following the PCE. The route minimises the impact of the bypass on the River Tywi, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), its floodplain and views from Llandeilo. This alignment places the proposed highway embankment predominantly at the outer edge of the river ecosystems at times of flooding. In addition the proposed bridge alignment would minimise the impact on the River Tywi SAC.

The route suggested by Mr Tim ap Hywel could be promoted by him and others in the future as an 'Objectors Alternative Route' to the Welsh Government proposals. This opportunity would arise when the Welsh Government publishes its draft Statutory Orders, Environmental Statement and Statement to inform an Appropriate Assessment for the proposed bypass of Llandeilo and Ffairfach.

At that time the route would be agreed with him and a booklet prepared showing the 'Objectors Alternative Route' and the Welsh Government's proposal. This booklet would be circulated before the start of any Public Local inquiry (PLI) to enable people to either support or object to it. The Independent Inspector appointed to hold the PLI would consider the 'Objectors Alternative Route' during the inquiry and comment upon it in his Report.

If the decision was then taken to support the 'Objectors Alternative Route' it would then be necessary to restart the design development process leading to the publication of new draft statutory orders etc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Sargeant'.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-361 Free bus passes for students under 25, and in full-time education

Petition wording:

Students under 25 in full time education should be entitled to a free Arriva bus pass because when you're in college and finish half a day you have to wait for the 5 o'clock bus and some students cannot afford a bus (Arriva) due to parents' low income and students not being liable to receive EMA or ALG.

Petition raised by: Students of Llandrillo College

Date petition first considered by Committee: 24 January 2012

Number of signatures: 15

P-04-371 Reduced fares on public transport for all children up to the age of eighteen

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to require reduced fares for public transport passengers aged under eighteen years.

Petition raised by: Simon Williams-Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 13 March 2012

Number of signatures: 26

Agenda Item 3.5

P-04-382 Student Fares on Public Transport

Petition wording:

We call on the Welsh Government to secure reduced fares on public transport for those in full-time education.

Petition raised by: A-level students

Date petition first considered by Committee: 27 March 2012

Number of signatures: 93

Darren Millar AM / AC

Shadow Minister for Health
Gweinidog yr Wrthblaid dros Iechyd

Welsh Conservative Member for Clwyd West
Aelod y Ceidwadwyr Cymreig dros Orllewin Clwyd

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



REF: CAR/CE/LC

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

18th July 2012

Dear William,

Re: Free bus pass for students petition

Further to the oral evidence session with students from Coleg Llandrillo at the Petitions Committee meeting in North Wales on the 2nd July, please find enclosed further information relating to the survey and cost calculations referred to by the students.

It should be noted that these papers have been prepared by the students themselves and I have been asked to forward them to you on their behalf.

I trust that this will assist committee members in their consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Darren Millar AM

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1NA
Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1NA
Tel/Ffôn: 029 20 898731
e-mail/ebost: darren.millar@wales.gov.uk



55 Market Street, Abergele, LL22 7AF
55 Stryd Y Farchnad, Abergele, LL22 7AF
Tel/ Ffôn: 01745 839117
Web/Gwe: www.darrenmillaram.com

Survey and Summary

-To support the petition for free bus passes for students under 25, and in full time education (P-04-361)

To collect a sum amount of students who agree with the petition we asked 29 students who vary in different courses to answer some questions relating to our petition here are our results -

Question one –

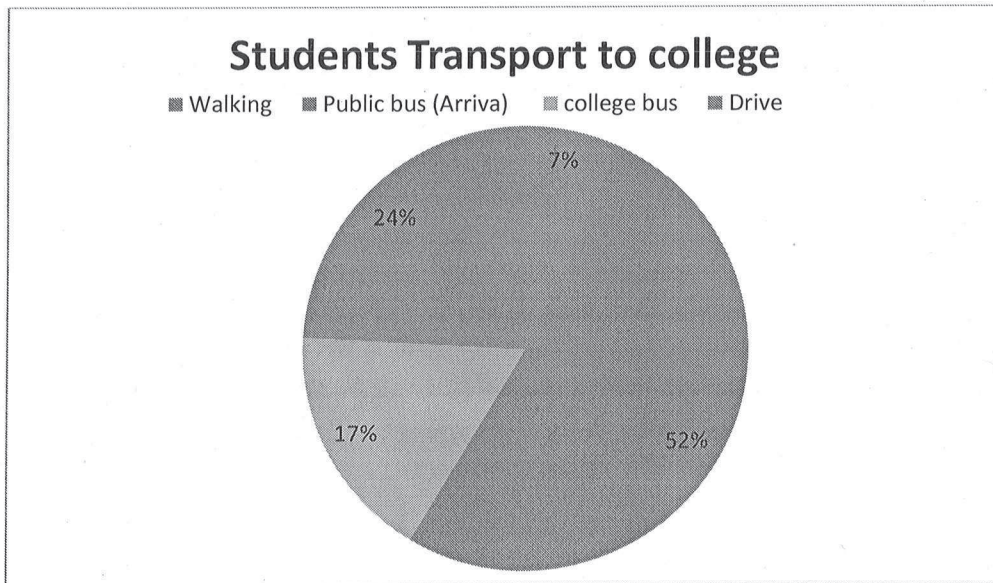
1) What Transport to you use to get to Llandrillo College?

Walking – 2 out of 29 students

Public bus (Arriva) – 15 out of 29 students

College bus – 5 out of 29 students

Drive – 7 out of 29 students



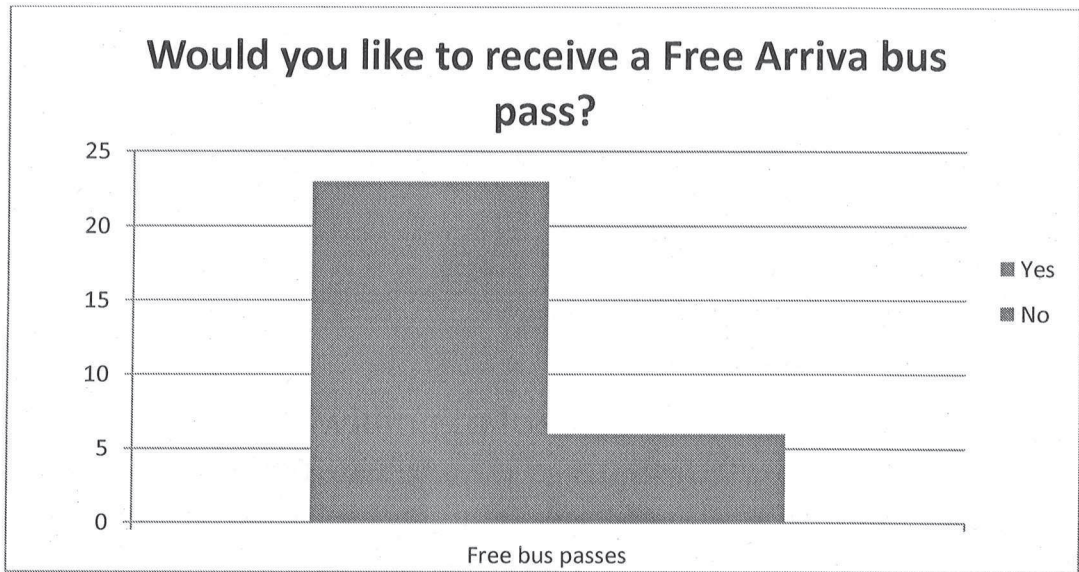
National Assembly for Wales

Questionnaire about free bus passes

Llandrillo Students

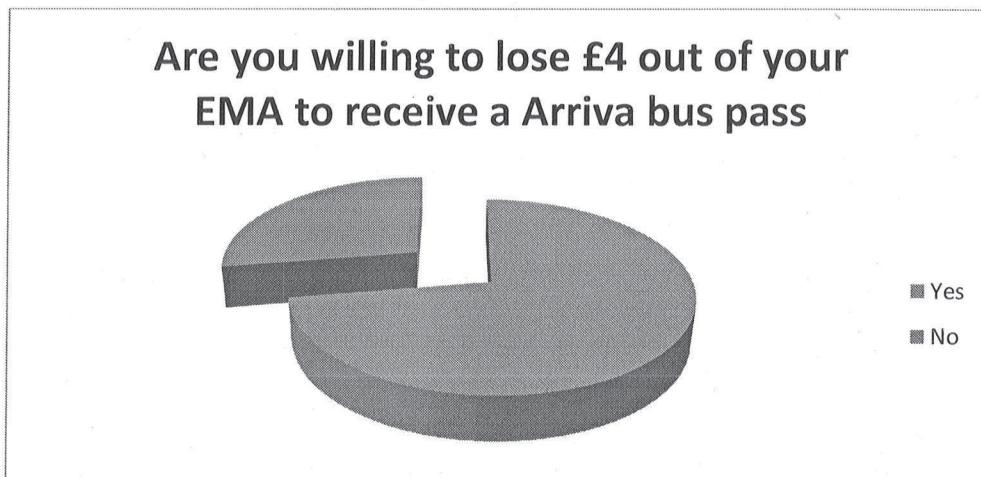
2) Would you use a Free Arriva Bus pas Monday – Friday from 6am to 7pm?

Yes - 23 out of 29 students No - 6 out of 29 students



3) Would you be willing to lose £4 out of your EMA payment to receive an Arriva bus pass (considering that it costs £12 for a student weekly bus pass)

Yes - 21 out of 29 students No – 8 out of 29 students

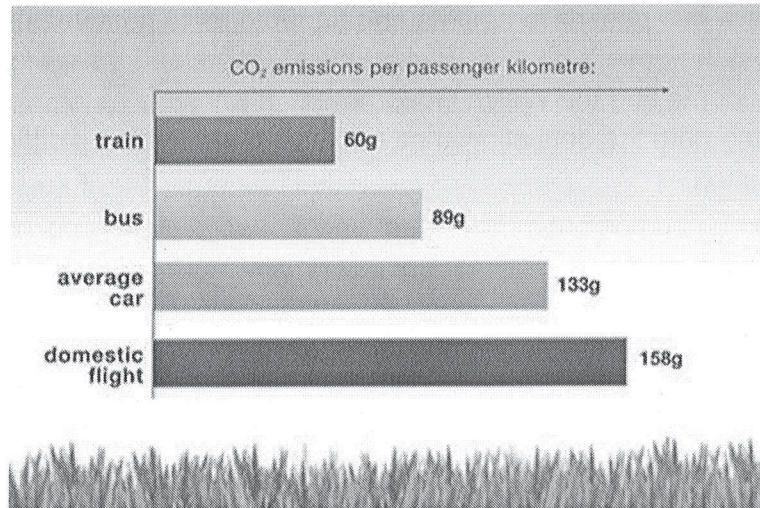


Summary

The benefits of using the free Arriva bus passes are –

- It is a greener way to travel it emits less pollution than a car
- It is a safer way for students to Travel rather than 16-25 year olds driving on motorways
- It is a cheaper way of travel and its more efficient
- Many routes throughout Wales have dedicated bus lanes, so you can avoid sitting in traffic jams and being late for travel.
- No need to drive around trying to find a parking space as there is a limited space in college for parking spaces
- Also getting a road prevents other petitions from arising about students parking outside of the college outside people's houses

These are just a few benefits that have come to the top of my head im sure there is more when you look in depth into the problem.



www.firstgroup.com

National Assembly for Wales

Questionnaire about free bus passes

Llandrillo Students

The best thing about this petition is that it is not costing the Welsh Government a penny because the government is already dishing out money for the EMA so by deducting the £4 from the EMA from the students it's costing the students not you. This way by taking the £4 from the EMA the allowance is actually going on educational needs which EMA was meant to be for in the first place it's either being spent on alcohol, petrol or clothes not educational purposes.

Also you may argue that people who are receiving the EMA payment every week which the highest reward is £30 are technically using the £30 reward just to get back and from college every week how is this helping the student if they need the money for rent or educational purposes? The answer is it's not.

The EMA reward scheme is not fair on all students, because some students are not receiving the access to the rewards due to the households income of the family causing the student to not be able to come into college certain days, is it fair that the Government prevent students from education? The Welsh government should be encouraging students to education not putting barriers and brick walls in front of them. Our petition is not asking for a lot it's merely asking for the Welsh Government to provide free Arriva bus passes to help us and promote us to receive our education it's not going to cost the government, it will cost the students and it's a win-win situation for the students and the Welsh Government. It will save much more money that students signing onto the dole allowance because there finding it difficult to receive their education.

Llandrillo College students

Finance sheet- How we propose to fund extending bus passes to students in full-time education.

14%- Students who are likely to use this *Arriva* bus pass (see our survey research document to see where this % has come from).

Our research suggest that students who currently walk or drive would do so regardless of if they were provided with an *Arriva* bus pass, therefore we have used the 14% average as a base for our calculations.

40 595= current number of students in 16-25 in Further Education Institutions

14% of 40 595= 5 683

£504= Average price of annual bus pass for students (£12 per week, 42 term time weeks in a year)

5 683 x £504= £2 864 232 (cost needed to fund the scheme)

Below are two options that would provide the funding needed by reducing the highest award of the EMA (£30 per week).

17, 180 - Students in Further Education Colleges who receive the £30 per week award.

Option 1

Reducing £4 from the £30 EMA:

£4x 17 180= £68 720

£68 720 x 42= £2 886 240 (cost generated from this reduction)

Option 2

Reducing £5 from the £30 EMA:

£5x 17 180= £85 900

£85 900 x 42= £3 607 800 (cost generated from this reduction)

Both these totals would provide the income needed to fund the cost needed.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-361
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/06830/12

William Powell AM
Chair Petition's committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

27 August 2012

Thank you for your letter dated 6 August 2012 to Leighton Andrews AM, the Minister for Education and Skills, regarding the petition from students at Llandrillo College requesting a free Arriva bus pass to travel to and from College. I am replying as home to college transport falls within my portfolio.

The Welsh Government is committed to assisting students from low-income families with the costs associated with study. In addition to the Education Maintenance Allowance and the Assembly Learning Grant, the Welsh Government provides support for those students facing hardship through the Financial Contingency Fund.

It was with great interest that I read the students' proposals for funding the free Arriva bus pass scheme.

I am greatly impressed by the details set out in the students' proposed scheme. However, I take the view that the proposed scheme would not be workable from the practical point of view due to the lack of quantitative and qualitative information, such as an estimation of the costs of administering the scheme; full consideration of all the potential variations which could affect affordability; and comprehensive consultation with the body of students who are in receipt of the Educational Maintenance Allowance to allow for a full assessment of the impact of the scheme upon them.

Regrettably, the Welsh Government is not able to take forward or fund a scheme that would provide free travel for students and learners aged between 16-25 due to the tighter budgetary constraints to which we are subject and the background of competing demands which have to be taken into account.

However, given the clear merits of the students' proposals, I would advise that the students concerned raise the matter with the relevant local authorities, the College and commercial operators to establish whether it is feasible for a free Arriva bus pass to be provided.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CS', is positioned above the printed name.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

P-04-393 Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group

Petition wording:

We call upon the Welsh Government to reinstate plans for the bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech which straddle the English/Welsh border. 15,000 cars and lorries a day pass through these two villages, and it will only increase once the plans for the wind farms get the go-ahead. We call upon the government now to proceed with their plans, or at least open up talks on the bypass and have a full debate, listening to our needs and the voices from our community on how this road is affecting us and our quality of life. We hope, by doing this, that the English government will then take note and proceed with plans on their side. We would like a full and open debate on the need for a bypass for the villages of Pant and Llanymynech, which then, will develop into the actual construction of the bypass once funds are available.

We are fed up of the noise, the pollution, the fact that we cannot walk our children to school, walk to the shops, or walk our dogs along the road. Road improvements such as widening, will not work here. The road was initially designed as a single track lane for horses and carts. The houses on both sides of the road often touch the edge of the road, and there are many lanes which feed onto the A483, which will again make it unsuitable for improvements. A bypass is the only option we feel, taking the road from Llyncllys (which is absolutely deadly) around the villages of Pant and Llanymynech and joining the new bypass by the edge of Llandysilio. This is the main trunk road between Manchester and Swansea, and it is not fit for purpose. We have many MPs and AMs on our side and we are determined to get this done, and have a full debate in the Assembly on the subject.

Petition raised by: Duncan Borthwick

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 May 2012

Number of signatures 84



**From Mike Penning MP, Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State**

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

**William Powell AM
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA**

Tel: 020 7944 3084
Fax: 020 7944 4521
E-Mail: mike.penning@dftrgsi.gov.uk
Web site: www.dft.gov.uk
Our Ref: MC/144666
Your Ref: P-04-393

- 2 JUL 2012

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 14 June to Justine Greening concerning a petition received by the National Assembly of Wales, calling for a bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech, which straddle the English-Welsh border. I am replying as Minister responsible for the strategic roads in England.

The relative priority of the A483 Pant to Llanymynech Bypass was considered by the West Midlands Regional Transport Board as part of the previous Government's Regional Funding Allocation advice process in 2006.

The West Midlands Regional Transport Board advised the Government at the time that the proposal was a low priority due to its low cost benefit score and the modest contributions it was thought to make towards economic development and housing in the Region.

Following this decision, the Highways Agency completed a detailed review of the proposal to assess whether its cost could be reduced whilst maintaining a substantial proportion of its benefits. This study concluded that possible smaller scale solutions along this route would still offer poor value for money, and as such a decision was taken not to develop the proposals further.

In October 2010, the Department for Transport set out the outcomes of this Government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, publishing details of its investment decisions for major road projects on the strategic road network.

As proposals for an A483 Pant to Llanyrnech Bypass had not been prioritised previously, the Department did not have a scheme to consider as part of the Spending Review, and there are therefore no plans to develop such a proposal at this time.

In preparing for future investment decisions, the Department will be considering the current and future forecast performance of the strategic road network, to identify and prioritise the scale of identified problems. It is also committed to work with regional and local stakeholders to ensure it considers their views on the transport problems faced, and the range of potential options for addressing them.

I would be happy to discuss the issues with the Welsh Government Minister for Local Government and Communities; officials in my Department and the Highways Agency are also willing to discuss the situation with their Welsh Government counterparts.

I have copied this letter to the Secretary of State for Wales, and to the Clerk to the Petitions Committee as requested.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Regards Mike Penning', written over a faint blue watermark of the word 'Regards'.

MIKE PENNING

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-393
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/06398/12

William Powell AM
Chair Petition's committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

3rd
July 2012

Thank you for your letter of 14 June 2012 following a petition received requesting the reinstatement of plans for the bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech.

It is not be feasible to bypass Llanymynech without bypassing Pant. As Llanymynech is in Wales and Pant in England, any proposals would be a joint initiative with the Highways Agency and the Welsh Government. A proposed scheme was led by the Highways Agency but was deferred following a reprioritisation of their Targeted Programme of improvements.

Following a review of the road conditions at this location, we have not identified any safety problems, however we will continue to monitor and undertake appropriate measures as are considered necessary.

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities

P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Government to consider if proposals for day care for the vulnerable elderly, to be moved from a purpose built, thirty year old Day Centre, to an unsuitable basement in an old building, previously used as the Town Hall Aberystwyth, are compliant with statutory requirements, and any relevant guidance. The County Council are planning to demolish the Centre as part of a development to build a car park, a supermarket and a retail outlet.

Petition raised by: Pamela Ellis

Date petition first considered by Committee: 28 February 2012

Number of signatures: 10 (An associated petition collected approximately 6,000 signatures)

Supporting information: The present Day Centre is a purpose built facility, about thirty years old. It is in a convenient situation in the town centre, with easy access, a large drop off point and is near a road safety crossing. It is light and sunny, and can accommodate about 90 clients of mixed dependency, in several spacious rooms. The envisaged centre is not quite half the size and will only be able to cater for 32 clients in one main room. At present those carers of disabled clients or those caring for victims of a stroke, can have access to respite care on 2 or 3 days of the week. We feel the move will discriminate against this group as already fewer people are being assessed and referred by Social Services for this respite care. The council have admitted there will be rationing. Because of difficulties of access to the basement area, an outdoor, steep ramp with a 180 degree turning point half way down has been built. We feel strongly that carers or mobile chair users will have huge problems, particularly in stormy or icy weather. The ceilings in the basement are low; there is a large pillar in the centre of the room making it difficult to move wheelchairs or trolleys, natural light levels are low as it is partially below ground and several doors have to be navigated to access toilets. The old centre has a superb new kitchen providing good meals, the weekly luncheon club, a valuable socially inclusive option, has been closed already. In future, meals will be prepared elsewhere and brought in. There will only be one area available for meals and all other activities; thus space will be extremely limited. The local WVS presently provides drinks and snacks; that will no longer exist. The present centre has a large bathroom with a hoist, also laundry facilities, which were invaluable. The new centre will have a shower built into a toilet for assisted bathing, which opens directly onto a communal area. As this is the only disabled

toilet, it will be difficult for a disabled client to access a toilet if another client is having a shower. If the only new facility will only be able to cater for 32 clients, these will almost certainly have to be those needing respite cares, so those older citizens who value the opportunity to enjoy time at the centre to socialise, take part in activities, have a bath and enjoy a good meal will not be able to do so. The present centre has a very pleasant garden with seats, ample parking, a bay for dropping off people and is completely accessible to all. The present centre is made available in the evenings to groups of elderly, for example the Arthritis Care group fear that they will not be able to cope with the rain, in the dark, for their evening meetings. The new centre is on a dangerous main road turning, with heavy traffic use. Former users of the basement when it was the Town Hall have complained that it is too hot in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. The heating system has been improved, but the present sash windows are not being replaced and there will be no air-conditioning installed. Whilst the County Council have made efforts to meet our concerns, we strongly believe that the proposed new centre is absolutely unsuitable and is vastly inferior in the present centre. We would add that the Council have admitted that they did not carry out a proper consultation. Hence the formation of this pressure group.

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau
Petitions Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Ellen ap Gwynn
Arweinydd Cyngor Sir Ceredigion
Canolfan Rheidol
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion SY23 3UE

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

P-04-366
11 Gorfennaf 2012

Annwyl

Diolch am gynnal ymweliad diweddar y Pwyllgor Deisebau â'r ganolfan ddydd newydd yn Aberystwyth. Roeddem yn gwerthfawrogi'n fawr y ffaith eich bod chi a'ch cydweithwyr wedi neilltuo amser o'ch amserlenni prysur i drafod y cyfleuster newydd â ni.

Yn amgaeedig mae nodyn a gymerwyd gan y Clerc ar ddiwrnod yr ymweliad, sy'n trafod rhai o'r pryderon a fynegwyd gan ddeisebwyr a'r defnyddwyr gwasanaeth y siaradwyd â nhw. Fel y gwelwch, mae'r rhain yn cynnwys:

- Mynediad i'r ganolfan: diffyg croesfan i gerddwyr neu gilfan y tu allan i'r adeilad; diffyg mynedfa â chysgod i'r adeilad; hyd y ramp y mae'n rhaid i gerddwyr ei ddefnyddio; diffyg gwasanaeth bws cyhoeddus i'r ganolfan.
- Y ffaith bod y ganolfan bellach ar agor i gleifion sydd wedi'u hatgyfeirio yn unig, sy'n effeithio ar gyfleoedd ymgysylltu cymdeithasol y defnyddwyr gwasanaeth
- Diffyg cyfleusterau ymolchi.

Byddai'r Pwyllgor yn ddiolchgar pe gallech flaenoriaethau'r materion hyn yn y misoedd i ddod er mwyn lliniaru rhai o bryderon y deisebwyr.

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8393
E-bost / Email: William.powell@cymru.gov.uk

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

Yn ystod ein hymweliad, trafodwyd y posibilrwydd o gynnal arolwg wedi'i ddilysu'n allanol o'r gwasanaeth, yn ddelfrydol gan AGGCC, y gwnaethoch ei groesawu. Byddwn yn ddiolchgar pe gallech gadarnhau p'un a fydd arolwg o'r fath yn cael ei gynnal cyn diwedd y flwyddyn.

Diolch i chi eto am ystyried y mater hwn.

Yn gywir



William Powell AC / AM
Cadeirydd / Chair

Amg. Nodyn o ymweliad rapporteur

Copi i Aelodau Etholaethol a Rhanbarthol

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau
Petitions Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Ellen ap Gwynn
Leader of Ceredigion County Council
Canolfan Rheidol
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion SY23 3UE

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

P-04-366
11 July 2012

Dear *Ellen*

Thank you for hosting the Petitions Committee's recent visit to the new day centre facility in Aberystwyth. We very much appreciated you and your colleagues taking time out of your busy schedules to discuss the new facility with us.

Please find enclosed a note taken by the Clerk on the day of the visit, which flags up some of the concerns expressed by petitioners and the service users we spoke to. As you will see, these include:

- Access to the centre: the lack of a pedestrian crossing or layby outside the building; the lack of a covered entrance to the building; the length of the ramp that walking service users have to negotiate; the lack of a public bus service to the centre
- The fact that the centre is now open to referred patients only, which impacts on the social engagement opportunities of the service users
- The lack of bathing facilities.

The Committee would be grateful if you could prioritise these issues in the coming months in order to alleviate some of the concerns of the petitioners.

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8393
E-bost / Email: William.powell@wales.gov.uk

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

During our visit, we discussed the potential for an externally validated inspection of the service to be carried out, ideally by CSSIW, which you welcomed. I would be grateful if you could confirm whether such an inspection will take place within the year

Thank you again for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William".

William Powell AC / AM
Cadeirydd / Chair

Encs. Note of rapporteur visit

CC Constituency and Regional Members

Petitions Committee rapporteur visit in connection with

P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre

Background

The rapporteur visit took place in Aberystwyth on 15 June 2012. Members of the Petitions Committee met with petitioners at St Paul's Church Hall, Aberystwyth. Following that meeting, Members met with representatives of the Ceredigion County Council and attendees at the new day care centre facility in the Town Hall, Aberystwyth. The meetings are recorded in this note.

Meeting with Petitioners

Present:

- William Powell AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee
- Bethan Jenkins AM, Petitions Committee member
- Elin Jones AM (observer)
- Frank Hogg
- Gerald Morgan
- Joyce Evans
- Pamela Hughes
- Gwenda Williams
- Ken Thomas
- Martin Shewring
- Pam Ellis
- Eurwen Booth
- Richard Spencer
- Abigail Phillips, Committee Clerk
- Alex Phillips, AMSS

Gerald Morgan welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Petitions Committee for considering the petition and for visiting Aberystwyth in order to see the new day care centre.

The petitioners expressed their regret that the Petitions Committee members would not be visiting the Park Avenue Day Care Centre which had been closed and replaced by the Town Hall Day Care Centre. Petitioners felt that it would have been useful for the Committee to gain a clear idea of the space available at the old centre and the gardens surrounding the building.

Petitioners raised a number of concerns. These were:

- A need for clarity with regard to the evacuation of service users at the day centre in the event of a fire. The Committee was asked to seek assurances that a personal evacuation

plan was in place for all users and that a fire officer's report had taken account of the mobility needs of service users

- There is no pedestrian crossing or layby outside the building to enable service users to access the centre safely. Service Users were previously taken undercover to a door, but access is now via a long ramp that is open to the elements
- There is no public bus service to the centre at present
- No more than 32 Services Users can access the Centre at any one time, which is fewer than the 90 – 100 that the old centre allowed. Petitioners have been told that the number of people wishing to access the service has declined, but they remain concerned about the reasons for that reduction and question whether everyone who wants to access the service is able to
- Petitioners felt that no proper consultation was carried out ahead of the closure of the Park Avenue Day Care Centre
- People who had previously met with friends at the Park Avenue Day Care Centre on a Wednesday are now unable to attend the new Centre as it is open to patients on referral only
- There is no bathing facility available in the new centre, only a combined shower and disabled toilet room. There was an expectation that patients who could not be bathed at home would be taken to an alternative location to be bathed, but this has not happened. It was reported that one patient had been unable to access a bath or shower for the 6 weeks since the closure of the old centre.
- One service users was unable to use the new Day Care Centre with his wife as he could not walk the length of the access ramp. This has resulted in a loss of 15 hours of respite for his carer and means that the couple cannot socialise together.
- Petitioners pointed out that socialising was an important aspect of life for individuals who were being cared for at home. It is also important that carers are able to maintain a social life.

Petitioners told the Committee that they would like an alternative centre to be provided. The old Drill Hall had been offered as an alternative to the Park Avenue site, but there had been no consultation on that and the offer had since been withdrawn.

Petitioners also told the Committee that the Council's decision three years ago to close the Day Care Centre with no alternative provision could have been 'called in' but that too much time had now elapsed for that to happen.

Petitioners reported that they had been told by Council Officers that the Day Care Centre was non-statutory provision and so could be withdrawn altogether. The petitioners feel that as the Day Care Centre is paid for by the over-stretched Social Services which encourages care at home, the funding may be under threat. The petitioners feel that the centre should be paid for from the Health budget.

One petitioner described the care that people receive at home from visiting professionals as rushed in comparison with the relaxed atmosphere of a day care centre at which service users benefit from the varied skills of a larger work force and the company of others.

One petitioner suggested that costs were not an issue for the Council but if they were, the Centre could be run by a charity in an alternative location. Examples of such an approach in the Netherlands were cited.

Petitioners felt that the decision to close Park Avenue Day Centre would have been overturned by the newly elected council, but for the binding contracts that they are a party to. As Welsh Government is part funder of the Mill Street Regeneration that has led to the need to close Park Avenue Day Care Centre, petitioners feel that the Welsh Government have a responsibility to take action, perhaps by 'calling in' the decision.

Finally, petitioners called for an independent assessment of the current centre. Any such assessment should include consideration of the experience of carers and service users along with the effects of the changes on those who had used Park Avenue Day Care Centre but felt they could not use the new centre.

Meeting with representatives of Ceredigion County Council

Present:

- William Powell AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee
- Bethan Jenkins AM, Petitions Committee member
- Elin Jones AM (observer)
- Ellen ap Gwynn, Leader of the Council
- Catherine Hughes, Cabinet Member
- Shirley Steen, Officer in Charge of the Day Centre
- Sue Darnbrook, Assistant Director (Adults & Mental Health)
- Alan Baily, Architect
- Peter Gough, Health & Safety
- Abigail Phillips, Committee Clerk
- Alex Phillips, AMSS

The Leader of the Council welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair of the Petitions Committee thanked the Leader for honouring the meeting date, given the pressures on her time following the recent floods. Sympathies were offered to the victims of the floods.

The Chair explained that the Committee had received a petition relating to the new Day Care Centre, and had met with petitions to hear their concerns.

The Council Leader explained that decisions made before the elections relating to the Mill Street Area development were binding, and carried a heavy financial penalty should the council now reverse the decision. The decision had been made under European Procurement Rules and used a matrix for bidder selection. Following selection, the developers chosen requested a bigger footprint of land for development that included both the Park Avenue Day Care Centre and the Drill Hall, which had been the council's preferred site for Day Care provision. It was then that the library site was identified for the Day Care provision. It was acknowledged that there had been insufficient

consultation and that no alternatives had been sought. Although the Day Care provision is non-statutory, the Leader of the Council made it clear that the provision would continue. Some service users had been distressed by newspaper reports speculating on the future and current provision of care at the new centre. Service users had told Councillors that they preferred to move than have no provision at all.

The Assistant Director (Adults and Mental Health) told the Committee that falling rolls for Day Care Centres are typical across Councils as service users seek alternative provision through direct payments and community based services if they don't need the specialist care provided at centres like that at the Town Hall, and because people are typically remaining healthier for longer. Only one gentleman had not transferred to the new centre and this is because he has chosen not to.

The Football Club now provides a luncheon club for those service users who used to access the drop in sessions on Wednesdays. The sessions are reported to be well attended and growing in popularity.

The integration of the specialist Day Care Centre in the basement of the Town Hall and the library on the Ground and upper floor of the Town Hall was felt to go some way towards integrating older people with other members of the community. It was also felt that the new centre is more intimate and encourages people to converse and use the library facilities. Two senior citizen groups were using the centre on a regular basis for meetings.

The lack of a public bus service was recognised as an issue. The Council is hoping that a service bus will soon be serving the Town Hall.

The entrance ramp that is open to the elements had also been identified as an issue. The Council intends to create a covered entrance to the side of the Town Hall that will enable service users to alight from buses and enter the Day Care Centre while staying undercover.

The Petitions Committee shared petitioners' concerns regarding the combined shower and disabled toilet but staff reassured the Committee that no patient had needed to access the toilet while the shower had been in use. Showers were planned to take place while other service users were in activities and unlikely to ask to use the toilet. There were alternative disabled toilets elsewhere in the building for wheelchair users, although very few wheelchair users attended the Centre. Alternative toilets for ambulant users were available.

Council officials told the Committee that, where possible, bathing should take place away from the Day Care Centre as it was not the right environment or setting for such levels of personal care. Those service users who need aids or adaptations in order to be able to bathe or shower at home were being assessed and provided with equipment or, where appropriate, had been offered a bath at an alternative venue. The Committee was told that only one service user was still awaiting a bath, but that a bath at an alternative venue had been offered to her.

The Committee was told that the architect had worked with building control and fire officers during the design, construction and post-construction stage to ensure that the needs of users were taken into account. The Health and Safety assessment of the building showed that provision for a fire emergency was over and above the standards required.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that a review of the provision would take place around the end of April next year, and that she would welcome that to be carried out by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales as regulating body. Service user comments are being regularly gathered and acted on in the meantime. A service users group will be formed to enable attendees at the centre to shape the service.

The Committee agreed to send those present a note of the meeting, and to keep them informed of the Committee's consideration of the petition.

The Committee was then given a tour of the library facilities and Day Care Centre before chatting with service users and sharing a meal with them.

Feedback from service users

The Committee was aware that not all service users were present on the day of the visit, although the centre was full to capacity on that day. Members sensed a certain amount of anxiety from some service users who felt that they had to 'put up' with the new centre or risk losing it altogether.

Service users praised the staff, activities and quality of food at the centre.

Some service users said that they missed the bathing facility.

The lack of a covered entrance was problematic with users having to sit in wet clothes after getting wet on the way in. There was a fear that this would get worse in the winter months.

Some users asked the Committee to do what they could to re-open the old facility as it was just sitting empty.

Some users seemed to feel that they had been treated as unimportant because they had been moved to the basement facility.

One lady felt that alternatives for bathing should have been put in place before the move to the Town Hall.

Committee Service

June 2012

Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION

ADRAN GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL

...yn gofalu i wneud gwahaniaeth

A. Parry Davies
Cyfarwyddwr
Director



CEREDIGION County Council

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

...taking care to make a difference

Minaeron, Rhiw Goch, Aberaeron, SA46 0DY

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Ken Redman
Inspector
CSSIW, South West Region
Government Buildings
Picton Terrace
CARMARTHEN
SA31 3BT

Dyddiad
Date

30 July 2012

Gofynnwch am
Please ask for

Mrs S Darnbrook

Llinell Uniongyrchol
Direct line

01545 572694

Fy nghyf
My ref

SD/JVJ

Eich cyf
Your ref

e-bost
e-mail

Dear Ken

I have received a letter from William Powell AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee of Welsh Government, following a visit the committee made to the new day centre in Aberystwyth.

In the letter he asks for "an externally validated Inspection of the service to be carried out, ideally by CSSIW".

I would be grateful if you would give this request your consideration and respond directly to Mr Powell on this matter at William Powell AC/AM, Chair, Petitions Committee, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, CARDIFF, CF99 1NA.

Yours sincerely

S.L. Darnbrook.

Mrs Sue Darnbrook
Assistant Director Adult and Mental Health Services

cc Mr William Powell



Mr W. Powell AC/AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Our ref: KR/ WP

Your ref:

Date: 6 August 2012

Dear Mr Powell

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales has received a letter from Sue Darnbrook, Assistant Director Adult and Mental Health Services in Ceredigion, in which she forwards a request from yourselves following a visit to the new day centre in Aberystwyth that 'an externally validated inspection of the service to be carried out, ideally by CSSIW'.

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate is an operationally independent division of the Welsh Government. The powers and functions of the Inspectorate are enabled through legislation including the Care Standards Act 2000, its associated regulations and national minimum standards.

With regard to the provision of care and support to adults (people over the age of 18) the Care Standards Act 2000 empowers CSSIW with the responsibility to register and inspect care homes, nurses agencies and domiciliary care agencies.

The definition of a care home is an establishment that provides both accommodation and personal care for persons who are or have been ill, who have or have had a mental disorder, persons who are disabled or infirm and persons who are or have been dependent on alcohol or drugs.

The definition of a nurses agency is that of an employment agency or employment business which consists of or includes supplying, or providing services for the purposes of supplying registered nurses to individuals or establishments.

A domiciliary care agency is defined as an undertaking which consists of the provision of personal care in their own homes for persons who by illness, infirmity or disability are unable to provide it for themselves without assistance.

Day centres are not regulated settings as set out by the Care Standards Act 2000 and as such CSSIW do not have any legal powers in the registration or inspection of these schemes. Any quality assurance of such a facility must be that of Ceredigion County Council.

Yours sincerely



Ken Redman
Inspector
South West Region

P-03-263 List Stradey Park

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Minister for Heritage to grant listed status to Stradey Park, in order to protect the heritage of this world famous rugby ground and cultural icon for the people of Wales.

Supporting information:

The petition to list Stradey Park was inspired by calls that *“something should be done”* to protect the heritage at this world famous location. It is significant that these calls have continued after the Scarlets have moved across Llanelli to their new stadium. Stradey Park is clearly more than just a place where rugby was watched – it is part of local culture and national heritage.

A cultural icon can be defined as anything that is readily recognised, and generally represents an object or concept with great cultural significance to a wide cultural group. It may come to be regarded as having a special status as particularly representative of a particular group of people or a period in history.

Stradey Park is synonymous with the support of a Welsh community for its rugby club in the 20th century – it is undoubtedly a cultural icon.

Stradey Park has gained worldwide fame, not only for the exploits of the players who took to the famous turf, but also for the fervent support supplied by those who crammed into the stands and terraces surrounding it during the matches, and at half-time and full-time onto the pitch itself.

That support became world renown as typically Welsh, an image strengthened by songs celebrating famous victories at Stradey, such as the Max Boyce song “9-3” about the support of the community at Stradey for the 1972 victory over the All Blacks – the last by any club side in the world. “All roads led to Stradey Park”, “The day the pubs ran dry” and “I was there” all conjure up images of Stradey Park on that day and Llanelli captain Delme Thomas being carried off the pitch by fellow players, surrounded by thousands of supporters.

Stradey Park invokes images of Welsh working men completing a shift in the tinsplate works, docks or mines before playing a match in front of thousands of fellow workers of Tinopolis. The famous “sosbans” that were placed on the Stradey posts were a direct reference to Llanelli’s main export – Tinsplate – and in particular the “Stamping” Works located less than a mile from Stradey Park where saucepans were made and exported worldwide.

Stradey Park has always been known as the “most Welsh” of Welsh grounds, not least for its Welsh language scoreboard and Welsh language singing on the terraces. “Sosban Fach” is known throughout the world after it was adopted and sung by supporters due to the “sosbans” on posts. A gymanfa ganu was held in 1972, before the All Blacks game.

Typical of a rugby ground being at the heart of a Welsh community, Stradey Park has seen many non-rugby events including hosting several other sports and annual Guy Fawkes night fireworks displays.

On 15th November 2007 the funeral of Ray Gravell was held on the Stradey Park pitch. This unique event in Welsh history – described by some in the press as “a Welsh state funeral” – was attended by 6000 mourners including leading figures in Welsh political, sporting and cultural life, with many thousands of people lining the streets outside. Images of the coffin standing on the pitch, flanked by the Eisteddfod sword bearer and the assembled tribute makers were broadcast live on S4C.

There is no doubt that Stradey Park is of great cultural and historical significance to Wales. It was a modern day battle field and particularly representative of the Welsh passion for rugby in the 20th century. The petition has achieved in excess of 3500 signatures made more significant because this was a heritage petition not a rugby petition. The petition was collected on shop counters throughout Carmarthenshire and even without much publicity it has attracted signatures because people believe that the Stradey Park pitch should be saved to mark the location and its heritage.

Although the petition is named “List Stradey Park”, and there are many that would like to see the whole stadium saved, it is generally accepted that listing Stradey Park would mean listing the Stradey Park pitch and retaining it as open space within any development. This modern day battlefield is what makes it unique because of the events that have taken place on it, obviously rugby successes and the momentous Ray Gravell “state funeral”, but also the famous Stradey Park half-time and full-time pitch invasions where families would play where their heroes had just played.

To list a sports pitch would probably require a new listing category or an amendment to an existing category. As tourism becomes ever more important in Wales, key locations of modern Welsh heritage such as Stradey Park need to be protected, so the need for the National Assembly to direct Cadw to create or adapt a listing category for sports pitches is evident.

Once a location like Stradey Park is lost under a development it becomes almost worthless. Perhaps a few tourists may be attracted to read an interpretive panel or blue plaque near the site, but the benefit to the local economy would be negligible. Places like Stradey Park need to be preserved to allow them to be marketed as tourist locations of modern Welsh heritage for the 21st century. Tourists want to be able to take to the pitch, not just read about it.

As well as the 3500+ signatures and a Facebook group of over 520 members, several local organisations including Llanelli Town Council and Llanelli Rural Council support the aims of the petition to protect the Stradey Park pitch. However none of these groups has the power to deliver that protection.

The petition has received international support, as well as support from other parts of Wales and the UK showing clearly that Stradey Park is of national

importance. Locally, the petition has also received the support of former Llanelli, Wales and Lions greats such as Delme Thomas and Phil Bennett.

A website supporting the petition can be found at www.stradeyparkpetition.co.uk. Further information to support a listing, from the kind provision in 1879 of land within its boundary walls by the Stradey Estate, through to the closure of the ground in October 2008, can be supplied.

Petition Raised by: Mr V Jones

Petition first considered by Committee: November 2009

Number of signatures: 4383



Mr W Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Taylor Wimpey South Wales
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12th December 2011

Dear Mr Powell

Re: P-03-263 List Stradey Park

Thank you for your letter of 1st December.

Since 2009 the issues you raise in your letter have been considered carefully by Taylor Wimpey and the Council as part of the planning process. The preparatory works undertaken pursuant to the permission have resulted in all of the buildings at the stadium being removed, and so has the pitch. There is therefore nothing left to preserve even if the Council had been minded to offer any form of listing protection when first asked. I am sorry that this is not the result that the petitioners will have wanted but there has been extensive scrutiny of the proposed redevelopment and its consequences over the years and all options considered.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Simmons'.

Keith Simmons
Managing Director

Taylor Wimpey UK Limited
Registered Number:
1392762 England and Wales.
Registered Office:
Gate House, Turnpike Road
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire
HP12 3NR

Taylor Wimpey South Wales is a
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P-04-322 A call to revise Cadw's hold upon churches in Wales

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to investigate the inflexible way in which Cadw enforces its regulations upon active, vibrant congregations using listed buildings across Wales, thereby keeping them in a state of architectural inertia, unable to take advantage of modern developments in building materials and making it difficult for churches to make changes necessary for them to serve the coming generation and the local community.

Petition raised by: Graham John

Number of signatures: 147

Petition first considered: June 2011

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-322
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/05570/12

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

12 June 2012

petition@wales.gov.uk

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 19 April seeking Cadw's comments on the petition numbered P-04-322. I am replying as Cadw is within my portfolio responsibilities and has no legal identity separate from the Welsh Ministers.

I provided a comprehensive response to the Petitions Committee on 19 July 2011 and my reply reflects the position of my officials in Cadw and covers the issues raised by the petitioner in his supporting paper.

Works to listed buildings need to be supported with strong justification which should include an examination of any less intrusive alternatives, where these are available. Achieving a proper balance between the aims / mission of the church and conservation can often require negotiation to reach a successful conclusion and I appreciate that this can become frustrating where complex matters present themselves. However, if an applicant feels that an unreasonable decision has been taken, there is a right of appeal to the Welsh Ministers.

The general steer of current policy and circular guidance endeavours to promote a balance between the needs of energy efficiency, sustainability and the protection of the historic environment. However, I will ensure that the issues raised by the petitioner are considered as part of the development and implementation of the new Heritage Bill in 2014-15. Formal consultation on proposals for a Bill will begin in early 2013, but the issues will be explored further in the forthcoming thematic Bill workshops and my Heritage Conference on 19 July.

Huw Lewis

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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P-04-381 Restoration for North Wales Hospital

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to assess the architectural heritage of the North Wales Hospital and to ensure that the bat roosts located there are protected. We would like this truly unique building to be preserved and restored for the nation.

Supporting information:

The North Wales Hospital is a fine example of a Victorian asylum designed by architect Thomas Full James, opening in 1848 and closed 1995. Encompassing a 160 years of history, the threat is imminent, the former North Wales Hospital should impart its sad story with aim of preservation and retention of the site, to preserve the historical context for future generations in this 126 acre site. During the period after disposal, it has had a succession of owners some of whom involved in letting the buildings fall in dereliction, asset stripping and demolishing listed buildings contrary Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Bat roosts have been disturbed contrary to The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The disposal and re-development of this Victorian hospital and associated buildings, once described by the Welsh historic environment agency Cadw as the finest purpose-built hospital in Wales, has been beset with problems for more than 15 years. The local authority could be placed at significant financial risk if they were to acquire the site while the condition of the buildings continue to deteriorate unless they have agreed a viable mix of new uses and have a developer partner to deliver the scheme. It is worth examining the history to date of the disposal process as it highlights a number of really useful lessons of wider applicability.'

Petition raised by: Paul Sharrock, restoration4nwh

Date petition first considered by Committee: 27 March 2012

Number of signatures: 29

PET(4)-13-12 : Tuesday 2 October 2012

Note of Petitions Committee meeting with petitioner, 1 July 2012

Related petition: P-04-381 Restoration for North Wales Hospital:

'We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to assess the architectural heritage of the North Wales Hospital and to ensure that the bat roosts located there are protected. We would like this truly unique building to be preserved and restored for the nation.'

Present:

William Powell AM (Chair)

Bethan Jenkins AM

Joyce Watson AM

Paul Sharrock, petitioner

Abigail Phillips, Clerk

Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk

Annette Millett, Committee Support

1. The Chair thanked the petitioners for meeting the Committee and invited them to tell the Committee about the petition.
2. The petitioners told the Committee:
 - a. The hospital was built in 1842 and was funded by public donation.
 - b. They are concerned that a demolition company is undertaking work at the site and felt that demolition should be avoided if at all possible.
 - c. They were confused as to why the U shaped area at the front of the building was being targeted in the current work programme. They wanted to know what would happen to the other buildings, in particular the nurses' home and chapel.
 - d. There was general confusion regarding any future plans for the site.
 - e. They were aware that asset stripping had been carried out by previous owners and that the timber framed building could now be unsafe as it had been unprotected from the elements for a period of time. A building survey had been carried out prior to a steel roof being put in place to replace roofs that had been stripped of lead. The group were supportive of the steel roof being put in place.
 - f. A bat survey had been carried out, but no follow up survey had taken place.
 - g. The building is crucial in a national context and should be protected.
 - h. There is a lack of transparency from the council and petitioners felt that communication had broken down. The petitioners would like to know what will be retained of the building and details of its future management.
 - i. A community use for the building would be welcomed, and the petitioners stated that they would not like to see the building used for housing, as there is not a need for more housing in the area.

- j. The group dis-associated itself with individuals who had been breaking in to the hospital to take photographs.
 - k. They recognised that the council are taking a 'brave' approach to the issues affecting the building and emphasised that they do not want to work against the council. They feel that Cadw could helpfully be brought in to assist.
 - l. A preservation group has shown an interest in taking on the grounds of the building, but the idea has not progressed.
3. The petitioners asked the Committee to seek transparency from the council on the issue and to try to ensure that as many of the buildings as possible were saved, even if it was just the façade.
 4. Paul Sharrock loaned a book on the hospital to the Committee. The Committee thanked him for it and promised to return it soon.
 5. The Committee thanked the petitioners for their time and agreed to pass on contact details for Save Britain's Heritage.

Committee Service

July 2012

PET(4)-13-12 : Tuesday 2 October 2012

Note of Petitions Committee visit to the North Wales Hospital, 1 July 2012

Related petition: P-04-381 Restoration for North Wales Hospital:

'We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to assess the architectural heritage of the North Wales Hospital and to ensure that the bat roosts located there are protected. We would like this truly unique building to be preserved and restored for the nation.'

Present:

William Powell AM (Chair)

Bethan Jenkins AM

Joyce Watson AM

Graham Boase, Head of Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services, Denbighshire County Council

Heather Cafearo, Principal Quantity Surveyor, Denbighshire County Council

Edward Holland, Senior Projects Adviser, Prince's Regeneration Trust

Abigail Phillips, Clerk

Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk

Annette Millett, Committee Support

1. The Chair thanked Graham Boase, Heather Cafearo and Edward Holland for meeting the Committee and expressed disappointment that it could not enter the hospital building for health and safety reasons.
2. The Chair explained that the purpose of the Committee's visit was to find out more about the building and the work that is being done to save it so that the Committee can give further consideration to petition P-04-381 Restoration of North Wales Hospital.
3. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to view the outside of the building and to find out more about the council's approach to the issue.
4. Graham Boase, Heather Cafearo and Edward Holland told the Committee:
 - a. The oldest part of the hospital was built in 1840. Other buildings had been added later and some were of a lower quality than the original building. The whole site was Grade 2 listed
 - b. The building was used as an asylum until the mid-1990s, when it was closed to patients and sold at auction. At its peak, 1500 patients were accommodated in the hospital.
 - c. The new owner of the buildings sold it on a few years later after carrying out asset stripping, and selling off some of the land on the estate.
 - d. The buildings are now owned by a company registered in the Virgin Islands.
 - e. The company put a planning application in four years ago which was agreed by the council. The company was to sell off some land for housing, which would provide the required funds to restore the listed building to a reasonable standard, the cost of which was estimated to be £4.8 million at that time. The council required a legal agreement

that the funds released by the sale of land for housing would be used to restore the listed buildings, and a bank Bond to underwrite the agreement.

- f. After nearly three years, the legality of the agreement and Bond were called into question and were cancelled.
 - g. An urgent works notice was served on the oldest buildings on the site, which make up around 25 per cent of the total buildings.
 - h. Following failed negotiations with the owners of the building, the council, in conjunction with the Prince's Regeneration Trust, entered the site a year ago to make the necessary urgent repairs. The council has spent £1 million on those repairs.
 - i. Dangerous structures notices have been served on some of the other buildings on site.
 - j. The council is committed to protecting the building and has a range of powers at its disposal that should enable it do so. The Prince's Regeneration Trust representative stated that the council's work on this issue was unparalleled.
 - k. It will be necessary to concentrate efforts on saving the oldest and most important 25 per cent of the site at first, with the hope that more of the buildings can be made safe for future regeneration.
 - l. The council fears that, once the current work is completed and the council and contractors leave the site, people will try to gain access to the building and could hurt themselves or cause further damage to the building. An average of 20 people a week try to get on site at the present time.
 - m. The council had consulted with the Countryside Council for Wales on the bat roosts, and the CCW are content with the council's actions in this respect.
5. The Committee thanked the council for their enthusiasm for the project and for taking the urgent action that was required.
 6. The Committee asked the council to meet with petitioners to discuss the issue and the council agreed that they would do so as soon as the situation allowed. The council also agreed to consider its wider communication strategy on this issue.
 7. The Chair thanked Graham Boase, Heather Cafearo and Edward Holland for their time.

Committee Service

July 2012

Agenda Item 3.11

P-04-407 : Save Kennard Court Sheltered Accommodation for Older People

Petition wording: Sheltered Accommodation for older people. They have been forced to leave the building and find a new place to live with a bogus reason of asbestos. The residents of the Accommodation have had no backing for them, and they're starting to give up. We need to support and help them to remain in their home. Some have already been moved, and if they don't move they have been threatened to be evicted. Bron Afon are targeting older vulnerable people ageing from 70 and above. It's not fair, we need to put a stop to it. To think at their time in life they have to suffer the stress and worries of being rehoused. Please sign this petition.

Supporting information: Most of these residents have been living in Blaenafon for all of their lives as well as their past ancestors. They have contributed to Blaenafon and its community. **THEY NEED OUR SUPPORT.**

Petition raised by: Georgina James

Date petition first considered by Committee: 17 July 2012

Number of signatures: 19

FAO: William Powell AM
By email via abigail.phillips@wales.gov.uk

Our Ref
Your Ref

IS/CF

Contact
Telephone
E-mail

Ian Simpson
01633 620427
ian.simpson@bronafon.org.uk

3rd August 2012

Dear William,

Re: Kennard Court Petition

Thank you for your letter of 24 July 2012 advising of the petition that your Committee is considering. I am grateful for the opportunity to comment and hope that the information I have sent you is helpful.

I believe it is important to set things in context so I will begin with a general overview before explaining the decision that has been made by our Board about Kennard Court and how we are putting it into practice.

The History and the Issues

Like almost every other provider of housing for older people, we are struggling to address the fact that there is now a significantly low level of demand for our Retirement Housing. We receive an average of 100 bids for every advertisement in general needs housing. In contrast, we have proportions as low as one bid for every eight advertisements in Retirement Housing. In other words, some of our Retirement Housing compares with general needs housing in terms of popularity on a ratio of 1:800.

This is a UK wide problem that is being experience by all providers.

Retirement Housing (or sheltered housing as it was then known) was built in the 1950s & 60s in Torfaen and was built for a population reaching retirement age who did not have a long life expectancy following retirement or who would expect to move onto residential care accommodation when their needs increased.

As you are aware, there is very little residential care accommodation available now and so it is expected that people will remain in Retirement Housing throughout the rest of their lives, even when they become more vulnerable through reduced mobility, medical problems, poorer eyesight or indeed dementia. Retirement Housing was not built with the needs of these more

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vulnerable older people in mind and very little of our Retirement Housing would meet current standards of design for accommodation for older people.

We have calculated that it would cost £26 million to demolish and build new accommodation of a suitable modern standard for older people living in our Retirement Housing. Even to upgrade it to a high standard and address some of the accessibility problems would cost approaching £20m. We do not have the funds to choose either of these options.

Instead, with a few exceptions where we are planning to change the age range for Retirement Housing (which I will come on to) our Board has set aside over £2m of new money to upgrade communal areas of Retirement Housing which were not previously included in our business plans. In other words, we are making a significant extra commitment to Retirement Housing to bring it up to a higher standard than required. We hope this will address some of the issues in relation to low demand by changing the look and feel of our Retirement schemes and making them more attractive for potential applicants.

The other reason why Retirement Housing demand has dropped significantly is that 55% of those currently occupying our Retirement Housing used to be owner/occupiers and sold their properties in order to move into Retirement Housing. Clearly, in the current housing market, few people are able to sell their properties for a reasonable price so that source of new demand has completely dried up.

The last reason why Retirement Housing is proving to be less popular is that people now have expectations that they can stay in their own homes as their needs increase and they become less mobile. If they are owners, they are entitled to a disabled facilities grant to adapt the property for their use. Bron Afon have spent over £5m on adaptations to our properties since transfer so that people can remain in them despite a disability. Helping to support people to remain in their own homes is in line with Welsh Government Older People's policy and Torfaen's local policy. It is a policy that we endorse but it has implications for demand for Retirement Housing now and in the future.

The consequence of all these factors is that there is very low demand for some of our Retirement schemes.

Our Board have been grappling with the issue of how to address these problems since before the time of transfer to Bron Afon. The status quo was not an option and was unsustainable.

Voids in Retirement Housing

The result of low demand is that we began 2012 with about 50 long term voids (i.e. empty homes) in our Retirement Housing which is broadly half of the number of total voids that we have at any one time. These long term voids are a very significant element of our rent loss through voids and need to be addressed in order to meet our Business Plan requirements particularly with the on-going risk arising from Housing Benefit changes. When we analysed the figures, it showed that over half of the long term Retirement voids were in five of our schemes (and three of these schemes were in Blaenavon). In addition, approximately two thirds of our

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rent loss for long term voids was in these five schemes.

The Board, therefore, considered it appropriate to try and tackle the problem of low demand in these five schemes.

The five low demand schemes

The five low demand schemes were:

Tan y Coed in Pontenewynydd
Baker Street in Blaenavon
Ivor Gardens in Blaenavon
Kennard Court in Blaenavon
Sid Griffiths Court in Garddiffeith.

These are all in the North of the Borough and three of them are in Blaenavon.

We decided that we would consult tenants about changes to their schemes in four of these schemes. Baker Street was the most suitably designed of the three schemes in Blaenavon and had the most thriving community. We hope that by making changes to the other two schemes in Blaenavon this will result in it becoming easier to fill our long term voids in Baker Street.

Consultation with tenants

Rather than inform tenants what we planned to do, we instead began a process of consultation. We went out to the four schemes and talked to tenants collectively in Coffee Mornings and individually regarding their views about how we should tackle the problem in their scheme of lack of demand and also what their own personal wishes were in terms of living in the scheme. We then considered the responses that we'd had and came up with a set of draft proposals for each scheme. We went back out to the schemes and talked to the tenants collectively and individually about the proposals and again sought their views about how they would like to respond in the light of our plans.

Following consultation with tenants we proposed that in three of the schemes we will reduce the minimum age for lettings to 50 years old enabling the schemes to become general need schemes. In two of those schemes we will in due course decommission the washing facilities and the communal room changing these schemes into normal general needs flats albeit with a restricted age range. Tenants were broadly content with reducing the age range but would prefer us to maintain the washing facilities and communal rooms.

Kennard Court

Kennard Court was the fourth of the schemes where we were consulting with tenants and here we came up with a different proposal. In Kennard Court we proposed to decommission the scheme completely and move everyone out and use the building and land for some alternative use. The reason we came up with a different plan for Kennard Court was because not only is its

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Telephone: 01633 620 111 • Email: enquiries@bronafon.org.uk • www.bronafon.org.uk

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design not suitable for continued use as older people's housing it is riddled with asbestos. In order to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, we have to do work to the heating system and in order to do the work to the heating system all the asbestos has to be removed. As it is throughout the building, we cannot do these works with moving all the occupants out for their own health and safety.

As we are going to have to move all the occupants, we decided that this was an appropriate time to decommission the scheme completely and move the occupants on a permanent basis rather than moving them on a temporary basis and then allowing them to return.

Accordingly, after we had consulted with them and sought their views, we went back to the tenants of Kennard Court with the proposal to decommission the scheme. We spoke to tenants individually and a significant number indicated to us privately that they were happy to move. Public meetings were called by a local Council candidate and members of the public were invited to this meeting too at which a significant amount of anxiety was created for tenants and a lot of pressure put on tenants to say they would not move. We declined to attend this meeting as it was clearly a party political meeting and it was inevitable it would increase anxiety and we have received a significant number of complaints about the calling and handling of the meeting since.

Throughout the process, residents of Kennard Court have been telling us privately that they are actually content to move and in some cases keen to move but have felt pressured in saying they did not want to move when asked in public.

Tenants in Kennard Court have been given a package of assistance:

- They get a home loss payment of £4400 per household each when they move;
- They receive a disturbance payment which covers the full cost of removal, transfers of their telephone line and the redirection of post. We arrange all of this work for them if they wish;
- They get first choice of our available properties so that they can choose to stay in Blaenavon if they wish or move further down the valley or live elsewhere

We have already dealt with numerous re-housing arrangements with tenants in Retirement Housing and many older tenants in their own homes who are anxious and concerned about works and moves so we have an experienced team use to hand holding and reassuring older people in these kinds of circumstances. Indeed, over the past four years we have received many compliments from tenants and their families about how sensitively we have supported older people through moves and works. The same staff teams are now working with the tenants of Kennard Court to support them to move.

At the time of writing 5 of the 12 households we are working have moved to new homes of their choice and 4 more have moves planned. Of the remaining 3 households 1 is a temporary resident in an intermediate care flat that the Council's Health and Social Care team manage and we are working with them to secure permanent accommodation and 2 are tenants who are waiting for vacancies to arise on a neighbouring Bron Afon scheme.

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Conclusion

We have been through a lengthy process of consultation. This has created some inevitable anxieties because change is not something that people would prefer to happen. Nevertheless, we have approached the issue sensitively and made sure that our staff have calmly and clearly explained the position to tenants. Unfortunately, the position has been confused by the intervention of local Councillors who have not only confused the facts but also created a lot of anxiety amongst the tenants and forced them in the position of having to state things that they are not happy with. I think we are over this period now and that the residents who we have so far helped to move are very happy with their new homes. This is reflected in comments made to us by tenants about their new homes:

“very happy”, “a lot more suitable”, “yes, in hindsight it is more suitable”

Please let me know if you require any further information and thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Simpson
Director of Community Housing and Support

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Telephone: 01633 620 111 • Email: enquiries@bronafor.org.uk • www.bronafon.org.uk

Investing in People, Homes and Communities in Torfaen

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/06023/12

FAO - William Powell AM
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

6 August 2012

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 24 July regarding a petition received by the Petitions Committee from residents of Kennard Court, a sheltered accommodation for older people owned Bron Afon Community Housing.

I note with some concern the issues raised by the residents of Kennard Court.

I have asked my Regulation Team, responsible for regulation of this Association, to take into consideration the issues and concerns you have raised and monitor its performance. Any regulatory concerns relating to the Association's performance on governance, financial management or landlord services will be included in the regulatory assessment report which will be published on both the Welsh Government and Association's websites respectively.

I regret that I am unable to provide any further assistance in this matter except I would like to take this opportunity to also mention that should the residents remain dissatisfied with the way in which their landlord has dealt with their complaints then they have a right to ask the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales to undertake an independent investigation. Contact details for this service are set out below:

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence.huw.lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Printed on 100%

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1, Ffordd Yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

Telephone: 01656 641150. Further details about this service can also be found at
<http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/>

Thank you once again for brining this matter to my attention.



Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Agenda Item 3.12

P-04-378 Extend the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the Gower Society's proposal for the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to be extended is expedited, given that the request has been with the CCW for consideration since 2005 and the fact that, as of December 2011, the CCW is no longer considering such proposals due to the potential establishment of a new Single Environment Body for Wales.

Petition raised by: The Gower Society

Date petition first considered by Committee: 13 March 2012

Number of signatures: 1 (from an organisation)

Supporting information: On 1 March 2005, The Gower Society (one of the oldest and largest local amenity groups in Wales) wrote to the Countryside Council for Wales requesting it to consider extending the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to areas in the north east of the Gower peninsula, parts of the Loughor Estuary and Loughor Conservation Area, and much of the upland area of Mawr.

The response of the Chief Executive of CCW (29.03.05) was that CCW was working with Denbighshire County Council "to work up a process that will inform any decisions on whether a tract of land should be put forward as a proposal for AONB designation. It is intended that the resultant process will be entirely transferable to any other areas in Wales." He went on to say: "It is likely that this pilot will be completed by March 2006".

A series of correspondence has followed this initial exchange and several meetings have taken place at National Assembly offices between representatives of The Gower Society and CCW, arranged by – and usually in the presence of – Edwina Hart, Assembly Member for Gower.

Two meetings were held with Ms Jane Davidson when she was Minister with responsibility for the environment, and on 18.07.11, representatives of The Gower Society met Mr John Griffiths, Minister for (inter alia) the Environment.

At each of these three meetings the proposed AONB extension was discussed.

The City and County of Swansea's policy is to support such an extension and Mawr Community Council (the area most largely affected by the proposal) has expressed its full support.

After the Clwyddian Range and Dee Valley designation Order was confirmed by the Minister on 22.11.11, we wrote to CCW again, urging them now to move forward with our 2005 proposal for the Gower AONB. The Chief Executive's reply noted the Welsh Government's approval of the case for establishing a Single Environment Body for Wales. "Given these momentous changes", he continued "we will be focussing our efforts in the next 18 months in working... to ensure a smooth transition from CCW to the SEB". Therefore "We are not in a position to consider any further proposal for boundary changes or new designations".

By then, it will have been over eight years since our proposal was first put to CCW. In our view, this length of delay is unreasonable, and we call upon the National Assembly for Wales to expedite this process.



John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06577/12

William Powell AM
Chair Petition's committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

8 August 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July with which you enclose a letter from Countryside Council for Wales, and a petition from the Gower Society which I have already commented upon in my letter to you of 18 April.

Regarding your comments about Countryside Council for Wales' service levels reducing before the new Single Body is established. I have made my priorities and services level requirements very clear to them in their 2012/13 Remit Letter which is published at <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/ccw/remit1213/?lang=en>

Included within the list of priorities is work on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty relating to pre-designation work to which it is committed. Countryside Council for Wales have not made any commitment to undertake pre designation work for the extension of the Gower AONB and this is therefore consistent with the service levels I expect from them in the implementation year.

Any consideration of the extension to an AONB is a matter for Countryside Council for Wales, which from 1 April 2013 will be a matter for the new Single Body. I am however aware that to aid any future work on AONB designations, the Countryside Council for Wales have been developing and testing a methodology for landscape designation in Wales.

Countryside Council for Wales in their letter to the Committee advise that there is to be a review of designations to inform the Environment Bill. In your letter you seek a timeline for the White Paper and the Bill. My officials are currently analysing the responses received to Sustaining a Living Wales, which will be published at the end of August. While a review of designations will be part of my considerations it is far too early to speculate whether any provision will be needed within an Environment Bill.

Best wishes,

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: John.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk
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Gower AONB extension

Thank you for forwarding the Minister's letter of 8th August, addressed to the Chair of the Petitions Committee.

We were disappointed at the Minister's response since although he says (paragraph 4) that 'any consideration of the extension to an AONB is a matter for CCW', Annex 1 of his remit letter of 11 April 2012 to Mr Morgan Parry (Chairman CCW) makes it clear that it is the Minister who is telling CCW which AONBs they should be looking at: "only the Ceiriog Valley area". We have not seen Remit letters for the previous six years, so cannot know how far or for how long consideration of AONB extensions (other than the Ceiriog Valley area) has been specifically excluded from the Minister's priorities and service level requirements.

The Minister's letter to you makes it clear (paragraph 4) that he is "aware that the Countryside Council for Wales have been developing and testing a methodology for landscape designation". We were told this by CCW in our initial correspondence with them in 2005, and on a number of occasions since then. Nothing appears to have changed.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Ridge MBE
Chairman,
The Gower Society

Agenda Item 3.13

P-04-324 Say No to Tan 8 – Windfarms & High Voltage Power Lines Spoiling our Community

Petition wording

The Welsh Assembly Government Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8:- Planning for Renewable Energy (2005) document provides advice and guidelines which without doubt result in the desecration of our beautiful Mid-Wales Countryside. Following these guidelines, will spoil our beautiful landscape, increase health risk from electro-magnetic radiation, damage tourism which is one of the main employment sectors, devalue properties and cause major environmental damage.

When the technical advice note popularly known as TAN 8 was issued by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2005, the local population did not truly grasp the scale of what it meant to the inhabitants of Mid Wales.

The Technical Advice Note TAN 8 will allow hundreds of huge wind turbines to be built upon wind farms within our communities.

As a result of the construction of these wind farms the National Grid will be obliged to construct power transmission lines to carry the power to where it is needed, although it is recognised that the National Assembly for Wales are not involved in the decision to route these power lines.

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to undertake a major review of the TAN 8 policy to include more public consultation.

Petition raised by: John Day

Number of signatures: 3249 signatures. Associated petitions collected over 13,500 signatures.

First considered by the Committee: June 2011

Supporting information:

1. The e-petition on the Welsh Assembly Government website has the highest response of any e-petition since the site was launched, with 2565 signatures so far, the previous highest being 1893. Along with other petitions and action by the People of Mid Wales it shows the depth of feeling on this issue, which must not be ignored.
2. Planning policy Wales (PPW) 3.1.8 "When determining planning applications local planning authorities must take into account any relevant view on planning matters expressed by neighbouring occupiers, local residents and any other third parties. (Shropshire County Council were not consulted when Tan8 was drafted) While the substance of local views must be considered, the duty is to decide each case on its planning merits. The Courts have held that perceived fears of the public are a material planning consideration that should be taken into account in determining whether a proposed development would affect the amenity of an area and could amount to a good reason for a refusal of planning permission."

3. We are particularly concerned about the health issues (*PPW 12.13.8 'Health considerations can be material considerations in determining applications for planning permission'*) surrounding wind-farms, high voltage transmission lines and sub-stations. Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) have been the focus of many worldwide studies, children up-to the age of 15 living near high voltage power lines run an increased risk of having leukaemia. *Draper report 2005 increase chances of childhood leukaemia by 69% within 200m of power lines and some effects up to 600m from power lines*
4. A consequence of corona discharges, high voltage AC power lines may produce clouds of negative or positive ions that are readily blown downwind. An increase of charge density downwind of power lines is well established and can be measured at distances up to several kilometres. People may be exposed to these more highly charged pollutant particles and the effect of electrostatic charge on increasing respiratory tract deposition has been recognised for some time. There is strong evidence that the risk of cardiorespiratory disease is increased by inhalation of particles generated outdoors (Taken from Health Protection Agency Particle report of an independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation and its Ad Hoc Group on Corona Ions) *See Pace document recommends a precautionary approach to emf.*
5. Research work in Portugal, published in May 2007, shows there is a clear health risk to people living near wind turbines to a condition they have called Vibro-Acoustic Disease (VAD). This research suggests prolonged exposure to infrasound and low-frequency noise can result in damage to the brain, heart and lungs. We are very concerned about many of the other health and safety issues surrounding wind-farms, high voltage power lines and sub-stations.
6. Much of the present policy controlling the construction of wind-farms is based upon studies and reports that are now outdated, many are 7 to 12 years old. With new technologies and new evidence emerging, there is a need to re-consider policy and planning guidelines especially with proposals for large wind farms and the cumulative effect they will have on the environment.
7. *Tan8 has no mention of cumulative effects on flooding, Increased "run off" from the bases of the turbines, the huge drainage schemes employed around these concrete bases and the access roads, will in turn increase the risk of flooding of the Severn valley. The cumulative effects on visual amenity, acoustic effects such amplitude modulation (a phenomenon making extremely loud booming noise as the wind speed varies across the rotor blades) which is more prominent as the turbines increases in size, largest now 606ft. Recently in Scotland the local authority of Achany wind farm, near Lairg has forced Scottish and Southern Electricity to shut down a Sutherland wind farm after the company breached planning controls by failing to deal with excessive noise from the development, to properties over 2Km away*
8. *Tan 8 had no mention of transport implications over 3000 abnormal loads proposed for mid Wales, to build probably the largest onshore wind farm in the world with the densest cluster of turbines, this would have a detrimental effect on the local economy. Tan8 does suggest community benefits should be gained from the development of wind turbines but actually only the*

minority gain and the majority of people will suffer from the associated infrastructure.

9. *Tan8 has no mention of the cost of onshore wind, through the renewable obligation certificate it is entitled to 4.8p/kwh extra on top of the normal charge per unit for electricity. Current projections from the governments own figures for the whole renewable project suggest a cost to the bill payer in the region of £6.5bn a year by 2020. This obviously would increase fuel poverty and put businesses at a competitive disadvantage as well as providing inflationary pressures which would lead to job losses.*
10. *There are various claims on the efficiency of on-shore wind turbines and their effectiveness to generate when demand is most needed, even taking some of the higher claims of efficiency, the wind-turbines are not suitable for the flexible power demands of the national grid, as they will not generate in low or no wind conditions or high wind conditions. Back up supplies will need to be kept running to able to fill in for the intermittency of turbines. If a car manufacturer claimed a fuel efficiency of 50mpg but only actually did 30mpg then said manufacturer would be in trouble. Why can a turbine manufacturer claim installed capacity of 3Mw but only actually achieve 19% of this figure ? (Using latest available data REF Renewable Energy Foundation) surely then the installed capacity is 570Mw. In Norway on occasion the turbine fleet has had a net loss on the grid as they consume electricity when idle. These factors would have profound implications for the CO2 that turbines are supposed to save. The whole project if it was to meet the installed capacity predicted by Tan8-800Mw in mid Wales would produce less than 0.4% of the UK national energy requirements.*
11. *CO2 emission claims for wind turbines, from manufacture to construction taking into account steel manufacture and shipping, concrete manufacture, conductor windings (the majority of magnets required for the generator are imported from China where they are vast pools of heavy metal laden liquid poisoning the earth left over from the manufacture of these magnets) gearbox and blade construction and access road construction, mean that over their life cycle they will be responsible for generating more CO2 than they can save. The -upland peat will be disturbed, and damage to any kind of vegetation and soil will release carbon dioxide.*
12. *The damage to the beautiful landscape, wildlife, peat bogs and plant life, will lead to a downturn in Tourism which is one of main employment sectors within Mid-Wales. PPW 11.1.7 'In rural areas, tourism related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse, local and national economy' PPW 5.2.9 Trees woodlands and hedgerows are of great importance, both as wildlife habitats and in terms of their contribution to landscape character and beauty. They also play a role in tackling climate change by trapping carbon' A recent study published by DEFRA-the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA) reveals that nature is worth billions of pounds to the UK economy the report strengthens arguments for protecting and enhancing the environment. The UK NEA has used new approaches to estimate the value of natural world by taking into account of the economic, health and social benefits we get from nature.*

13. The lack of a single regulating body to set, monitor and enforce standards for the wind industry has resulted in confusion and division of responsibility between the various Welsh Assembly, Westminster Government and local government bodies and the National Grid.
14. *Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) directive EU law 2004 was not implemented before the adoption of TAN8, why?*
15. *The recent publication by the Committee on Climate Change 'The Renewable Energy Review' (May 2011) 'It is also important to consider opportunities for reducing energy bills through energy efficiency improvement:*
- In the residential sector, we estimate that there is scope for a 14% reduction in heat consumption to 2020 through buildings fabric measures, boiler replacement and behavioral measures.
 - Our analysis also suggests that there is scope for a 14% reduction in electricity consumption through the purchase and use of more efficient appliances.'
- 15.1 *The two policies above if implemented have the potential to boost the economy provide long-term employment and provide energy savings, we would reap the benefits for many years.*
16. There are also potentially huge energy efficiency savings to be made in manufacturing *industry*, business, commerce and public sector much of it employing the latest monitoring and control equipment together with improved insulation
17. We have environmental and energy issues. We should have a full and open debate about these issues considering all the facts Nationally we have already achieved 19% CO2 reduction (DECC 2009) and implementing the above measures would ensure we could still meet our CO2 reduction commitments whilst being able to take a more considered approach to renewable energy.

How can destruction of our local environment be saving the planet?

William Powell, A.M., Chairman Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

24th August 2012

Dear Mr Powell,

Re Tan 8 Petition

I thank you and your colleagues for the opportunity to submit a petition to your committee. You and your staff have been extremely helpful and kept me informed at every stage of the process. The experience of presenting the petition to you and fellow Assembly Members on the steps of the Senedd, meeting with Assembly Members, and later meeting First Minister, Carwyn Jones was something that I will remember for ever.

As a result of my involvement as lead petitioner I was invited to submit evidence to the Environment and Sustainability Committee on the 12th January 2012 which I must admit I found a little stressful as I suffer from Parkinsons. I believe that in this meeting the opportunity for meaningful input and expansion was too controlled and restricted by the Chairman, consequently the evidence was rather limited in its detail.

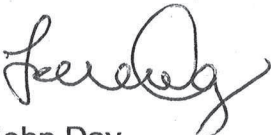
The Tan 8 petition, together with associated petitions, has helped to highlight the widespread and profound feeling of the people, protest meetings continue, and the recent announcement by the National Grid to site a massive sub station at Cefn Coch and to run high voltage cables to Lower Frankton has increased the resolve of the local residents. It's clear that the Welsh Assembly Government are not listening to common sense, history is repeating itself. Only 26 miles north west is the Tryweryn reservoir at Capel Cerig. The

village of Capel Celyn near Bala was flooded over 46 years ago to provide water for Liverpool. People were driven from their homes to build Tryweryn reservoir. Protests had been angry and widespread over a 9 year period, winning support from all political parties in Wales. Every Welsh MP apart from one voted against the scheme, but Liverpool Corporation, with the backing of English MPs, regardless of public opinion, drove through a parliamentary bill. The 800-acre valley was flooded and caused the destruction of a school, a post office, a chapel and cemetery. It flooded 12 farms and destroyed many peoples lives. New research even suggests that the flooding was not necessary. There are lessons to be learned from Tryweryn, why can't we learn from our previous mistakes? I am very disappointed and feel let down by the First Minister, Carwyn Jones, as he is unwilling to accept the valid evidence. Furthermore he does not take the views of the people of Mid Wales into account and has reneged upon his earlier statements. During a meeting that I attended, along with five other representatives concerning wind farm developments, and in subsequent announcements he said: "The Welsh Government believes this level of development is unacceptable in view of its wider impacts on the local area." He stated: "My government would not support the construction of large pylons in Mid Wales." In changing his stance he has lost any respect and credibility he may have previously held.

I believe the process of being able to submit petitions on-line adds to the democratic process giving individuals and groups a direct opportunity to influence decision making. But as we see with the current wind farm issues in Mid Wales democracy is only possible if the Government and its leaders are willing to listen and act upon the will of the people. I accept that you and your Committee have done everything you can and I agree that the Petition should now be closed.

Once again, many thanks

Yours sincerely

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

John Day

Agenda Item 3.14

P-04-383 Against NVZ Designation for Llangorse Lake

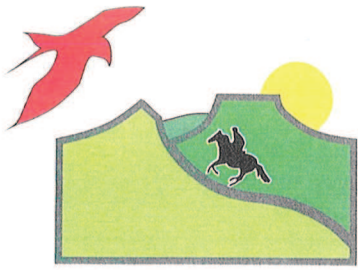
Petition wording:

'We call on the Welsh Assembly Government to overturn the proposed Nitrate Vulnerable Zone designation on the basin of Llangorse Lake, which is likely to affect approximately 25 farm businesses.

Petition raised by: Kaye Davies

Date petition first considered by Committee: 27 March 2012

Number of signatures: 43



Pen-y-Bryn Farms

Gilfach Farm, Llangorse, Brecon, Powys, LD3 7UH

Tel: 01874 658584 or 658272 | Fax: 01874 658280

Email: enquiry@activityuk.com | Web: www.activityuk.com

Water Policy Branch,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ
15TH March 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

NVZ designation within the Llangorse Lake catchment area

We the undersigned are a group of farmers farming within the designated area of the proposed NVZ.

As a group and individually we are appalled to discover that we have had no prior notification of the proposals of an NVZ designation and facility to make representations. Had we not been informed from an outside source we would not have been in a position to make representations on our thoughts and worries within the short timescale.

We have met on many occasions in the short time allowed for consultations and have submitted the attached points of concern which need to be addressed prior to future discussions with our group as to how best implement future management controls.

Please find enclosed attachments:

1. Points of Concern
2. NFU Letter
3. FUW Letter
4. Local County Councillor

Correspondence to be directly sent:

1. CLA Letter
2. MP and AM Letter
3. Community Council Letter

CC:

CCW and Environment Agency

Yours Sincerely,

The Undersigned



Wales
Cymru

Awards:
Business Excellence Awards 2006
Worldwide Small Business Awards 2005
Welsh Tourism Awards 2005

THE BRITISH
HORSE SOCIETY



APPROVED RIDING
ESTABLISHMENT



Points of concern to be addressed before further consultation with farmers on the implication of a NVZ on land in the catchment area of Llangorse Lake

1. Landowners were not given prior warning for the consultation document and not supplied with a copy, when they are the most important people affected. This contravenes our legal rights under the Human Justices Act.
2. The relevant authority must first look to what originally caused the problem in the lake and make them responsible for the damage done. Also address the current position where the Bwlch sewage works is constantly overflowing due to problems pumping over the cutting. Compounding this issue there is over 70 properties with their own septic tanks and soak aways emptying into a clay basin. After this has been achieved then come back to the farmers and with their cooperation look at how the quality of the lake can be further improved. In the 30-year time span there was no control of the nutrients entering the lake from the two sewage works at Llangorse and Bwlch. This allowed further damage when the motor boats churned up this powerful cocktail and aided by the prevailing wind washed it into and onto the north east shore and over a period of time destroyed the then present reed beds. This has not been rectified and has resulted in damaging the ecological status of the lake.
3. CCW arranged for sections of the eastern side of the lake to be fenced off to allow them to re-establish the reed beds that were extensive prior to the construction of the sewage plant in the early 1950's. They have not made any effort to undertake this work having put the farmers to great expense.
4. There is little reference to the extensive damage done up to the time the sewage was diverted to Talgarth. This damage had long lasting implications with over 30 years of effluent entering the lake from Llangorse and Bwlch, much of the time untreated.
5. Numbers of stock are grossly inaccurate. The number of cattle in 1993/7 was just under 600 and sheep just under 4,000. This has changed to date with cattle remaining the same and sheep reducing to fewer than 3,000. This reflects badly in the figures and graphs submitted in the consultation document.
6. Change by farmers, has been made due to costs and efficiency and no reference or allowances has been made to accommodate these e.g. N levels reduced, due to high pricing, along with nutrient management plans in place for most farms around the lake. The reports are out dated and do not reflect the present as most of the farmers in the catchment area have spent large amounts of money building and installing modern systems to greatly reduce the environmental impact on their own land and eventual run off into the lake.
7. The report is not damning. Since this report has been conducted several improvements have been made on numerous farms that have not been taken into account.

8. To impose restriction on farmers on the use of certain buildings built prior to 1991 is unacceptable unless the rebuild is completely financed by government or the authority imposing these restrictions. Much of the land in the catchment area is about to complete ten years in Tir Gofal and are signed up for Glastir as from 2012 with more entering the scheme 2013/14. To comply with their current entry agreement they would be compelled to replace their slurry systems etc. This would not be cost effective and the only answer would be to withdraw from the Glastir scheme prior to any payments been made.
9. Farmers are the best custodians of the countryside and are more aware of the preservation of the countryside than the bodies of bureaucrats who impose their personal interpretation on out of date research. Unfortunately the Llangorse Lake Advisory Group is not of like mind and do not have an overall policy as to present and future management of the lake.
10. Before imposing more restrictions on the already vulnerable agricultural community in this area the authorities need to get their own house in order and do an in depth study of the amount of effluent created from private sewage disposal from private properties on the south east section of the catchment area. This from CCW studies is being shown to have the highest level of nutrients entering the lake. Most of the other catchment area is already disposed of into the existing mains sewage system. This area of land is not intensively farmed due to the land soil structure, white clay-underlying layer. However this is an area that has the largest number of dwellings with septic tanks emptying into this impenetrable clay base, so all effluent freely entering the lake via the river completely untreated.
11. Compulsory intervention never works; negotiation and mutual need to improve will win hearts and ultimately improve the lake for our future generation to enjoy. It is only there as it was prior to the advent of the sewage problem due to the way our forefathers farmed and moulded the countryside around the lake. Bureaucrats think they are an express train but farmers look to the future in a completely different way and continue to mould the countryside in a fashion that will meet future needs and preserve the fabric of the countryside to meet this need.
12. The suggestion that it may be necessary to purchase some of the land adjoining the lake, this may be acceptable if agreement could be reached, however there is a greater issue, the devaluing of the land forming the catchment area a total of approximately 7,000 acres. This could lead to a claim of at least £45,000,000 from the affected landowners along with annual claims for loss of income.
13. It is the belief of all the land owners that over and above the current improvements made that with cooperation and careful management and monitoring further improvements can be achieved without damaging or curtailing the present level of farming undertaken by farmers of this exceptional area. We are not only farmers but are conservationists as well and seriously want to protect and enhance the environment we have the privilege of farming and living in. without detriment to the lake.

NFU CYMRU

Tŷ Amaeth – Agriculture House, Royal Welsh
Showground

Llanelwedd, Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3TU

Telephone: 01982 554200 Fax: 01982 554201

Website: www.nfu-cymru.org.uk



Director: Mary James

Ein cyf/Our ref:

Eich cyf/Your ref:

E-mail:

Dyddiad/Date: 13 March 2012

To whom it may concern,

Dear Sir/Madam,

Proposed NVZ Llangors Lake catchment

NFU Cymru has met with farmers in the proposed NVZ designation in the Llangors Lake area and a number of concerns have been raised, as outlined in their letter of correspondence enclosed.

We have particular concern regarding the proposal to repeal the exemption for slurry, silage and fuel stores on farms that were built or were committed to being built before 1 March 1991 under SSAFO regulations. NFU Cymru has written to the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development regarding this issue. There are a large number of these structures on Welsh farms which were soundly built that pose no pollution threat. A significant proportion of these structures will have many years of useful life left in them. We would strongly contend that there is no good reason or evidence to suggest that in these circumstances farmers should be forced into the huge cost of having to build new structures by 2015.

NFU Cymru will also raise other issues regarding the burden of bureaucracy and the impact of this designation, in our direct response to the NVZ consultation which is currently open.

The group of farmers in the Llangors area are hugely concerned regarding the proposed designation. NFU Cymru notes that the reason for the notification is eutrophication in the lake. Nitrate levels in the lake are very low and we would question the implication in the proposed designation that nitrates from agriculture are a significant contributor to eutrophication. This is after all a nitrates directive. We would suggest that those farmers in the catchment appeal against its' inclusion on this basis.

NFU Cymru fully understands these concerns which have been raised by these farmers in the area and we support their representations made.

Yours sincerely,

Stella Owen
Farm Policy Advisor NFU Cymru



FARMERS' UNION OF WALES
UNDEB AMAETHWYR CYMRU
BRECON & RADNOR BRANCH • CANGEN BRYCHEINIOG A MAESYFED

County Office/Swyddfa Sirol: 8 Ship Street, Brecon, Powys, LD3 9AF.
Tel/Ffôn: (01874) 622779. Fax/Ffacs: (01874) 610374.
E-mail/E-bost: brecon-fuw@btinternet.com

Reference/Cyfeirnod:

Date/Dyddiad:

12th March 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

The Farmers Union of Wales fully supports the farmers of the Llangorse area in opposing any NVZ Designation for the area. We agree with their points of concern and have raised similar concerns regarding the inclusion of Llangorse as a potential NVZ and numerous other concerns in our own consultation response.

Yours sincerely,

Aled Jones

Melanie Davies
County Councillor
Llangorse Ward

Castle House
Llangorse
Brecon
LD3 7UD

14th March 2012

Response to the consultation on the review of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones in Wales with reference to Llangorse Lake

I have been part of a family business that operates on Llangorse Lake all my life, I am a member of the Llangorse Lake Advisory Group and am the County Councillor for the Llangorse Ward.

Please note my following comments as part of your consultation regarding the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone designation proposals, as outlined in 'Nutrient Modelling and Nutrient budget for Llangors Lake Report 831 April 2008'.

I am very concerned about the whole process and how it bypasses the local farming community directly affected in the proposed Zone. I do not understand the rationale of not fully engaging at the report and consultation stages, the result is that it leaves affected landowners disengaged and only able to give any challenge after the area has been designated through an appeals process. I am amazed that this is seen as good practice, where is the open and transparent democratic accountability, even within Local Planning Authorities those directly affected are consulted before, as part of a rounded report.

The farming community should have been integral to the report, I am informed that the stock numbers are inaccurate; how then, can the assumptions based on their numbers be given any weight? And why was this information not qualified by asking those who knew eg, the farmers?

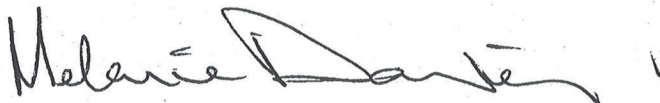
I understand that nutrient management plans are in place already and are common practice and that if the Zone is imposed it will just increase the bureaucracy that local businesses are expected to comply with, resulting in little or no results on the ground, except to devalue the effected land and burden owners with more red tape. I also have a real concern that this will have huge cost implications on individuals with regards to infrastructure and that no audit has been carried out to assess the current suitability of existing buildings, silage, slurry and oil fuel provision. It could undermine some farming practices to the point were some individuals could be driven out of the industry altogether.

I do not understand why the reports recommendations target the Nitrates which are recorded as entering the lake from the North area and does not tackle the issue of the greater in-flow and Nitrate load (50-56%) entering the Lake from the Llynfi inlet (site No 6 in report). Is the Bwlch Sewage Pump Station spilling effluent into the lakes flood zone so it feeds in as sub-surface water?

What is being done to ensure that all the septic tanks in the north eastern area and out towards Bwlch are not polluting the Lake, what about soak-aways in old properties?

The Lake water quality has improved greatly over the last two decades and its status and how this status is arrived at is regularly debated at LLAG. Unfortunately part of the report, the recommendations are drawn from, was drawn up in a very dry spell and samples could only be taken from two inputs into the lake which means the wrong conclusions could be drawn. It is on this basis and those already mentioned above that I would suggest a management agreement should be drawn up between the interested parties and monitoring should be continued to ensure a fair, transparent and equitable way forward any other system at the present point in time is pre-emptive and unsound and while it may have no detrimental effect on the Lake it would have a disproportionate one on the local inhabitants.

I strongly support the conservation of the Lake and the surrounding area, I also believe that voluntary agreements and working groups foster better mutual understanding, respect and working practices than heavy handed legislation. The best placed people to support this work are the farmers themselves who have long term invested interests in the environment by the very fact that they live and work in the area from generation to generation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melanie Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Melanie Davies
County Councillor

PET(4)-13-12 : Tuesday 2 October 2012
P-04-383 : Against NVZ Designation for Llangorse Lake

Note of Petitions Committee visit to Glan Aber farm in Dinbych, 1 July 2012

Related petition: P-04-383 Against NVZ Designation for Llangorse Lake:

'We call on the Welsh Assembly Government to overturn the proposed Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) designation on the basin of Llangorse Lake, which is likely to affect approximately 25 farm businesses.'

Present:

William Powell AM (Chair)
Bethan Jenkins AM
Joyce Watson AM
Owain Williams, farmer
Geraint Williams, farmer
Rhys Roberts, FUW
Abigail Phillips, Clerk
Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk
Annette Millett, Committee Support

1. The Chair thanked Owain and Geraint Williams for welcoming the Committee to their farm on a Sunday, and Rhys Roberts for his attendance.
2. The Chair introduced the Committee and invited the farmers to tell the Committee how their business had been affected by the NVZ designation of the area.
3. Owain and Geraint Williams explained that theirs was a 500 acre beef and milk farm.
4. Their farm had been included in a NVZ designated area 12 months ago. They had carried out nitrate level tests before the changes were made and the results were around 15. Levels were now down to 8. The farmers questioned the need for the NVZ designation as generally levels below 50 were considered good so the pre-designation levels should have been acceptable.
5. The farmers also felt that the designation had limited value given that water from surrounding farms runs into their land.
6. The farmers explained that the NVZ designation had necessitated a £70,000 to £80, 000 investment in the farm. The Welsh Government had offered grants for 40 per cent of the cost, but the farmers felt that the grant application process was slow and overly bureaucratic, although they were grateful for the help as they recognised that this was not available to farmers in England. They did not have a single point of contact during the process, but had to deal with several officials.
7. The farmers also felt they needed to employ someone to deal with the extra paperwork, which added to the expense. The day to day paperwork is also more time consuming for the farmers now.
8. They also felt that the nitrate levels should be dealt with through the Water Directive rather than NVZ designations.
9. They feel that the NVZ designation means that they are disadvantaged when competing with neighbouring farms.

10. They showed the Committee the slurry pit that they had significantly enlarged as a result of the NVZ designation. It was now four metres deep and approximately four times the length of the original slurry pit.
11. They explained that they had to change the way the manure was spread on the fields. The old method had been to leave the manure on top of the fields, but now they had to inject it into the earth. This was done by using an injector that attached to a farm vehicle. The injector had cost £35,000.
12. The volume of slurry stored and the need to inject rather than spread manure means that farmers now have to spend longer dealing with that aspect of the farm.
13. The Chair thanked Owain and Geraint Williams and Rhys Roberts for their time.

Committee Service

July 2012

Agenda Item 3.15

P-04-390 Designate Penrhos Holyhead Nature reserve (coastal park) a National reserve

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to designate Penrhos Holyhead Nature reserve (coastal park) a National Nature Reserve.

Supporting information:

Penrhos Nature Reserve (coastal park) Holyhead has been used by the community for 40 years. It is a socially valued landscape. A natural heirloom. We believe the lasting legacy of this cherished nature reserve should be acquired and managed for the community and be designated a National Nature Reserve by CCW (countryside council of Wales) with a long term vision that includes a comprehensive initiative which involves the whole community in its 'Natural capital': Run by the people for the people.

Penrhos nature reserve is enveloped in a historic coastline that has been designated an AONB area near an SSSI, which make up its iconic landscape. Gorsedd y Penrhyn which dominates the coasts path line has been designated a regionally important geological, geomorphological site by (UK RIGS) by the geoconservation association. Also the freshwater habitats comprise of reed beds priority habitats under the uk habitats action plan (uk hap). By designating it a national park we would maximise the economic benefits of the islands 'natural capital'. Tourism is based on the unspoilt beauty of this island. It is a Inspirational gem at the heart of the community and has a rich tapestry of life and is cherished by the whole community. It is by all accounts a 'theological Paradise'. It is part of Holy islands altar piece, indeed the 100,000 visitors every year recognise this. 'We are a people bred on legends .clinging stubbornly to the proud trees of blood and birth.' R S Thomas

Petition raised by: Jenny Amelia Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 15 May 2012

Number of signatures: 826 (an associated petition collected 1,100 signatures)

RICHARD PARRY JONES, M.A.
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

CYNGOR SIR YNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL
Swyddfa'r Sir
LLANGEFNI
Ynys Môn - Anglesey
LL77 7TW

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

Gofynnwch am - Please ask for: Carol Roberts

ffôn / tel (01248) 752102 ffacs / fax
(01248) 750839

E-Bost - E-mail: rpjed@ynysmon.gov.uk
Ein Cyf - Our Ref. RPJ/CR/GJ
Eich Cyf - Your Ref.

26 June 2012

Dear Mr Powell,

**P-04-390: DESIGNATE PENRHOS HOLYHEAD NATURE RESERVE
(COASTAL PATH) A NATIONAL RESERVE**

I refer to your recent correspondence in respect of the above and welcome the opportunity to submit the following observations on the request submitted by Jenny Amelia Jones to your Petitions Committee.

The Committee will be aware that it is the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) who has the legal power to designate National Nature Reserves (NNR) in the Principality and as I understand matters they have also received a request for the area to be designated as an NNR but have declined to do so as they do not recognise the area to be nationally important in terms fauna, flora or geographical features of special interest.

As far as this Authority is concerned I would point out that Officers have been involved with the applicant company in pre-application discussions for the past 12 months or so regarding development of the area. Whilst the scheme of development is continually evolving the proposal have been subject to community consultation and details can be found on the Internet. The intent is to create a quality tourism and leisure destination, provide a sustainable economic legacy for the Island assist the tourism industry, and in part provide temporary self-contained construction workers accommodation for the nuclear new build development at Wylfa. The latter element will be on the Cae Glas site as opposed to the Penrhos Site. Notwithstanding the foregoing the project will still secure access to the Penrhos Reserve and Coastal Path and mitigate any loss of public access by opening up the Cae Glas site which presently has no public access whatsoever. The Authority is eager to maximise community/planning benefits if the development proceeds.

The development in its totality will comprise of three sites which will be interrelated.

The development lies within the boundary of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the applicant is fully aware of the need to comply with the requirements of paragraphs 5.5.2 and 5.5.6 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 4). The applicant is also aware that the two of the three sites are adjacent to the Anglesey Aluminium site on which a 299MW Biomass Station has been approved by DECC. Part of the Anglesey Aluminium site itself actually occupies a section of the AONB and is linked to Energy related Enterprise Zone status confirmed on the Island by the Minister, Edwina Hart.

The correspondence as submitted seems to imply that the Penrhos scheme will entail development of the whole site to the detriment of the character of the area as well as restrict public access. I would point out that the Penrhos site will still afford access to the public the development will in fact protect access to the area which Anglesey Aluminium annually spends approximately £250,000 on maintaining. Owing to the closure of the Works and the loss of hundred jobs the company can no longer afford the level of maintenance expenditure needed. However, the proposed development, if approved, will ensure continuity of access to the area by the applicant company (although the leisure and public areas will be clearly de-marked) as well as ensure improvements to the coastal footpath etc.

I would not wish to pre-judge any decision in respect of the planning application as discussions are on-going with the developer however the application will be considered on its individual merits having regard to the Development Plan as well as all relevant material considerations. Certainly if favourably consented the development would:

- (i) Assist the area's economic regeneration;
- (ii) Provide a leisure designation hub which will and assist the Island's Tourism industry;
- (iii) Provide a legacy for the Island's residents in safeguarding the Penrhos Coastal Park which without additional financial resources will face an uncertain future.

The Authority is fully aware of the concerns of many people in the area regarding the proposed development and its Officers, in dealing with the proposed application(s), will have due and diligent regard to the planning, social, environmental as well as economic issues concerned. The Countryside Council for Wales will be a formal consultees on the application and will respond in light of its statutory duties.

If I can provide you with any further information in this matter please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Parry Jones
Chief Executive

John Griffiths AC /AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-390
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06214/12

Williams Powell AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Abigail.phillips@wales.gsi.gov.uk

September 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for the letter from the Petitions Committee dated 21 May regarding the petition submitted to the National Assembly for Wales urging the Welsh Government to designate Penrhos Coastal Park, Holyhead, as a National Nature Reserve (NNR) and asking for my views on the petition. I apologise for the delayed response.

In Wales, designation of NNRs is a matter for the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW).

They are designated under either the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. NNRs demonstrate the very finest examples of our wildlife habitats and geological features. They are designated to conserve, and to allow people to study, flora, fauna or geological features of special interest. All of Wales's NNRs are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

The Penrhos Coastal Park is not a SSSI and does not have geology or habitats of national significance which are necessary in order to designate the site as a National Nature Reserve.

Ms Jones may wish to contact CCW to discuss this matter further. They can be contacted by post at CCW, Maes-y-Ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DW or by email at Enquiries@ccw.gov.uk

Best wishes,

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Agenda Item 3.16

P-04-399 Slaughter Practices

Petition wording:

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to ban the practise of slaughtering animals without pre-stunning them.

Petition raised by: Royce Clifford

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 June 2012

Number of signatures: 400

John Griffiths AC /AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-399
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06448/12

William Powell AM

William.powell@wales.gov.uk

20 July 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 26 June informing me that a petition calling upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to ban the practise of slaughtering animals without pre-stunning them has collected 400 signatures. I am aware that Jane Hutt AM has also received your letter.

My officials are preparing consultation documents that will be seeking views on proposed legislation to implement EC Regulation 1099/2009 – Protection of Animals at Time of Killing which will be directly applicable in all Member States from 1 January 2013.

We are a tolerant society and respect religious freedom but must reconcile this with animal welfare. We will be consulting shortly and I will not be making a decision about non-stun slaughter in Wales until the consultation has closed and all responses have been reviewed.

Best wishes,

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Agenda Item 3.17

P-04-406 : Against Proposed MCZ zones in North Wales

Petition wording:

We Call upon the Welsh Assembly Government NOT to include any of the six proposed sites within North Wales to become Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ). We say no to Llanbedrog/Pwllheli, Aberdaron/Bardsey Island, Porthdinllaen/Tudweiliog, Aberech/Llanstyndwy, Puffin Island/Beaumaris and North East Menai Strait.

This proposal would have a detrimental effect not only on our fishing industry but also on our tourism and economy. We rely on our coasts for our livings and enjoyment. We strongly oppose all six potential sites.

Petition raised by: Claire Russell Griffiths

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 July 2012

Number of signatures: 6,501 (an associated Caernarfon Herald petition collected in excess of 180 signatures)

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-406
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06570/12

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

28 July 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 9 July advising that the Petitions Committee has received a petition relating to the current consultation on Marine Conservation Zones. I note that the 6501 signatories are opposed to all of the potential site options in North Wales and that they are calling upon the Welsh Government not to designate any of these sites as Marine Conservation Zones.

I appreciate that people are worried about the effect that highly protected sites might have on local communities in North Wales – especially on fishing, leisure and tourism activities. I would therefore stress that no decisions have been made about final site locations, their size or boundaries.

The current first stage consultation is focused on gathering more information and views from people, especially in local coastal communities, about how they use the areas, how they might be affected by a highly protected designation and how any effects could be minimised.

I will consider carefully all responses received from the first phase of the consultation process before deciding on next steps, including views on the suitability of the approach itself and any alternative proposals.

I expect to publish an analysis of the consultation responses, alongside a statement of next steps, as soon as possible in the autumn.

Best wishes,

John Griffiths AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: John.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Printed on 100% recycled paper

Agenda Item 4.1

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-221
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07512/12

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

25 July 2012

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 10 July on behalf of the Petitions Committee, enclosing a further petition from Cynon Valley 50 Plus Older People's Forum about the Minimum Standards for Basic Footcare.

I am grateful for the views expressed on Standard 6 however the Basic Footcare Minimum Standards have been agreed with the expert group as the minimum needed for safe practice. The All Wales NHS Podiatry Managers group has developed and agreed the programme of training to ensure consistency of standards and approach across Wales. If you of the Cynon Valley 50 Plus Older People's Forum would like to discuss this further a representative of the Podiatry managers group would be happy to do so. This can be arranged by contacting the Chair of the Group by e-mailing Lance.Reed@wales.nhs.uk or telephoning 01633 618057.

I have noted the helpful comment on Standard 10.

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

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

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Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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

Your ref: P-04-401
Our ref: PO262/RB/NG

9 July 2012

Dear William

Petitions Committee

Thank you for your letter dated 26 June bringing to my attention the petition received by your Committee urging the Assembly Commission to accept the recommendation of the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee that there should be a requirement in the Commission's National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill for the record of all Assembly proceedings to be in fully bilingual form.

The Commission has since responded to that recommendation by proposing an amendment to the Bill making it a statutory requirement that there should be a fully bilingual record of plenary (but not of committee or sub-committee) proceedings. That amendment was considered by the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee during the Stage 2 proceedings on the Bill which took place on 21 June. The minutes of the Committee's meeting may be viewed at

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=226&MIId=885&Ver=4> . A recording of proceedings can be watched on Senedd TV and the written record will shortly be available on the Assembly's website.

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The Committee passed the Commission's amendment without dissent. An alternative amendment proposed by Suzy Davies AM, and which would have extended the duty to provide a fully bilingual record to committee and sub-committee meetings was withdrawn.

The Committee to whose recommendations the petition refers has therefore now, in the light of the arguments placed before it by the Member in Charge of the Bill, Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, endorsed the Commission's approach. In setting out the Commission's position, Rhodri Glyn Thomas stressed that although a legal commitment to provide a fully bilingual record of committee and sub-committee meetings was not something which the Commission could support at present, the Commission was committed to keeping translation arrangements for committee and sub-committee meetings under review, particularly in the light of future developments in translation technology.

The Bill will now return to the full Assembly for Stage 3 and Final Stage consideration which are likely to take place in the in the first week of October.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosemary".

Rosemary Butler AM, Presiding Officer