

## Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:  
**Committee Room 1 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:  
**19 February 2013**

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Meeting time:  
**09:00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

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### Agenda

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- 1. Introduction, apologies and substitutions 9.00**
- 2. New petitions 9.00 – 9.10**
  - 2.1 P-04-456 Dementia – This Could Happen to you (Page 1)
  - 2.2 P-04-457 The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign (Pages 2 – 10)
  - 2.3 P-04-458 Keep Further Education in the Public Sector (Pages 11 – 12)
- 3. Updates to previous petitions 9.10 – 10.10**

#### **Housing, Regeneration and Heritage**

- 3.1 P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts (Pages 13 – 91)
- 3.2 P-04-407 Save Kennard Court Sheltered Accommodation for Older People (Page 92)

#### **Health and Social Services**

- 3.3 P-04-366 Closure of Aberystwyth Day Centre (Pages 93 – 98)
- 3.4 P-04-424 Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital (Pages 99 – 102)

## **Environment and Sustainable Development**

- 3.5 P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey (Pages 103 – 104)
- 3.6 P-04-385 Petition regarding balloon and lantern releases (Pages 105 – 108)
- 3.7 P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register (Pages 109 – 133)

## **Local Government and Communities**

- 3.8 P-03-144 Guide Dogs for the Blind – Shared Space (Pages 134 – 143)
- 3.9 P-04-370 Petition for the improvement of Psychic and Intuitive services in Wales (Pages 144 – 145)
- 3.10 P-04-393 Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group (Pages 146 – 160)
- 3.11 P-04-402 Council Prayers (Pages 161 – 164)
- 3.12 P-04-416 North–South Rail Services (Pages 165 – 171)
- 3.13 P-04-426 Introduce a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth Ceredigion (Pages 172 – 178)
- 3.14 P-04-428 Alternative energy for street lighting (Pages 179 – 181)
- 3.15 P-04-438 Shopping Access (Pages 182 – 186)

## **Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science**

- 3.16 P-04-414 Welsh Jobs (Page 187)
- 3.17 P-04-446 Business Rate Relief for Welsh Charity Shops (Pages 188 – 189)

## **Education and Skills**

- 3.18 P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren (Pages 190 – 192)
- 3.19 P-04-441 Gwaith i Gymru – Work for Wales (Pages 193 – 196)

## **4. Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: 10.10**

Item 5

## **5. Review of Committee support 10.10 – 11.00**

## **P-04-456 Dementia – This Could Happen to you**

### **Petition wording:**

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- i. Bring to an end the discrimination against dementia sufferers in Wales who apply for N.H.S. Continuing Care Funding, by allowing for the cognition category of need (known as the 'domain') to go up to the level 'Severe' in the Welsh version of the Decision Support Tool. This would bring it in line with the English version; and
- ii. Direct Local Health Boards to implement the National Framework for N.H.S., Continuing Care Funding correctly in terms of patient eligibility and without regard to budgetary constraints.

**Petition raised by:** Helen Jones

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 19 February 2013

**Number of signatures:** 1413

# Agenda Item 2.2

## **P-04-457 The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to cease the use of National Health Service budget for religious care and to work with the leaders of organised religion to establish a charitable trust to fund religious care in the hospitals of Wales.

### **Supporting Information:**

The charitable chaplaincy campaign comprises an informal network of citizen who are concerned that every million pounds of public money allocated to the NHS in Wales should be used to promote public health and to treat those who need medical attention.

Our campaign has no funds and needs none. It is sponsored by no other organisation within or without Wales. Modern internet based services allow us to communicate with each other and with our democratically elected representatives.

All our supporters have seen and concur with two documents which are provided in support of this petition, Principles which sets out our motivation and Proposal which states our case with supporting evidence and rational argument.

We provide a third document Employment which provides evidence of how the monies drawn from the NHS Budget for hospital chaplaincy services are currently spent.

**Petition raised by:** The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 19 February 2013

# The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign

*The Wales-wide, cross-party campaign for a charitable hospital chaplaincy.*

## Charitable Trusts

The usual test used today was laid down by their Lordships in *IRC v Pemsel* <sup>[1]</sup>. To be charitable, a trust must serve one of the following purposes:

- 1) The relief of Poverty [Public benefit test does not apply]
- 2) The Advancement of Education
- 3) The Advancement of Religion<sup>[2]</sup>
- 4) Any other purpose beneficial to the Community not falling within the other categories.

[A revision in 2011 added nine other purposes - none relevant to our case.]

It is likely that a Wales Hospital Chaplaincy Fund (HCF) for publicly financed hospitals (profit-making private hospitals must be excluded) would be an acceptable proposal to the Charities Commission under either 3 or 4 of the list above. The terms of reference of the Hospital Chaplaincy Service (HCS) would determine which of the listed purposes was appropriate. The HCF would be established for the exclusive purpose of funding the HCS.

## Definitions of religious and spiritual care.

The set of “Guidance” documents for Spiritual Support in the Wales NHS contains a serious ambiguity which makes discussion of this matter difficult.

The document *Guidance on Capabilities and Competences for Healthcare Chaplains/Spiritual Care Givers* provides two definitions on page 4 (quoting from *Service Development for Spiritual Care in the NHS Wales 2010*):

**Spiritual Care** is usually given in a one to one relationship, is completely person centred and makes no assumptions about personal conviction or life orientation.

**Religious Care** is given in the context of shared religious beliefs, values, liturgies and lifestyle of a faith community.

It then goes on to claim that –

“Spiritual care is often used as the overall term and is relevant for all”

This is bound to produce confusion. If the two forms of care are to be conflated then a separate term is required to remove this ambiguity.

An example of the consequence of this ambiguity occurs on the same page of the document. At one point it states “Spiritual care can be provided by all health care staff, by carers, families and other patients.” This must imply the separate definition above. It then goes on to make the unjustified claim “Chaplains are the specialist spiritual care providers”. If, in this sentence, the word “spiritual” is replaced by the word “religious” the claim might be acceptable, since the chaplain is usually a cleric, but only if the recipient of such care is of the same faith as the chaplain. Of course the

chaplain should offer spiritual care as defined by the separate definition above - that would seem to be the duty of all NHS staff in contact with patients and their families. The nursing profession might rightly claim that its members are the specialist spiritual care (as defined above) providers by virtue of their selection for employment and their professional training. It seems to me that being capable of offering spiritual care (as defined above) is as essential for an NHS employee in contact with patients and their loved ones as honesty is for a bank employee or courage and loyalty for a member of the armed services. In truth the term “spiritual care” is imprecise, ambiguous and confusing. It would be better to replace it with the three well defined terms:-  
**Religious care** – The pastoral care provided by clerics to those who require it.  
**Empathetic care** – The ethos by which all hospital care is delivered  
**Holistic care** – The model of hospital care which recognises the mind-body nexus and delivers care guided by evidence of medical efficacy within an empathetic ethos.

The cost figures given below were obtained in reply to the question:-  
*For the previous financial year, what was the total cost to your Board for the provision of Chaplaincy Services?*

It is reasonable to assume that the costs relating to training nursing staff in correct spiritual care (as defined above) and the allowance for such care in calculating work load were **not** included. The costs given are therefore in respect of Religious Care.

### **Stakeholder analysis**

For each stakeholder it is possible to compare their interests in the choice between tax-payer funding and charitable funding of the Hospital Chaplaincy Service.

**Patients:** The same service is delivered by the same people and the individual patient should be entirely unaffected by the means of funding.

**NHS Staff:** Charitable trust funding may mean that a number of staff would retain their jobs in spite of future financial stringencies whilst the chaplaincy service received is the same in both cases.

**The Wales NHS:** The NHS will be able to deliver more than one million pounds worth of additional medical and/or nursing and/or ambulance services every year in perpetuity if chaplaincy is funded by a charitable trust.

**The Minister:** It may be felt that making the change from using NHS monies to Trust monies involves some political risk. This can be minimised by considerate transition arrangements and it would be understood by the tax-payer in a time of funding constraint.

**The religious denominations:** It would seem best that the tax-payer through the NHS Wales pays the bill for the chaplaincy service. But the establishment of a charitable trust would be an admirable ecumenical activity which enhances their reputation and involves their adherents in supporting fellow believers in times and situations of great challenge. This stakeholder might believe funding for chaplaincy is more secure if it comes from the public purse. This is much less likely to be true in future. Indeed, with sufficient voluntary effort, the funds raised by such a charity might even exceed those at present provided by the Wales NHS enabling a broader range of sects to be represented in chaplaincy.

## The cost of chaplaincy

	2007/8	2008/9
North Wales NHS Trust	£ 159,289	£ 170,144
Velindre NHS Trust	£ 18,934	£ 19,514
Cwm Taf NHS Trust	£ 46,093	£ 97,809
Abertawe bro Morgannwg	£ 218,299	£ 216,642
Hywel Dda NHS Trust	£ 63,185	£ 115,774
Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust	£ 240,596	£ 251,483
North West Wales NHS Trust	£ 95,429	£ 103,877
Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust	£ 312,000	£ 300,845
Powys Local Health Board	£ 35,228	£ 38,119

=====	=====
<b>£1,189,013</b>	<b>£1,314,207</b>

	2009/10	2010/11
Betsi Cadwaladr NHS Trust*	£ 259,042	£ 221,619
Velindre NHS Trust	£ 57,162	£ 30,857
Cwm Taf NHS Trust	£ 117,990	£ 111,974
Abertawe bro Morgannwg	£ 214,000	£ 231,842
Hywel Dda NHS Trust	£ 124,556	£ 157,793
Aneurin Bevan NHS Trust	£ 259,910	£ 260,589
Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust	£ 293,158	£ 293,351
Powys Local Health Trust	£ 46,603	£ 45,389

=====	=====
<b>£1,372,421</b>	<b>£1,353,414</b>

### 2011/12

Betsi Cadwaladr NHS Trust	£ 225,815
Velindre NHS Trust	£ 30,856
Cwm Taf NHS Trust	£ 132,102
Abertawe bro Morgannwg	£ 237,426
Hywel Dda NHS Trust	£ 171,133
Aneurin Bevan NHS Trust	£ 255,173
Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust	£ 238,425
Powys Local Health Trust	£ 34,543
	=====
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,325,473</b>

\* Combined North Wales and North West Wales Trusts

Total expenditure since figures first collected. **£6,554,528**

## **Conclusion**

The provision of a hospital chaplaincy service is not a statutory obligation for the NHS. It is probably best described as a traditional provision by the NHS.

The funds available to the Wales NHS will never be so generous that a contribution from the voluntary sector may be rejected without good reason. Even if current funding (indexed against inflation) is maintained, an aging population, advances in medical and pharmaceutical science, developments in medical and nursing techniques and the rising expectations of the population will always place ever greater demands on NHS budgets. A million and a quarter pounds each and every year into the future may be seen as a small contribution but only by obtaining many such small contributions may these increasing demands be met.

The creation of a Hospital Chaplaincy Fund to cover the cost of religious care by hospital chaplains will be good for the churches, chapels, mosques, kingdom halls, temples and synagogues. The humanist movement might also join this enterprise. It would be an ecumenical enterprise that builds bridges between faiths.

The proposed charity would need to raise about £1.5 million per year to maintain the present service. This is entirely achievable. While the present fiscal arrangements are in place, a portion of this amount would be met by “gift aid” tax which is returned by the Treasury.

It would, of course, be for the NHS Wales and the proposed Hospital Chaplaincy Fund (HCF) to agree the appointment and employment arrangements for HCF funded chaplains. Since this issue has been raised during the Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign, we offer the view that hospital chaplains should be properly regulated, CRB checked, representative of the local population and trained to a high standard which must include awareness that proselytism and evangelism in an NHS setting is unacceptable. The HCF fund-raising target should be to finance the current level of establishment. If the HCF raises more money than is required to support this staffing level, additional appointments might be discussed with the Health Boards. If there is a shortfall, staffing levels would correspondingly be reduced.

The Church in Wales, the Catholic Church (Wales) and the Free Church Council have been asked to consider this matter. The reaction has been, “the NHS has taken responsibility for religious care, so the churches need not act”. Regrettably there appears to be a lack of leadership from the faith communities in this matter. As a consequence, a strong political lead is required; perhaps amounting to a declaration of a time period for the transition to charitable funding.

## **Notes**

[1] <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/rr1a.aspx>

[2] This term seems to have been revised very recently to:-  
Public Benefit and the Advancement of Moral or Ethical Belief Systems

**Alan Rogers October 2012**



# **The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign**

## ***The Wales-wide, cross-party campaign for a charitable hospital chaplaincy***

### Campaign Principles

#### Things we are **not** saying about NHS chaplaincy services.

1. We are **not saying** that they should be abolished.  
If the religious make arrangements for the funding of chaplaincy services and these services are delivered in a way which does not offend, disturb or inconvenience hospital patients and staff then we can see no objection to their provision.
2. We are **not saying** that we know they are worthless.  
We know of no substantive evidence that proves that there is a *clinical* value to chaplaincy services. If there is we would be pleased to receive references to any published peer review studies or research which proponents can provide. This is exactly the kind of evidence (if it exists) which might justify NHS expenditure. We quite understand that many people may find chaplaincy services comforting and reassuring - hence **Point 1** above.

#### Things we **are** saying about NHS chaplaincy services.

1. There is **no statutory requirement** for the NHS to fund a chaplaincy service.  
There is a tradition to provide such a service but this could be honoured by facilitating a service which is funded by charitable donation.
2. The cost of chaplaincy services is **not insignificant**.  
The NHS expenditure on chaplaincy services although small relative to total NHS expenditure is large enough to be of use to an NHS whose work is, and always will be, confined by its budget. Every million pounds that the Wales NHS spends should be carefully targeted for maximum benefit. Chaplaincy costs are in excess of one million pounds per annum.
3. Charitable funding is **financially feasible**.  
The costs are such that a charitable trust could raise the required revenue by voluntary donations. For example, in Wales 25,000 donors giving £1 per week would fully fund the chaplaincy services. Many people in Wales donate £52 p.a. to support the Welsh Air Ambulance Service which is charitably funded and raises £5 million p.a.. If proponents of tax-payer funding are correct about how valued the chaplaincy service is, one might expect this target to be achieved with ease.
4. Charitable funding would **benefit hospital chaplaincy**, the Wales NHS and Wales.  
It is difficult to imagine a more worth-while ecumenical project than the formation of a charitable Hospital Chaplaincy Fund organised by the Catholic Church, the Church in Wales, the many Non-Conformist denominations, Mosques, Temples and Synagogues in order to provide these services which bring comfort and support to adherents in times of great difficulty and stress. This would contribute to social cohesion. The NHS Wales would be relieved of the financial burden of this service.  
That would seem to be a win-win strategy.
5. There are **already in place** the necessary organisations on which to build a charity.  
In Wales there are established ecumenical organisations which are quite capable of initiating and managing a charitable Hospital Chaplaincy Fund. Probably the most appropriate of these is Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales). This is a Christian organisation and it would need to make contact with and secure the assistance of non-Christian religious communities, possibly through the Inter Faith Council of Wales, in order to be fully ecumenical.

**The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign**  
*The Wales-wide, cross-party campaign for a charitable hospital chaplaincy*

The campaign submitted Freedom of Information Act requests to obtain data on the use of NHS budget assigned to chaplaincy services. This reveals that the funds so allocated were used exclusively for the employment of theologically trained clerics.

**Whole Time Equivalent Hospital Chaplains by Sect and Trust [FY 2011/2012]**

	Cardiff & Vale *	Abertawe	Hywel Dda	Betsi Cadw'dr	Aneurin Bevan	Cwm Taf	Powys	TOTAL
Anglican	2.25	2.30	2.82	3.06	3.30	1.90	0.18	15.81 (52.08%)
Buddhist	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10 ( 0.33%)
Catholic	0.25	0.80	0.62	0.61	0.00	0.12	0.00	2.40 (7.91%)
Hindu	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00 (0.00%)
Jewish	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25 (0.82%)
Moslem	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.42 (1.38%)
Non-conf. **.	3.25	1.90	1.86	1.92	1.50	0.30	0.65	11.38 (37.48%)
Other/No faith/ Humanist	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00 (0.00%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.25</b>	<b>5.10</b>	<b>5.30</b>	<b>5.59</b>	<b>4.97</b>	<b>2.32</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>30.36</b>

\* Includes Velindre

\*\* Christian N.C.- Includes Baptist, Methodist, Prebyterian, Independent, Free Church, Salvation Army and possibly others unrecorded.

**NOTES**

Christian denominations account for 97.47% of expenditure Moslem 1.38%. All the rest 1.15%

Only two trusts employ Moslem chaplains.

Only one trust employs a Buddhist chaplain.

Only one trust employs a Jewish chaplain.

No trust recorded expenditure on Hindu chaplains.

No trust recorded expenditure on Humanist chaplains.

Four trusts employ Christian chaplains exclusively – but may have contact lists.

## The Charitable Chaplaincy Campaign Petition - a personal statement

*This statement has not been seen by supporters of the campaign so it would be understandable if it were considered inadmissible in support of the petition.*

I believe that the state funding of religious care in NHS hospitals raises an important issue of political theory in respect of the rights of the citizen and the obligations of the state. These two matters are conflated, one might say confused, in current Welsh Government policy on hospital chaplaincy. My view is that they can and should be discussed separately.

I entirely support the proposition that the citizen, confined to hospital, should have the right to religious care. Such a right is strongly related to the right to receive visitors. The hospital patient is not (except in the most unusual cases) incarcerated by the state. The patient in hospital is receiving medical treatment of her/his own free will or if unable to or incapable of expressing permission then with the permission of the patient's next of kin.

[As an aside, I was so incarcerated in an isolation hospital when five years old (1945). I was suffering from the highly contagious disease scarlet fever. The authorities had a right in law to incarcerate me. I was allowed no visitors until I recovered. Such situations may occur today in the case of very rare highly infectious and virulent disease or severe mental illness.]

The political question which our campaign confronts is this:-

*The hospital patient has a **right** to visits from a religious carer\* but does the state have an **obligation** to provide this at a cost to the public purse?*

A couple of "thought experiments" may be used to test this issue.

(1) The hospital patient has a **right** to visits from family and friends – does the state have an **obligation** to meet the cost of the travel involved in such visits and to refund loss of income?

This may become a real rather than hypothetical question as specialist services (e.g. high dependency neonatal care) are concentrated in a very small number of locations. I think the Welsh Government would answer "no" to such a question.

(2) A couple of families living in a small town in rural Wales belong to a minority religious sect. These four adults and four children cannot afford to acquire or build a temple/ church/ mosque/ synagogue/ etc neither can they afford to pay the salary of a pujari or archaka/ priest/ imam/ rabbi/ etc. The families have a **right** to freedom of worship – does the state have an **obligation** to meet the cost of creating a place of worship and to pay the salary of the religious leader required so that these families may enjoy that right? Again I think the Welsh Government would answer "no" to such a question.

If the Welsh Government does decide that it has an obligation to fund religious care from the public purse it should be able provide a closely argued defence of that position. A defence which is at least as complete as the position our campaign presents in the *Principles* and *Proposal* documents.

This, I believe, **is an obligation** on a responsible, open, democratic government.

Alan Rogers

1<sup>st</sup> February 2013

\* The right to receive religious care should not diminish the rights of other patients to be treated and for hospital staff to work in an environment conducive to medical and nursing care. For example the burning of incense, ringing of bells or the chanting of religious invocations might be unacceptable.

## **P-04-458 Keep Further Education in the Public Sector**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure:

1. Further education, along with publicly funded assets, is retained within the public sector.
2. Colleges continue to be bound by the national agreements in FE, such as the national pay scales.
3. The introduction of an all-Wales contract for FE lecturers.
4. Welsh Ministers do not dissolve colleges and give colleges the ability to transfer the property, rights and liabilities to another body.

**Petition raised by:** UCU Crosskeys Branch

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 19 February 2013

**Number of signatures:** 246

## **P-04-458 Keep Further Education in the Public Sector**

### **Supporting Information**

1. The 2011 Welsh Labour National Assembly for Wales election manifesto declared “FE colleges as public assets which belong to their local communities and its community of staff and learners”. One commitment in the manifesto was to “ensure the parity of esteem for teachers and lecturers by maintaining the current link between their pay and conditions” as well as “introduce an all-Wales contract for FE lecturers”.
2. However, in July 2012, the Welsh Government tabled the long awaited White paper on its proposed bill for Further Education (FE) in Wales. The Welsh Government wants to introduce changes, through legislation, that will remove a number of restrictions and controls on colleges, giving greater autonomy to college Principals.
3. The Welsh Government currently places a duty on colleges to maintain the pay parity for FE lecturers with school teachers through the annual conditions of funding letter it send to FE colleges in Wales. Many college Principals opposed the introduction of an all-Wales pay-scale.
4. If the Welsh Government does not continue to exercise some level of control over the FE sector, colleges could disregard national agreements in FE which could include the national pay scales. Should colleges disregard the existing national pay scales and contracts, teaching pay scales could vary significantly across each college. The quality of teaching could therefore be affected since teachers would not want to work for those colleges offering lower pay scales.
5. The Welsh Government’s White paper notes that the power of Welsh Ministers’ to dissolve colleges will be replaced with the ability of a college to dissolve itself and transfer the property, rights and liabilities to another body. If colleges were allowed to transfer their properties, rights and liabilities (as outlined in the Welsh Government’s proposals), then colleges could dissolve themselves and transfer the assets to a private company limited by guarantee.

## P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts

### Petition wording

Following the disproportionate cut in the revenue funding of Hijinx Theatre we call upon the National Assembly of Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure sufficient funding is available so that the exemplary and ground breaking work undertaken by Hijinx is not threatened. This unique welsh company has spent 30 years developing opportunities for people with learning difficulties to be included at all levels and this cut will result in a serious reduction in their current provision.

**Petition raised by:** Mike Clark

**Petition first considered by Committee:** March 2011

**Number of signatures:** 1893

### Supporting information:

- Hijinx Theatre is a professional theatre company founded in 1981 touring high quality productions to small venues throughout Wales and beyond. A large part of our remit is working with learning disabled and general community groups.
- Hijinx endeavour to cast learning disabled actors alongside professionally trained actors whenever possible, creating an inclusive cast and, as there is currently no professional drama training for talented adults with learning disabilities in Wales, this is something we are addressing as a matter of urgency with plans in development to provide such training.
- Hijinx set up the **Odyssey Theatre** project in 1999 – funded by the National Lottery up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 [**not** part of the revenue grant]. Odyssey is a participatory community group for adults of all abilities who also collaborate with several local organizations Meadowbank Special School (a school for children with severe communication problems) and music students from Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
- **Odyssey was runner up in the National Lottery Awards, Best Arts Project category in 2009.**
- **Hijinx Outreach** offers workshops and projects to people within the learning disabled community
- **Hijinx Outreach** produces **Unity Festival** – a week-long mixed ability festival of performances, workshops and other activities from companies across the world in collaboration with the WMC and Mencap Cymru – (historically funded through additional fundraising and with revenue grant support for core staff wages and general office costs.)
- Hijinx’s revenue grant in 2010/11 is £234,448 + £29,990 lottery funding for Odyssey Theatre project – a figure which represents standstill funding for the last 5 years.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 the grant will be £160,000 to **include** Odyssey. This represents a cut of £74,448 + £29,990 = £104,438

- All ACW Quality Monitoring forms over the past three years have rated the company's work "good" or "excellent"
- ACW's decision flies in the face of the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities and is contrary to the aspirations of its own Investment Review.
- With the new grant Hijinx will not be able develop work with people with learning disabilities and it represents a radical reduction in the activity currently offered.
- There **will** be staff redundancies and a re-structuring of the company – and a marginalized community will suffer.
- Hijinx are unique and innovative – the only company in Wales who offer professional opportunities to adults with learning disabilities, both as performers and workshop assistants. Hijinx are committed to inclusive working and believe that everyone has something to offer regardless of ability.



**National Assembly for Wales**  
Communities, Equality and  
Local Government Committee

Task and Finish Group  
Inquiry into Participation in the  
Arts in Wales – Focus Group Report

May 2012



The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales and holds the Welsh Government to account.

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the National Assembly's website:  
**[www.assemblywales.org](http://www.assemblywales.org)**

Copies of this report can also be obtained in accessible formats including Braille, large print; audio or hard copy from:

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

Tel: 029 2089 8505  
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**National Assembly for Wales**  
Communities, Equality and  
Local Government Committee

Task and Finish Group  
Inquiry into Participation in the  
Arts in Wales – Focus Group Report

May 2012





# Communities, Equality and Local Government Task and Finish Group Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales

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This document outlines the contributions of the groups and participants that the Outreach Team has conducted focus groups with. The group's details were provided by arts networks BVSNW, Arts Council for Wales, Voluntary Arts Wales and Disability Arts Cymru.

## Summary

### **Groups names, area and audience type**

- RCT Community Arts - Cofio - South Wales - women (60 - 94 years old)
- RCT Community Arts - Reach the Heights - South Wales - young people (11 - 19 years old) classed as NEET or in danger of becoming NEET
- RCT Community Arts - Flippers - South Wales - young girls (10 - 13 years old)
- Ruthin Craft Centre - Threads in Time - North Wales - older men and women (60 - 70 years old)
- Galeri - Promometheus - North Wales - young adults with disabilities (16 - 25 years old)
- Galeri - Tonic - North Wales - mixture
- Celf o Gwmpas - Mid and West Wales - professionals, variety of ages and ability
- Arts Alive - Mid and West Wales - women from various backgrounds
- Arts 4 Wellbeing - Mid and West Wales - single mums, and people with mental health and learning issues

### **Total number of participants**

195

### **Focus groups with organisations**

- BVSNW
- Celf o Gwmpas
- Arts 4 Wellbeing

# Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales – Participant feedback

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## **Cofio - RCT Community Arts**

A reminisce dance theatre production involving older adults which RCT Community Arts embarked upon in May 2012. This project has involved older adults, whose ages span from 60 to 94 years, living in the communities of Maerdy, Ferndale, Tylorstown, Stanleytown, Ynyshir and Trebanog.

### **Date**

7 March 2012

### **Numbers**

A total of 12 participants took part, all of which are women between 60 and 94 years old.

### **Other comments**

Julie Evans, Artistic Director and Arts Practitioner for RCT Community Arts, wanted to emphasise the difference between the work of voluntary arts organisations and professional community arts organisations. The output and skill levels from professional community projects need investment to continue.

### **Quotes**

“Being involved in Cofio has had a lasting and profound effect - we have developed new skills significantly affecting confidence, physical interaction, intellectual, emotional, social and memory.” (Cofio member/RCTCA)

“The social aspect of Cofio and the creative interaction with others gives you a feeling of well-being and purpose – milestones and memories shared through telling our stories through dance and drama.” (Cofio member/RCTCA)

“I am very shy, but coming to Cofio each week gets me out of the house, meet and get to know people better, and also helps my mobility. The social interaction with others has helped me speak out – not so shy now.” (Cofio member/RCTCA)

Audience Responses to the performance:

“Excellent. I enjoyed every minute. What a grand bunch of ladies. So talented and showed lots of confidence. Keep on going ladies, I want to see the show again.” (Audience member)

“Cheered the hearts of the audience. And promotes sound intergenerational work. So glad I came!” (Age Cymru)

“This performance was amazing. The cast is wonderful! What a change from watching boring telly. 10 out of 10! Congrats!

“A fab performance. I am 14 and I enjoyed learning about the history and how they lived. It’s very funny, too!”



South Wales West Outreach Manager, Kevin Davies with participants from Cofio at the first focus group on Wednesday March 7, in Teifi House, Maerdy.

## **Threads in Time-Ruthin Craft Centre**

This group attend a series of conversational lectures that explores the fascinating story of a century of textile practise organised by Ruthin Craft Centre. Participants pay £5 for a 2 hour talk (Sundays 2-4), and a question and answer session. Participants were from all across north Wales. The audience were predominantly female (only 2 male in the group) and between the ages of 60 and 70.

### **Date**

11 March 2012

## **Numbers**

Over 50 participants on the day had a short 5mins introduction on the Committee, background and general terms of reference of this inquiry. 26 completed a questionnaire with some taking extra copies home to send to the freepost address, and 7 people gave extra comments that will be detailed.

## **Reach the Heights – RCT Community Arts**

Reach the Heights is a group of projects aimed at improving the opportunities available to children and young people in Wales. ‘First Footholds’ aims to strengthen the current position for young people aged 11-19 who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

The project is working on new ways to engage young people and to improve their chances and opportunities. They will develop and offer information, guidance and training, and create new learning opportunities and experiences for people across the age range.

‘Reach the Heights’ is partly financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and is part of the Convergence Programme for West Wales and the Valleys.

Up to £27 million of ESF money will be made available to support a range of different activities over the life of the projects. The rest will come mostly from the Welsh Government, and the Joint Sponsors, a group of voluntary and statutory organisations who are managing and providing the activities.

## **Date**

14 March 2012

## **Numbers**

7 boys and 4 girls took part in an informal discussion. They were all between the ages of 11-16. Some of the participants were new to the group, and had only joined in the last few weeks, whereas others had been coming for more than four years.



## **Flippers – RCT Community Arts**

Flippers are a dance class for young girls between the ages of 10 to 13. They meet once a week at the Park and Dare Theatre in Treorci. They have also performed at events such as the Community Dance Night at the Muni Arts Centre in Pontypridd.

### **Date**

14 March 2012

### **Numbers**

A total of 14 girls between 10 and 13 years old took part in a very informal chat about participation in the arts.



These are pictures taken from a Flippers performance at the Community Dance Night at the Muni Arts Centre in Pontypridd in November 2011.

## **Prometheus- Galeri, Caernarfon**

Prometheus is a dance group for young adults (16-25 age group) with disabilities from the Gwynedd area. The young people and carers practice weekly on a Wednesday afternoon between 6:30 and 9:15. Due to the funding coming to an end, the 3 year project will be finishing at the end of March 2012.

**Date**

14 March 2012

**Numbers**

3 young people and their carers took part in a session where we held an informal focus group and the carers also completed questionnaires (easy read version) on behalf of the young people. Initially the group had over 15 young people taking part on a regular basis but due to various reasons (discussed further below) the group now has only 4 regular members and their carers.

**Tonic- Galeri, Caernarfon**

Tonic is a group that meets once a month giving participants the opportunity to see a film. The group tend to be pensioners who pay £5 to watch a film followed by cup of tea and socialising opportunity.

**Date**

15 March 2012

**Numbers**

Over 50 people took part on this date but numbers are regularly between 80 and 150 and can reach up to 250.

The information collected below was gathered in informal conversations with participants following the film being viewed.

**Celf o Gwmpas, Powys**

Celf o Gwmpas runs a high quality visual, performing and environmental arts project across Powys. They run a programme of exciting and challenging projects that include filmmaking, animation, sculpture, painting, drama and music for people with learning disabilities and people who are often excluded from society.

**Date**

14 March 2012

**Numbers**

A total of 6 participants took part, all of which are professional artists of varying age, ability and medium. All of the artists in this session experience social exclusion due to mental health issues and learning disabilities.

## Other comments

The group felt strongly that they were in need of support to actually be able to attend sessions in the first place. They thought that many people were excluded from taking part because of problems in their everyday lives. Lack of funding within the various arts programmes meant that these issues could not be tackled. For example one lady said that when dealing with everyday life (trying to claim benefits, deal with officials) then art becomes a very low priority. Inability to participate in arts activities affects health and wellbeing, and contributes to a cycle of sickness, lack of confidence and community participation.

One participant was particularly interested in training to become an arts therapist and wanted to raise the issue that there are no courses available anywhere in Wales for this kind of further education. She would have to move to London to do this.

They also stated that there is little recognition in Wales of art as a profession. This means that professional artists are not funded and unable to start careers and thus able to engage members of the public in workshops etc.



Outreach Manager for Mid and West Wales, Cheri Kelly with participants from Celf o Gwmpas on March 14.

## **Arts 4 Wellbeing – Carmarthen**

Arts4wellbeing is a compact highly professional organization, delivering a wide range of accessible person centered arts activities and courses all over Wales, designed to inspire and motivate children, young people and adults of all ages. Skill building leading to engagement and motivation through the experience of success

They specialize in confidence building, working with identity, building connections with self, society and environment, looking at new pathways forward into training and work through an improved sense of wellbeing.

### Date

15 March 2012

### Numbers

Total of 36 people attended. It was a mixed group who had been referred via Tiny Tots family center including single mums, people with mental health issues and learning disabilities.

## **Arts Alive Wales, Powys – First Session**

This organization is based in Crickhowell and provides high quality arts activities for all people across Powys.

### **Date**

16 March 2012

### **Numbers**

The morning session was attended by 6 people who had been referred by Brecon District Contact Association. Participants have mental health illnesses of varying degrees. They were able to attend the session free of charge as the sessions were funded by Brecon District Contact Association and the Workers Educational Association.

## **Arts Alive Wales, Powys – Second Session**

### **Date**

16 March 2012

### **Numbers**

The afternoon session was attended by 5 ladies who attend a fee class. They have various levels of experience as artists, from professional artist and tutor, to

psychologist using art as therapy. All attended this class for their own personal creative time.

**Other comments**

The group wanted to stress that there are lots of really good things going on around the county but not enough sharing of good practice happens. For example why not look at groups that are successful in attracting participants and more importantly sustaining that activity over time.

Group name	Question 1 - What kind of arts activities do you currently participate in (for example, drama, music, art, writing, crafts, film-making, dancing)?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	Dancing and keep fit dance classes.
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	Variety of different forms of music, from playing guitar, harp, piano, drums, singing and rapping. They have also done dance, painting and crafts. Recently they performed at the LAC (looked after children) awards.
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	Dance, breakdancing, street dance (some of which is done in School). Some of the groups play instruments such as the violin and piano, and a number of them go to girl guides as well.
Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre	Mostly ceramic and textile arts. Some spoke about concerns other family members had that were involved in other forms -theatre and dance especially.
Promometheus - Galeri	This was the only dance group that the group knew of in their locality specifically for young people with learning difficulties. They felt that being a group that was specifically for this age group was an important factor in them attending.
Tonic - Galeri	The people I spoke to felt that there were a few activities concerning the arts that they could take part in, but most chose to only take part in this group.
Celf o Gwmpas	Visual arts including painting, drawing, photography, recycled art, sculpting.
Arts Alive - 1 <sup>st</sup> session	Pottery, art courses only. Not aware of any other courses that they could access other than ones within the Arts Alive centres which are not free.
Arts Alive - 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	Pottery, recreational drawing, painting, recycled crafting. Work as a tutor teaching crafts, painting and pottery. Work as a psychologist and like to use art as therapy within my sessions
Arts 4 Wellbeing	Most of the group did not take part in any other activities as they were not aware of any. They were aware of a youth theatre and some of their children went there.

Group name	Question 2 - Why do you participate in arts activities?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	<p>Company is a major factor, encouraging older people to come out of isolation, keep active physically and remain active members of the community. Having a safe place to come and socialise, make friends, build confidence, and simply having a fun place to go to is a big reason.</p>
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	<p>The main reason they like taking part in art activities is to socialise with new people, and talk to people they wouldn't otherwise be in contact with. They think it's fun, and it helps them keep out of trouble, because if they were not taking part in these group activities, they would be hanging out drinking on the streets with their friends. It gets them out of the house and it's a great way of making new friends as there are not a lot of other things to do in the area.</p> <p>Youth workers are available to talk to, and it's easy to discuss personal issues and problems they are experiencing with them.</p> <p>They also gain qualifications such as OCN which they think will help them get work in the future.</p> <p>The group saw arts participation as just another type of activity available to them, like sports teams, outdoor pursuits such as walking, rock climbing, horse-riding and go karting. The girls in the group especially liked the artistic activities, especially the musical element.</p> <p>Benefits from taking part in arts activities over other types of activities they have done in the past included building confidence and learning new things.</p>
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	<p>Like making new friends, and socialising. They said that the Flippers project is fun because they love to dance, they do a lot of different styles of dance, and they are encouraged to use their own ideas that can be used at performances.</p> <p>The Flippers group are also involved in assisting the younger age ranges in their classes. They help with the Tiny Steps group, who are a dance class for those between the ages of 4 to 6. They really enjoy that as they teach them how to dance, value it as good experience for the future, and they said that the group themselves like having people nearer their age range teaching them and showing them what to do.</p>

	<p>The majority of the group have been coming since they were 3 years old.</p>
<p>Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre</p>	<p>Generally to meet like-minded people and socialise. There was also a feeling that it was a form of education within the arts world, and that they could learn from the experts that come and give the lectures.</p> <p>As the majority of the audience were over the age of 60, many felt that participating in this group was a way of keeping their minds active and gave them something new to consider and learn about.</p>
<p>Promometheus - Galeri</p>	<p>The main reason given for attending these sessions was to socialise with people of a similar age and without being made to feel different or be side-lined. It gave them an opportunity to meet new people and make friends.</p> <p>Participating in Prometheus also gave the young people an opportunity to keep fit and keep active which benefitted their physical fitness.</p> <p>The carers I spoke to said that there weren't many opportunities for groups of young people with disabilities in this area, so they were limited in terms of choice and so part of the reason why they participated in this activity was due to a lack of options.</p>
<p>Tonic - Galeri</p>	<p>The main reason for taking part in this activity was to get out of the house on a regular basis, meet friends and have a catch-up. It was something that they looked forward to on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>Celf o Gwmpas</p>	<p>Being part of a group activity allows the participants to build their confidence. They can learn new skills and share experience. This group is part of a programme to learn how to promote themselves as artists, how to run workshops and how to attract their own funding and earning potential. Meeting as a group allows them to share ideas and explore new ways of working with the materials or to explore new avenues. By sharing their skills and helping others it has given them the confidence and opportunity to create a better life for themselves.</p> <p>The group stressed the need to be part of the group as they all live rurally and some of them have no other opportunity to meet people. Rural isolation is a big factor in causing them to sink into depression and creates lack of motivation. Art is therapeutic it gives them a voice and</p>



	allows them to express their feelings.
Arts Alive – 1 <sup>st</sup> session	Interesting, a sense of community, Wellbeing both mental and physical. “It helps me to overcome agoraphobia and forces me to get out of the house” Meet different people who they wouldn’t normally associate with. People with the same issues understand and “I can just be myself”, no judgments when they come here. Helps them with anger management, gives a structure to the day. A purpose to life. Develops artistic skills as well as social skills.
Arts Alive – 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	It allows freedom of expression. It gives a sense of personal wellbeing.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	A lot of people said that they took part in the group activity because it allowed them to “be themselves”. They were using it as a stepping-stone to further education. It gave them the skills to take control of their own lives. It empowered them and was an entry into work. They enjoy the chance to share experiences and learn that others have the same issues as them. This allowed them to meet new friends and likeminded people. It also challenged their prejudices and beliefs about others in the community and thus gave them the chance to build a community feeling. It gave them an opportunity to express their feelings and confront issues in a safe and welcoming environment. It helped them to build their confidence. The group is made up on a mixture of ages and it gave members the opportunity to meet older residents in the community. It allowed an escape from everyday life.

Group name	Question 3 a) - Has arts provision been withdrawn in your area because of budget cuts?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	They used to take part in computer classes and digital photography classes, which were free to attend, but both have closed in the past two years due to funding.
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	They were not aware of funding cuts, and how it may or may not have affected them.
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	Not aware of any, however one mentioned that she used to go to a street dance class in Ystrad Sports Centre once a week, which stopped 3 years ago. This may or may not have been because of funding.
Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre	<p>Generally there was not a lot of knowledge about the funding of projects with the majority claiming to have heard of 'budget cuts' in the arts but didn't feel that this had affected them that much.</p> <p>A lot felt that it was communities funding and volunteers that were involved in the majority of projects that they were aware/ participating in and that they were still active e.g. local choir/ dance groups. But felt that maybe some of the larger projects which involved more people were being affected by budgets cuts.</p>
Prometheus - Galeri	<p>Due to the funding of the Prometheus project finishing in a couple of weeks- the group felt that this had a direct impact on the young people that took part as they would no longer have this group to attend.</p> <p>The young people that I spoke to had nothing but praise for the Prometheus project and felt that there would be void in their social life after the project came to an end.</p>
Tonic - Galeri	The group weren't aware of any specific arts provision that had been withdrawn in their area, but thought that was down to their lack of knowledge not because that there were not any examples.
Celf o Gwmpas	They have noticed that there are fewer opportunities to attend projects that would have been available previously. There seems to be more on line promotion of courses rather than paper based newsletters or advertisements for courses that are being run. They have seen the Arts Council putting their money on "safe bets" rather than encouraging new artists who are unknown to them. Some funding had been withdrawn that was to be used to set up

	a central place for arts programmes to be delivered.
Arts Alive – 1 <sup>st</sup> session	Nothing available in Llandrindod Wells and assume this is because there is no funding.
Arts Alive – 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	As a professional it is difficult to attract funding for development of community arts. Particularly difficult for small organizations.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	They are aware that this group can only last for 10 weeks and that there is no more funding for the group to continue.

Group name	Question 3 b) - If so, how has this affected you?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	This has not affected them a great deal, as all of those who used to attend these classes now attend Cofio. However these courses are not available in the same area
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	It meant that she was not taking part in an arts class before she joined this class around a year ago, after she heard about it through a friend.
Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre	
Promometheus - Galeri	
Tonic - Galeri	
Celf o Gwmpas	Not every participant had access to the internet, either due to financial constraints or their location. This means that they do not have equal access to find out things that are going on and so miss out on opportunities. A couple of the artists had applied for funding and been turned down as there was not enough money available for their type of project/proposal. The central place project was abandoned as funding was withdrawn.
Arts Alive - 1 <sup>st</sup> session	Have to travel a long distance to get to anything, Rely on people to give me lifts or else I cannot attend the course.
Arts Alive - 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	Unable to sustain courses. Funding does not allow a freedom to deliver certain courses due to the restrictions from the criteria. It can be difficult to meet the criteria when wanting to do a course that is a hobby course but can enhance other skills.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	Lost the chance to volunteer on future groups and so build more skills leading to work. They will not be able to build experience. Some have said that once the course finishes they know that they will start to withdraw from the world again.

Group name	Question 4 - Do you think that people have enough opportunity to participate in arts activities in your area?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	<p>No - there are not many activities available for this age range in the area beside Cofio and local choirs.</p> <p>Some people do not have the time to take part in arts projects, and have less money to do so. Some older people do not like leaving the house, and the group saw isolation as being a big barrier, along with a feeling that physical activities are not for older people. Promotion is important to correct this.</p> <p>The group believe there is a responsibility to attract people to take part in the activity they would like to, and that choice is paramount to attract participants. They also make the connection between the options available, to participation, to the skills people can develop (i.e. digital photography and computing - skills that many older people may not possess).</p>
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	<p>When asked what they would do if they did not come here, the group suggested that there would not be anything other than a couple of local youth clubs available for them to attend. Youth clubs had been attended by many of the group, but none of them go there anymore because of the other people's "stupid" behaviour, and there are not enough arranged activities as there are at Reach the Heights. In their age range they could go twice a week but the majority of them don't go at all.</p> <p>One of the group suggested that there are lots of police stations in the area, but nowhere for young people to go to. She suggested that there wouldn't be a need for so many police stations if young people had things to do and places to go to keep them out of trouble.</p> <p>There are local football clubs, but they are extremely popular which means that the majority of young people cannot regularly take part, and there is a large waiting list to join the teams. One of the staff members volunteers as an under 16 football coach in the area, and he has 157 under 16s on his books.</p> <p>Some of the girls felt that girls' sports teams were too elitist (in and out of School), and were intimidating for girls who didn't think they were particularly good at the sport.</p>

<p>Flippers - RCT Community Arts</p>	<p>General feeling that there are some things to do in the area, like a choir, the Flippers class, and other types of participation like youth clubs and cheerleading.</p> <p>They were quite critical about local youth clubs, the majority of the group knew where they were, and what nights they can go, but choose not to attend because they don't arrange enough programmes and activities for them. One girl mentioned that it's just a bunch of people hanging around, unlike Flippers where they are told what to do; they have specific things to do when they come in and it is generally well structured. They like having that structured environment.</p>
<p>Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre</p>	<p>Feeling that there was a North- South divide in terms of provision was a theme that was echoed from many.</p> <p>Having said this many thought opportunities have improved in the last 20 years- many spoke of the time when they had to visit Liverpool or Manchester to participate in artistic activity as there was no opportunity in North Wales.</p>
<p>Promometheus - Galeri</p>	<p>The group did feel that there was a lack of relevant facilities for groups with severe disabilities to take part in the arts. This ranged from practical facilities such as toilets/ washing facilities to a shortage in qualified instructors and teachers.</p> <p>The group also felt that the numbers participating had dropped significantly mainly due to budget cuts in other areas. An example was given of a young person who used to attend the group regularly and needed the support of 2 carers, but due to budget cuts she now only had 1 carer and so could no longer attend.</p> <p>The group felt that there wasn't enough provision or opportunity for people with complex needs in North West Wales.</p> <p>Having said this the group also commented that they thought there was a general lack of knowledge of opportunities that were available and that groups and organisations should work together to promote</p>
<p>Tonic - Galeri</p>	<p>4. The groups were divided on this matter, with some saying that there was enough opportunity but didn't because they didn't want to take part.</p> <p>Others felt that there were lack opportunities specifically</p>

	<p>for the older generation. At the same time though they also acknowledged that it might just be a lack of awareness on their part.</p> <p>When questioned about where they would go to find out about these opportunities, most were unsure and thought they would probably rely on word of mouth or friends to inform them.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>Whilst there might be opportunities available, they are not always widely promoted (see the note re internet), which means that the opportunity to participate is not always there. The programmes are very fragmented and this creates problems in continuity. There is no central place to go to which can stop people from wanting to attend. People see arts centres as a barrier and as no programmes are run in “normal” every day places this means that people might not take part as they think it is not for them.</p> <p>The group felt strongly that more work needs to be put into delivering programmes in places that people can access them.</p>
Arts Alive – 1 <sup>st</sup> session	<p>No. As this is a rural community it is very difficult to get things up and running. Classes need a certain number of people to attend to make it viable. This means that not enough classes are run for smaller groups of interested people.</p>
Arts Alive – 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	<p>No. Travel costs and infrequent public transport excludes a lot of people from being able to go to arts activities in rural areas. Lots of people don’t meet the criteria for the courses that are being run. For example, a course may be targeted at young unemployed people leaving no funding available for the older members of the community. This is happening more and more. Lots of things are going on but they are not always advertised in the relevant areas to attract certain groups of people. Lots of the art courses are very short and don’t fit the timetables of families etc. Lots of arts activities are perceived as upper middle class and this puts people off joining in.</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>Not enough opportunities exist. There needs to be more art activities delivered in school. There are few activities for adults to be involved in, especially this group as they mostly have child care responsibilities that reduce their ability to take part.</p>

Group name	Question 5 - Would anything help you to participate more in the arts?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	<p>Access to transport - free bus passes are essential to allow them to get about. Removing that would cause major issues and cause many older people to be isolated.</p> <p>People need a range of choices to get them interested in the first place. This group is well established and the members are close friends, but for those who don't currently partake in activities, especially arts activities, they need the choice so that they are encouraged to participate because of their enjoyment of a particular form of art, which will then lead to other benefits as mentioned previously.</p> <p>Some arts classes are seen as being too professional, and are too focused on the end result (certificate/GCSE/Alevel) than the enjoyment of it.</p>
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	<p>More choice. At the moment they do whatever is available, and if more things were available then they would participate more. The girls emphasised that they don't do enough physical activity, so dance classes and so on are seen as a good way of keeping fit and having fun. They would like to do more contemporary things like photography, graffiti art and parkour/free running which is only available in Cardiff.</p> <p>Again, the group saw participation in the arts very much the same as they do any other type of activity, and they would like more choice in general in their local area, such as sports teams, swimming and other physical activities.</p>
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	<p>More choice in general would be welcomed but nothing was particularly highlighted.</p>
Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre	<p>More publicity about event that were happening seemed to be something that they agreed would get more participating and also get new audiences interested and involved.</p> <p>Rural transport schemes were also seen as something which had been trialled in few areas which would offer an</p>



	opportunity for people to participate more.
Prometheus - Galeri	The group they found this question quite difficult- however they did express that having more activities specifically for 16-25 year olds with learning disabilities would make them want to get involved in more art activities. They didn't want to be in the same group as younger children or older adults.
Tonic - Galeri	Transport was brought up by the group as being an important factor to them participating more in the arts with many relying on friends to pick them up for these activities. Public transport was seen to be an option but often doesn't take them close enough to the venue and so this stops them from taking part.
Celf o Gwmpas	Access to transport – Powys is a very big county and lots of programmes are spread over a very rural area. Buses are infrequent. Often the timetables of the buses do not marry up with the timetables of classes. This means that they may be able to get to a class but not get home and therefore they can't attend. Trains are infrequent and do not connect to the right towns or timetables of classes.
Arts Alive – 1 <sup>st</sup> session	If there were activities going on during the day rather than the evenings. If there was help in childcare for people who could only attend in the evenings. If the activities were inclusive for the whole family. If courses were run in places where I might already be for example, after school clubs.
Arts Alive – 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	If local buildings were shared such as schools or colleges and their facilities were made available such as dark rooms, studios, pottery studios. If there were reasonably priced tester courses – don't want to pay out a lot of money for a 10 week course and then find it's not for them and can't get the money back. If they could move money from one course to another if they find it's not the right one for them. If things were inclusive of the whole family. Accreditations, certificates that would be useful in everyday life.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	More hours, longer courses (this is only 10 weeks), follow on courses, different times, linked to family centre giving crèche facilities. If they were delivered in an area where they already meet.

Group name	Question 6 - What might stop you from taking part in arts activities (for example, accessibility)?
Cofio - RCT Community Arts	Lack of access to public transport. Facilities to hold sessions; they mentioned that Communities First currently pay a portion of rent at Teify House in Maerdy, which is where they hold their sessions. If they decided to stop paying rent, or if the building was shut for any other reason, there would be no other facilities in the area making it impossible to participate.
Reach the Heights - RCT Community Arts	Transport is an issue, and being of the age that the group are, there are issues around parents letting them travel when it's dark, and being out after school.
Flippers - RCT Community Arts	No access issues were mentioned, transport was not specified as an issue. Many of the group had arrangements with the others family members.
Threads in Time - Ruthin Craft Centre	Cost was definitely the greatest barrier the group saw as possibly stopping any participation in the future- transport cost, car parking costs, attendance costs.
Promometheus - Galeri	<p>Transport was seen to be one of the main barriers to them taking part as all members of the group relied on someone to bring them to the activity, be that a family member or a designated carer. Public transport was not seen as being a viable option for this group because of their needs.</p> <p>Another barrier to them attending would be if their carers did not want/ or could not attend the activity as the young people could not attend alone.</p>
Tonic - Galeri	
Celf o Gwmpas	Lack of access to public transport and the cost of public transport. Lack of confidence to go to a formal class. Lack of internet access (most things are published on line now) lack of moral support to make that first meeting. Lack of networking. Without personal networking some people are unaware of what is available. Lack of financial support to run workshops when the numbers are too small.
Arts Alive - 1 <sup>st</sup> session	Additional childcare costs, lack of confidence, travel costs
Arts Alive - 2 <sup>nd</sup> session	Travel costs, travel distances, additional costs to join. Lack of confidence that the course will lead onto other things.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	Public transport - lack of buses, too expensive, timetables don't marry up with times for courses. Courses are too far

	away (lots of rural communities with no facilities). Lack of support from family.
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# Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales – Organisation feedback

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## **BVSNW, Cardiff**

The Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales is an umbrella organisation that actively represents supports and promotes the interests of the BME communities and the BME voluntary sector in Wales.

### **Date**

16 March 2012

### **Numbers**

BVSNW had invited a cross section of organisations and participants to attend the session. A total of 7 people attended the session, all of which represent art groups and organisations. These included the Romani Cultured Arts Company, Respect, Sound Progression, India Dance Wales, BVSNW and Filipino Community

## **Celf o Gwmpas, Powys**

### **Date**

16 March 2012

## **Arts 4 Wellbeing – Carmarthen**

### **Date**

15 March 2012

<b>Group name</b>	<b>Question 1 - Which groups of people participate in your organisation's arts activities</b>
BVSNW	Ethnic minorities including the Filipino community, Gypsy Roman travellers, schools, local communities. A wide variety of ages, and diverse cultural background.
Celf o Gwmpas	Adults and young people with learning disabilities all across Powys. Special schools and units, artists with learning difficulties and mental health issues.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	A wide range of people. Mostly lower end of the social scale, economically inactive groups including, disaffected youths, NEETS, pupil referral units, probation services, single mums, mental health clients, substance misusers, and social services, elderly.

<b>Group name</b>	<b>Question 2 a) - Do you think that budget changes have affected participation in the arts, either positively or negatively?</b>
BVSNW	<p>BVSNW have received a slight increase in funding this year, but relative to previous cuts they are operating on a lot less money they had in prior years. They will be able to represent people from across Wales much better due to this increase. Tight budgets previously meant they were very Cardiff focused.</p> <p>The changes in budgets this year has been a positive for BVSNW.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>Not experienced cuts personally. They are aware of a group that are unable to bring a group along to classes any more due to budget cuts in other areas (transport costs to bring along to class). This is anecdotal and they find that most people that attend their programmes are supported by family and so are still able to attend.</p> <p>They have had increasing amounts of funding from the lottery funding. They have benefitted from a new fund from the Arts Council known as Creative Steps specifically aimed at addressing gaps in the provision for the marginalised groups.</p> <p>They are well supported by Powys County Council too. They are aware of a local venue that is threatened by cuts and thus reduces the possibility of their participants showcasing their work.</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>Yes. There is little funding available now. High arts are attracting funding very easily, whereas arts at ground level are finding it difficult to obtain funding for various reasons. These being: unable to spend the time writing funding bids, and difficulty in making the project fit the funding stream, lack of experience in applying for funding.</p>

Group name	Question 2 b) – Do you think that certain groups of people have been affected more than others?
BVSNW	<p>Everyone appreciated that times are tight, and money is not widely available. There was a strong feeling amongst the group that underrepresented groups such as those that BVSNW represent, have been affected from the very beginning, and that these funding changes don't address these issues.</p> <p>One of the group mentioned that they have lost their office, reduced staff and the amount of activities, and are turning down requests for performances due to insufficient funding which hasn't been addressed over the years. Many of them felt that the salaries of senior staff at the Arts Council and other large arts organizations in Wales should be reduced to contribute to the funding deficit.</p> <p>The effect on other organizations outside of those that BVSNW represents also has an effect on ethnic minority groups, as they are sometimes commissioned to perform by other larger groups. They are expected to perform for minimal sums when comparing to other groups from more mainstream ethnic backgrounds. A difficult decision has to be made on a regular basis: do they perform at cheaper rates/free to increase exposure and awareness or do they refuse to perform under the standard rate. Equity has suggested that they should refuse to perform under the set rate.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	
Arts 4 Wellbeing	Youth clubs. The organization had been asked to put on a specific project but they were unable to obtain the funding. The project would have built up a piece of work that would affect the whole of the community in the longer term.

Group name	Question 3 – Are there gaps in provision for people to participate in arts activities, either demographically or geographically?
BVSNW	<p>Lots of people in the sector are reliant on the BVSNW's assistance, so these funding changes should enable them to better represent people in Mid, and North Wales.</p> <p>One of the group mentioned that they get requests from schools in North Wales to perform for them, but they are not always able to do so because of the extra costs for travel and so on, which means that they don't perform there as much as they do in the South. This means that promoting a message of diversity and raising awareness of different cultures isn't effectively done in all parts of the country.</p>

	<p>It was strongly argued that provision is not as widely available for ethnic minorities, as it is in other areas, and equality is too much of a tick box operation.</p> <p>The group stated that there is inequality in funding applications. Big organizations that the Arts Council have prioritized in the funding review have the ability to apply for large pots of funding, as well as smaller funding streams that smaller groups and organizations (like those in this focus group) compete for. They also said that big organizations with bigger budgets employ consultants to assist them in writing applications for funding, which inevitably leads to a higher success rate. Smaller organizations don't have the ability to do so and therefore lose out.</p> <p>Due to the limited resources they work from they don't have the resource to promote what they will be doing in the future, or promote past success, which could lead to an increase of participants.</p> <p>Local authorities can assist art provision greatly by making empty spaces and schools available at cheaper rates for these groups.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	They have no views on this. They get out and about as much as they can. They are not aware of gaps. There are lots of advocacy based organisations.
Arts 4 Wellbeing	There is a lot of funding being put into NEET groups. This creates an overlap and means that funding isn't available for other groups such as elders, single mums (over 25), and health groups. Community based festivals, development of arts projects that don't meet NEET criteria.

Group name	Question 4 – Are there enough funding sources available other than the Arts Council for Wales? Are alternative funding sources accessible?
BVSNW	<p>Many within the group didn't know. They were not sure what funding streams are available, how to access it and who to contact outside of the Arts Council, and felt that the information is not widely available.</p> <p>Others suggested that it was dependent on the art form. There are limited funding sources for dance, but if it involved children there are several different options. One of the group mentioned that she was overwhelmed looking for arts funding online, as there are so many possibilities. However once she tried certain possibilities, it became very apparent that only a tiny proportion was potentially applicable. It spent a lot of time and effort to do so, which smaller groups do not have.</p> <p>There is also a lack of clarity over what the person reading the application, that ultimately makes the decision is looking for. In most cases the individual working for a group representing ethnic minorities may not have the expertise to complete forms effectively, and they don't know what to concentrate on which will make their application more effective. This is not helped by larger organizations (that may have a specialist resource, or employ consultants to write applications competing for the same pot of money. Strong feeling that this is elitist.</p> <p>There is a lack of guidance available for individuals and group for alternative funding sources if they are turned away from the Arts Council.</p> <p>BVSNW has a role to play in assisting these groups with funding allocation.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>No. They are unable to access European Social Funding due to being in the wrong objective. Powys is perceived to be too rich. There are no communities' first areas and so no funding is attracted. They only have access to the Arts Council and Powys County Council. They have accessed some lottery funding.</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>Only aware of local government and limited charities and trusts.</p>



Group name	Question 5 – What role does the voluntary arts sector play in promoting participation in the arts in Wales and how can this be supported?
BVSNW	<p>Huge – especially for this sector. Large arts organizations and the Arts Council can't connect with local communities and ethnic minorities because they don't have the skills, the knowledge or the rapport with the audience. This was argued as a big problem, and many of the people around the table felt that the BVSNW themselves should be an Arts Council department, if they are serious in engaging with underrepresented ethnic groups.</p> <p>These groups need a better understanding of what the priorities of those who distribute funding is, in order for them to know how to prioritize their work, and receive project funding.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>Voluntary arts are community based. Networking with other organisations is easy and so there is less duplication of work going on in the voluntary sector. There is a database Arts Engine, managed by Powys Council, which they can access but have to pay for. A centralised 'What's On' database would help them to ensure that their programmes are promoted and there is no crossover. Local Council provide free translation for their publicity and documents. This is invaluable. Memberships to organisations can be expensive but is vital. However due to the amount of funding they have available they have to be selective as to which groups they join.</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>Carmarthen and Ceredigion are very rural communities and people in these communities are isolated, scared and vulnerable. These kinds of activities can help people to connect with their communities, meet new people and build up community values through shared experiences. They can help to build peoples skills as they volunteer to help on the projects.</p>

Group name	Question 6 – Is the strategic relationship between the Welsh Government and the bodies that distribute arts funding effective in increasing participation?
BVSNW	<p>No, the group felt that the WG should be more hands on, and that the Arts Council should be more heavily scrutinized. More dialogue is needed with participants and organizations when their policies, aims and objectives are set, and there should be more of an opportunity to challenge them.</p> <p>They felt that their contributions do not carry much weight as they are a minority group and they cannot affect policy as much as larger arts organizations can. There appears to be a big disconnect between the aims and objectives of the Arts Council and these ethnic organizations.</p> <p>There were a lot of comments about the ability of ACW officers. Inconsistency in standard of their support, and the majority of reports they write were positive, but then went on to say that some examples didn't meet the objectives of the funding. Many of the group felt they reached this conclusion because of a lack of understanding and knowledge, and that the ACW should have other systems in place such as obtaining official feedback from participants and the audience. Also certain instances where ACW officers have withheld funding which they had initially agreed up to two weeks prior to an event taking place which effects the success of the project. Differences in attitude, opinion and understanding of the officer towards the work of ethnic art groups plays a major role, possibly down to differences in interpretation of policies.</p> <p>Many of the group mentioned that the Arts Councils systems were out-dated, and the statistics on ethnic participation misleading. They said that presenting ethnic participation and engagement levels in percentages hides the actual numbers, which would reflect more poorly on the Arts Council for Wales. What is classed as ethnic art? Is a black person doing ballet considered ethnic art, or is a white person performing an Indian dance considered ethnic art?</p> <p>The funding process is seen as extremely complicated and many of them felt that the ACW don't fund some ethnic arts projects because they are viewed as any other arts group, which would set a precedent for others to claim they should also receive funding. They felt this was wrong as underrepresented groups should have different funding requirements.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>Yes, Arts Council of Wales works well. As does the lottery funding. They are not clear on how these organisations work with the Government but they think that it seems to be working</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>In some areas it has worked as the bodies are now accountable and have to make money available. Not sure that Welsh Government is aware of how the money should be spent when setting criteria. For example there needs to be more money put into schools, youth orchestras, and arts for art's sake.</p>

Group name	Question 7 – All public bodies in Wales will have published a strategic equality plan by April 2012. Do you think that these new public sector equality duties will help to increase participation in the arts among under-represented groups in Wales?
BVSNW	<p>Many of the group didn't know what it entailed. BVSNW were involved in the consultation. Lots of scepticism around more policies, more words on paper. They felt that policies have existed for years, but the reality is very different when you see their staff (age, gender, and ethnicity) and how they promote and target their activities.</p> <p>They felt that the dynamics of big arts organizations need to change and that equality doesn't happen on paper. They emphasized the importance of equal gender and ethnic representation being employed within organizations, and how that links with successful implementation of their policies.</p> <p>Policies should be simplified to ensure they are interpreted appropriately and consistently, so that individuals and groups can use them and refer to them accordingly, especially when applying for project funding.</p> <p>Many artists are forced across to England due to lack of opportunities for underrepresented groups in Wales.</p>
Celf o Gwmpas	<p>Yes, once the strategic plans are in place it will help fundraisers to set up projects with the strategic aims in mind. This will help them when applying for funds as they can tailor their projects to the strategic aims.</p>
Arts 4 Wellbeing	<p>No. Having to tender based solely on equality plans can create issues with obtaining funding. It can reduce the ability for voluntary organizations and small companies and individuals to apply for funding as the projects that they deliver are whole person based rather than skill sets targeted. They have little time to research the plans in order to put together a bid based on the criteria.</p>

**National Assembly for Wales**  
Communities, Equality and  
Local Government Committee

## Report by the Task and Finish Group on Participation in the Arts

January 2013



Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

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**National Assembly for Wales**  
Communities, Equality and  
Local Government Committee

**Report by the Task and Finish Group  
on Participation in the Arts**

January 2013



Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales

### **Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee**

The Committee was established on 22 June 2011 with a remit to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising expenditure, administration and policy matters encompassing: Wales's culture; languages; communities and heritage, including sport and the arts; local government in Wales, including all housing matters; and equality of opportunity for all.

### **Task and Finish Group**

The Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee established a task and finish group of three Members to consider and report on Participation in the Arts. The group members were Ann Jones (Chair), Rhodri Glyn Thomas and Joyce Watson.

### **Current Committee membership**



**Ann Jones (Chair)**

Welsh Labour  
Vale of Clwyd



**Joyce Watson**

Welsh Labour  
Mid and West Wales



**Rhodri Glyn Thomas**

Plaid Cymru  
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr

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## Recommendations

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**Recommendation 1.** The Welsh Government should put in place a participation action plan, to sit alongside its accessibility action plan, with the purpose of increasing participation levels across Wales. (Page 25)

**Recommendation 2.** The action plan should include measures to monitor participation levels across the arts, and actions to identify inequality of provision (e.g. due to geographic, economic or social reasons). (Page 25)

**Recommendation 3.** In addition to accessibility and equality, the Welsh Government's annual remit letter should include an emphasis on increasing participation levels. (Page 25)

**Recommendation 4.** The action plan should include measures to ensure co-ordination across government departments and joint working by partners, including local government and the voluntary sector. (Page 26)

**Recommendation 5.** The Arts Council of Wales should keep under review its funding policies, to ensure that they are delivering excellence, while increasing participation levels. (Page 34)

**Recommendation 6.** The Arts Council of Wales should ensure that organisations are able to access information on alternative sources of funding. This should be in the form of training, if necessary. (Page 34)

**Recommendation 7.** The Arts Council of Wales should ensure that it uses its relationships with networks to ensure that information reaches relevant organisations. (Page 35)

**Recommendation 8.** The Arts Council of Wales should put in place a strategy to increase levels of funding from business. (Page 35)

# 1. Introduction

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1. The arts sector in Wales is wide and varied. Some arts activities are provided by large, professional networks and others are run by volunteers. Funding sources include the Arts Council of Wales (who also distribute Lottery funding), local authorities and other sources such as charitable trusts and private businesses.

2. The equality of opportunity to participate in arts activities is highlighted by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) article 27(1), which states that:

“Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, [and] to enjoy the arts [..]”

3. The UN Convention on the Rights on People with Disabilities, article 30 also states:

“States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.”

4. In Wales, these values are underpinned by strategies such as the Arts Council of Wales’s *Participation Strategy (2009-13)*, the Welsh Government’s *Programme for Government* and public authorities’ strategic equality plans.

## ***Accessibility inquiry***

5. In the third Assembly, the former Communities and Culture Committee undertook a lengthy inquiry into the accessibility of arts and cultural activities in Wales, which reported in February 2011.<sup>1</sup>

6. In January 2012, the Minister provided an update on the progress of the report’s recommendations to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Assembly for Wales Communities and Culture Committee-[The accessibility of arts and cultural activities in Wales](#), February 2011

<sup>2</sup> [Update from the Welsh Government on the Communities and Culture Committee Report into the Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities in Wales](#), 18 January 2012

## ***Petitions***

7. A number of petitions were received by the Assembly's Petitions Committee following the Arts Council of Wales's Investment Review expressing concern at the impact of decisions that had been taken following that review.<sup>3</sup>

## ***Terms of reference***

8. The Committee agreed to the following terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group:

The Committee will:

- assess the impact of budget cuts on participation in the arts in Wales, specifically whether certain groups of people have been affected more than others;
- identify gaps in provision for participation in the arts, both demographically and geographically;
- explore the role of the voluntary arts sector in arts participation and scope alternative funding sources;
- evaluate the policy framework between the Welsh Government and the bodies that distribute arts funding; and
- look at whether arts organisations in Wales are equipped to deliver the equality objectives of their funders.

## ***Method***

9. As the focus of this inquiry is on participation in the arts, the Committee thought it was important to gather the views of individuals as well as organisations. The call for evidence reflected this, and consultation questions were made available in various formats.

10. The Assembly's Outreach Team organised a number of workshops across Wales that were hosted by local arts organisations. These were used to gather the views of individuals that might not have otherwise responded to the inquiry. A report on these evidence gathering activities is available on the Committee's website.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> P-04-0317 - Hijinx funding for the arts; [P-03-308 - Save Gwent Theatre](#); [P-03-311 Spectacle Theatre](#); [P-03-314 - Save Theatr Powys and Mid Powys Youth Theatre](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Focus Group Report](#)

11. Two oral evidence sessions were held on 15 and 29 March, where representatives from various organisations including the Arts Council of Wales, Hijinx Theatre, Disability Arts Cymru and Voluntary Arts Wales, among others, gave evidence.

## 2. Barriers to participation

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### Introduction

12. This chapter sets out the feedback we received from witnesses about what they perceive to be barriers to participation. In Chapters 3 and 4 we will set out some of the ways that we believe these concerns could be addressed.

### Transport and rural areas

13. Over thirty respondents highlighted transport and rurality as major barriers to participation in the arts. People noted that the rising cost of fuel, reductions in local transport services and the closures of local arts organisations were all factors in their decision whether or not to take part in activities. A number of respondents<sup>5</sup> noted the particular lack of public transport in rural areas and in the evening.

14. An individual respondent highlighted a particular case of where transport is a barrier to participation in north Wales:

“[...] without Theatr Harlech people in Ardudwy have to drive for over an hour each way to attend similar/ larger scale arts events on the North Wales coast in Caernarfon, Bangor and Llandudno.

“There is no public transport available for such journeys in the evenings. Such distances, especially in the winter months, severely restrict the opportunities and increase the cost of participating in live arts for local people.”

15. Hijinx noted particular issues around transport for people with a learning disability:

“Adults with learning disabilities who live in supported housing and are not able to travel by bus are unable to access either performances or participatory activities. Performances in mainstream venues are often too expensive for them. Vulnerable adults and older people are often anxious about travelling after dark.”<sup>6</sup>

16. Swansea Metropolitan University and Caerphilly County Borough Council also highlighted the issue of the cost of transport. In a focus group session, the Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales (BVSNW) stated that they get

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<sup>5</sup> Voluntary Arts Wales - Arts 10

<sup>6</sup> Hijinx Theatre - Arts 04

requests from schools in north Wales to perform for them, but they are not always able to do so because of the extra costs for travel, which means that they do not perform there as much as they do in the south. This was echoed by the Wrexham Youth Justice Service, which commented on the issue of encouraging art professionals to travel to North Wales.

### **Gaps in provision**

17. A number of gaps in provision were identified. These included gaps for:

- disabled people (highlighted by Disability Arts Cymru, Touch Trust and Prometheus);
- older people (highlighted by Age Cymru, Harlech and Ardudwy Music Society and Tonic);
- young people (highlighted by Oriel Myrddin Gallery and Cwmni'r Frân Wen); and
- people living in mid and west Wales (highlighted by ArtWorks Cymru, Mid Wales Opera and Power of the Flame).

18. Three respondents stated that there were gaps in the provision of traditional art forms.<sup>7</sup>

19. Disability Arts Cymru expressed concern about the indirect ways that disabled people may be affected by budget reductions:

“[...] when money is tight, or perceived to be tight, arts organisations and events organisers will make cuts to accessibility. Perhaps they will go for a cheaper venue where the access is not so good for disabled people, or worry less about whether there is enough parking, or access to the stage, or whether they can get sign language interpreters, or whatever the access issue is.”<sup>8</sup>

20. BVSNW represents artists from BME backgrounds, and they remarked that their artists have to work for a low rate in order to perform:

“[organisations] have an issue where they say they are expected to perform for minimal sums when comparing to other groups from more mainstream ethnic backgrounds.

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<sup>7</sup> BVSNW focus group

<sup>8</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

“A difficult decision has to be made on a regular basis: do they perform at cheaper rates/free to increase exposure and awareness or do they refuse to perform under the standard rate. Equity has suggested that they should refuse to perform under the set rate.”<sup>9</sup>

21. However, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) noted that BME groups and Welsh speakers often engage more in the arts, proportionately.<sup>10</sup>

22. The ACW highlighted the work that they have been undertaking, and plan to undertake, in order to target arts provision at specific groups of people and address gaps in provision. They stated that:

“[...] our targeted development programmes are usually targeted at areas, groups, communities, or communities of artists that cannot access the more general funding, such as schemes funding, or are not part of our revenue portfolio. [...]

“Creative Steps looks to target artists who might, for example, come under the protected characteristics in the new Equality Act 2010.

“It is a very different way of working. It is about identifying those people, inviting them to come and have conversations with us, and then looking at the work that they have been doing, what their development needs might be, what kind of projects they might wish to develop, and working much more closely with them to look at what kind of funding might be appropriate.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Deprived communities and the cost of participation**

23. Eight individuals that responded to the consultation highlighted the cost of activities as another major barrier to participation. It was suggested by some respondents that people living in deprived communities were more likely to be affected by budget reductions as they are more likely to depend on subsidised provision.

24. Four organisations, including Cyster, noted that the changes to Communities First areas would also affect participation among people in deprived communities.

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<sup>9</sup> BVSNW Focus Group

<sup>10</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid



25. Dawns I Bawb stated that:

“There is less funding available within Communities First so groups/ organisations which used to buy our services cannot do so any longer. As a consequence, it has become more difficult to reach people in these areas.”<sup>12</sup>

26. Harlech and Ardudwy Music Society noted that they have had to increase the fees for their courses because of reductions in funding, and Small World Theatre had noticed a marked decrease in attendees from deprived communities.

27. Several individuals noted that concessionary prices would encourage them to participate more. One individual stated that:

“[...] most arts activities are run by private companies, who are able to charge what they like, which obviously limits the attendance to people who are able to afford it, rather than be subsidised which would make them accessible to all.”

28. Another individual said that:

“Although I am a Senior Citizen, I pay full fees for this course [...]It’s quite a struggle to find the full fees.”

29. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council noted that more people are seeking financial assistance to attend arts activities:

“While we have not seen a significant decrease in numbers of participants, we are experiencing people needing to seek financial assistance to attend. We have considered offering our programmes for free however we feel that this devalues a service that is already being subsidised from the core budget and that people still need to pay to appreciate the high quality of service on offer.”

## **Education**

30. The cuts to the Arts Council’s Theatre in Education (TIE) scheme were noted by Gwent Theatre and Spectacle Theatre. Gwent Theatre stated that:

“The cut in funding for Theatre in Education has been catastrophic. In the region of 20,000 young people have been denied access to TIE

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<sup>12</sup> Community Dance for Conwy, Gwynedd and Ynys Môn - Arts 28

services in The Greater Gwent area alone. Similarly there is now no provision for TIE in either Rhondda Cynon Taf or Powys.”

31. On this issue, Spectacle Theatre remarked that:

“A generation of young people will be disenfranchised from their entitlement to access the arts in their community.”

32. Cyster noted that reductions in school budgets had also affected arts participation in an indirect way:

“Cuts to schools budgets have also had a massive effect already in terms of work in education. The cost of transport means we have run all our workshops within schools so that children do not need to pay to travel to rehearsals.”

33. Arts 4 Wellbeing<sup>13</sup> thought that schools should offer more opportunities for participation, and Rhondda Cynon Taff Community Arts commented that they thought “education system does not value the arts enough.”

### **Facilities and venues**

34. The issue of cuts to capital funding was highlighted as an important issue by organisations. Ty Cerdd Music Centre commented that new instruments are expensive, and buildings used for rehearsals are no longer fit for purpose. Some local authorities had recognised these issues, for example Carmarthenshire County Borough Council noted that venue sustainability is their priority, but this is having an effect on the groups of people that participate:

“While we are now having to prioritise venue sustainability as being the most effective way of providing access to the arts for most, this is beginning to affect the scope of being able to provide certain targeted interventions.”<sup>14</sup>

35. In a focus group session, Arts Alive remarked that schools and colleges should make their buildings and facilities (such as dark rooms and pottery studios) more available to arts groups.

36. Head for Arts also commented on the importance of schools as venues, saying that the lack of a school in north Torfaen makes finding a venue very

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<sup>13</sup> Arts 4 Wellbeing focus group

<sup>14</sup> Carmarthenshire County Council - Arts 02

difficult. The WLGA noted that local authorities could support arts organisations by making venues available and suspending business rates.<sup>15</sup>

### **Quality and professionalism**

37. The Arts Council's priority of 'excellence' in the arts led respondents to discuss issues around professionalism and quality.

38. Caerphilly County Borough Council stated that they have seen a rise in the number of professional artists seeking support, and an individual respondent said that there were less commissions for independent artists. Harlech and Ardudwy Music Society noted that after losing ACW funding they have had to employ cheaper and fewer professional musicians to compensate.

39. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council stated that they have found it increasingly difficult to fund professional arts practitioners who will travel to the Valleys area, which has led to a gap in the provision of quality, affordable arts activities in this area. They also stated that:

“Other issues relating to quality are those around local groups and organisations not valuing the professional arts practice of community arts practitioners and opting instead to 'train' people in a weekend to be a dance practitioner or using someone who can play the guitar to teach a group to do so - these devalue the work being done by professionals and make it increasingly difficult to make the case for the proper payment of artists in communities as well as potentially jeopardising people's experience of the arts.”

### **Conclusions**

40. The Committee recognises that the arts sector has been subject to significant pressures arising from the wider economic situation. We also recognise that the Arts Council of Wales has had to make some very difficult decisions relating to funding. In some cases, this has meant that organisations have had funding removed and it is difficult to see how they might carry on.

41. It is clear from the evidence that the arts sector is resilient, creative and responsive to change. However, the full impact of the public funding crisis

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<sup>15</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

has not been seen as yet, and this is something that needs to be kept under review.

42. In Chapters 3 and 4, we will set out the ways we feel that these issues can be addressed

### 3. Strategic Direction

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43. In this chapter, we address the strategic issues that can address the issues outlined in the previous chapter.

44. The Welsh Government's *Programme for Government* includes a number of actions to improve accessibility and increase levels of participation in the arts. These actions have an overall aim to widen access to culture, heritage and sport, and encouraging greater participation, particularly by targeting low income families and children to access services. The individual actions are to:

- require the Arts Council Wales to continue improving access and reducing the barriers to participation and appreciation of the arts;
- require the Arts Council Wales to make arts for young people a central plank of its future action plan in an agreed Compact with the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills;
- require the Arts Council Wales to undertake a strategic developmental and support role for arts organisations in Wales.

45. The ACW has developed a [\*Participation Strategy \(2009-13\)\*](#), which focuses on three priorities:

- increasing opportunities for people to actively participate in the arts;
- raising the quality of Participatory Arts practice;
- helping the Participatory Arts in Wales to become more durable and sustainable.

46. The strategy states:

“In March 2008 we published Arts and Public Engagement a report on the results of research into the barriers that prevent people from taking part in the arts. The main reasons centred around lack of public transport, community safety, cost and lack of interest.

“We now need to find ways of addressing these, working through the organisations we fund and in partnership with other key agencies, such as Local Authorities and Communities First.”

## Annual remit letter and accountability

47. Both organisations and individuals seemed to have a general lack of awareness about the relationship between the Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales, even if their organisation was funded by the ACW.

48. Harlech and Ardudwy Music Society remarked on the accountability of the Minister for Heritage, noting that individual funding decisions by ACW are not the responsibility of the Welsh Government, which they thought was “disgraceful”.

49. However, Mid Wales Opera supported the Minister’s decision to not comment on individual cases:

“We believe that ACW is doing an excellent job and that the way in which the Welsh Government consistently refused during the Funding Review to get drawn into individual cases was appropriate.”

50. Hijinx Theatre stated in their written and oral evidence that the Assembly should have a greater input into the Minister’s annual remit letter to ACW, through an annual arts debate. BVSNW thought that an Assembly Committee should have the opportunity to scrutinise ACW’s decisions and progress.

51. The Wales Association for the Performing Arts (WAPA) suggested that the remit of the Arts Strategy Board should be widened.<sup>16</sup> In their oral evidence ACW agreed with this principle, and suggested that officials from other governmental departments should be included in the membership in order to encourage cross-departmental working.

52. In their oral evidence, ACW re-stated that they would welcome the broadening of the Arts Strategy Board’s membership,<sup>17</sup> and the WLGA noted that the Board had been recently considering widening its membership. They also commented that a balance must be struck between being fully representative and being cumbersome.

53. The ACW said that they would welcome a more ‘joined-up’ approach from the Welsh Government, which recognises:

“[...] the work that the arts can contribute to a whole host of other areas, from education, to health, to economic development. The arts

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<sup>16</sup> Wales Association for the Performing Arts - Arts 24

<sup>17</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

strategy board is intended to provide a vehicle for the arts council to liaise with Government as a whole, but, if you are asking me for my honest opinion on how effective that is, I would say that it is mixed and that we do not have quite as regular a relationship with other departments as we do with heritage.”<sup>18</sup>

54. A number of other respondents noted the importance of improving cross-departmental working, specifically between local government, health, education and the arts. The Theatres Trust summarised this sentiment:

“The Theatres Trust would like to see more collaboration between government departments which recognise the value of the arts across many other areas of policy – in education, tourism and inward investment and culture.”

55. The WLGA commented on where responsibility lies for consulting arts organisations during formulation of ACW’s remit letter:

“Consulting with those groups is very much the role of the arts council and local authorities. I suppose that the dilemma with consulting all arts groups is that you may get skewed away from real strategic planning.”<sup>19</sup>

### **The Role of the Arts Council of Wales**

56. The majority of respondents were happy with the arms-length principle between the ACW and the Welsh Government. Voluntary Arts Wales stated that:

“We believe strongly in the arm’s-length principle. We think that it is important and right that the arts council is given the freedom to make the decisions, particularly the artistic decisions, about what is funded and what is not. [...]

“I do not think that there is a huge amount wrong with that relationship at the moment. There is a danger of it becoming a red herring if what we are talking about is arts participation, because the majority of arts participation is not funded by the arts council.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Oral Evidence, 15 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s6979/15%20March%202012.pdf>

57. Most organisations found ACW’s investment review process clear and fair, and many organisations praised ACW for their advice and transparency. The Welsh National Opera commented that:

“[...] the Arts Council of Wales provides clear advice and guidance and an open process for accessing project funding.”<sup>21</sup>

58. However, there was some criticism of ACW regarding its decision making and scrutiny. South Wales Intercultural Community Arts (SWICA) stated that:

“[ACW’s] artform-based approach is archaic and not prone to developing participation in particular.”<sup>22</sup>

59. Spectacle Theatre highlighted issues around ACW’s funding assessments:

“We strongly believe the current mechanism employed by the Arts Council to assess artistic quality is not transparent and disenfranchised valleys communities.”

60. Gwynedd County Council noted concerns around regional gaps:

“Following the latest changes to the Arts Council structure, concerns have been expressed that there is no regional overview that could identify gaps or opportunities to increase participation. There is a danger that a gap could develop here that could affect participation.”<sup>23</sup>

## **Voluntary sector**

61. The importance of the voluntary sector was highlighted in the Communities and Culture Committee report into accessibility of the arts. As budget reductions in some organisations has led to volunteers being utilised more, the current Committee thought it was appropriate to examine the role of this sector and how its work can be supported. An anonymous respondent to the consultation noted that:

“I would say that the voluntary arts sector provides the majority of participatory opportunities, especially to people in areas of economic and social deprivation. Not only do they give access but they provide

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<sup>21</sup> Welsh National Opera - Arts 08

<sup>22</sup> South Wales Intercultural Community Arts - Arts 21

<sup>23</sup> Gwynedd County Council - Arts 29



many social benefits - social networks, health issues (especially community dance) informal education, integration, therapy and social change.”

62. Disability Arts Cymru also noted the effective network that the voluntary arts sector provides:

“The voluntary arts sector is vital in maintaining links and networks in the arts, working closely with artists / participants who may be outside of the kind of artists funded by ACW.”

63. Torch Theatre commented that the voluntary arts sector needs to be “re-vitalised”, and thought that local authorities should take a lead on this.

### **Networks**

64. The importance of networks in connecting voluntary arts organisations was highlighted by six organisations. Voluntary Arts Wales, the main umbrella body for voluntary arts organisations in Wales, made some key recommendations for developing the sector, which included improving links between organisations. These recommendations were:

- some mapping or audit of existing arts participation;
- greater links between the amateur arts, professional community arts and professional arts organisations;
- increased support for Voluntary Arts Wales and the national voluntary arts umbrella bodies in order to improve inclusivity and diversity within local amateur arts groups;
- more holistic collaboration between amateur and professional arts, local authorities and the wider voluntary and community sector.<sup>24</sup>

65. Cyster suggested that advice services, affordable venues and a “sense of a wider movement” would improve participation through the voluntary arts sector.

66. Blaenau Gwent and Powys Councils acknowledged local authorities’ role in providing advice, specifically around the practical issues of running a group, like child protection, marketing and licensing. Caerphilly Council also highlighted the importance of voluntary network associations such as the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO).

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<sup>24</sup> Voluntary Arts Wales - Arts 10

67. The Youth Inclusion Programme at Conwy & Denbighshire Youth Justice Service stated that more opportunities to share good practice would be welcomed, and used an example of the conference arranged by ACW in 2011.

### ***Quality and professionalism***

68. Cwmni'r Frân Wen and Gwent Theatre indicated that more collaboration between the voluntary arts sector and the professional arts sector would be beneficial to the voluntary arts. ArtWorks Valleys Kids noted that they need:

“[...] high quality professional workers with the skills to deliver community and youth arts at a high level - this is highly skilled work if done properly it can have a huge impact on intervening successfully in supporting young people and members of the community.”

69. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council stated that the capacity of voluntary arts organisations is limited because of the lack of professionalism:

“In general there are a lot of participatory opportunities promoted through the voluntary arts sector however these are not always based on strong foundations e.g. professional practitioners, sound business awareness etc. which makes their capacity limited.”

70. Head for Arts highlighted the importance of investing in individuals, and encouraging quality and professionalism, even in voluntary arts:

“The voluntary arts sector is particularly active in areas of multiple deprivation like Merthyr Tydfil but though laudable, the quality of work is often poor. It's difficult to persuade someone to pay a professional practitioner when there's a willing volunteer who "knows a bit".

“We only employ highly experienced community arts practitioners, often finding ways of getting them to work alongside volunteer tutors to help raise the quality - and demonstrate the difference that it can make having someone who really knows what they are doing. The availability of revenue funding as well as capital from HOV would help this enormously.”

## Equality duties

71. Public authorities are subject to the Welsh specific equality duties, but the majority of arts organisations are not. However, if they are funded by a local authority, or the Arts Council of Wales, arts organisations may feel the effects of the duties indirectly.

72. In their written evidence, the ACW outlined the objectives that they will be working towards in their Strategic Equality Plan. The ACW emphasised that, although some of their Revenue Funded Organisations (RFOs) may not currently be equipped to deliver ACW's overall equality objectives, they are working to improve this:

“We have a development programme with our portfolio of revenue organisations, and part of that looks at how they will help us to address child poverty and the equalities agenda. We will be implementing that over the next 12 months. For many of those organisations, it is about understanding better what they are already delivering.”<sup>25</sup>

73. Most respondents were not fully aware of the full extent equality duties, but many seemed positive that the duties would help ensure that arts provision would be available to everyone, regardless of their gender, age, disability, sexuality, religion, or ethnicity. Disability Arts Cymru thought that they would “undoubtedly” increase participation and the National Museum of Wales stated that the duties are:

“[...] an extremely positive step for public bodies to be aligned and developing joint approaches to increase participation.”<sup>26</sup>

74. Live Music Now Cymru noted that they found it “good to be part of the discussion on [the equality duties] earlier this year”. Newport Museum commented that the equality duties will reinforce long established and pre-existing policies for many local authorities. Gwynedd County Council stated that:

“It became clear from [the consultation process] that ethnic minority groups are particularly eager to know more and to participate more with the arts on a local level. We believe that there is strong potential

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<sup>25</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> National Museum of Wales – Arts 13

to build on this: by informing groups about events and also supporting them to engage with the arts."<sup>27</sup>

75. Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre thought that such measures did not affect changes in the delivery of activities, but just increased bureaucracy and reporting. Small World Theatre thought that the process of defining and targeting 'under-represented groups' creates a division in itself.<sup>28</sup>

76. Some organisations felt that the public sector equality duties would have little impact on participation in the arts because it is a long way from strategy to grass roots level. Voluntary Arts Wales advocated using the duties as part of a more holistic approach to increasing participation in the arts. A number of respondents, including Swansea Metropolitan University and Bagad Pibau Morgannwg, thought that the equality duties would be ineffective unless funding was increased for organisations working with under-represented groups of people. This contrasts with the views discussed early regarding the restrictions placed upon projects when funding is targeted at a specific group of people.

## **Our View**

77. For the purposes of this inquiry, the committee drew a distinction between accessibility and participation. These are clearly linked, as accessibility to the arts is clearly linked to participation levels. It is the experience of the arts which can, in many cases, inspire individuals to get involved and have a go themselves. However, we concentrated on participation, as a number of issues relating to accessibility had been addressed in the previous Assembly's Communities and Culture Committee Report on the Accessibility of Arts and Culture.<sup>29</sup>

78. In November 2012, the Committee received an update on the Welsh Government's action plan on the recommendations of that report.<sup>30</sup> We welcome the progress outlined in the update.

## ***A participation action plan***

79. It is clear that the Welsh Government is putting in place measures to address equality and accessibility issues. From the update provided to the

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<sup>27</sup> Gwynedd County Council – Arts 29

<sup>28</sup> Small World Theatre - Arts 25

<sup>29</sup> National Assembly for Wales Communities and Culture Committee, [The accessibility of arts and cultural activities in Wales](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Update from the Welsh Government on the Communities and Culture Committee Report into the Accessibility of Arts and Cultural Activities in Wales](#), (November 2012)

Committee, it is clear that progress has been made in a number of key areas. We feel that this progress can be built on, to ensure that individuals who experience the arts and who are inspired to want to take part have access to opportunities. A participation action plan, sitting alongside the Welsh Government's action plan on accessibility and equality, would be useful in setting a strategic direction and could deliver increases in participation levels.

### ***Monitoring participation levels***

80. We recognise that addressing barriers to participation is not easy. The action plan should include measures to monitor participation levels across the arts, to get a full picture of the impact of funding cuts on participation. The action plan should also include measures to identify and address inequality of provision across Wales (e.g. due to geographic, economic or social reasons).

### ***Annual Remit Letter***

81. We note that the Government has delivered on its commitment to emphasise the importance of equality and accessibility issues in its remit letters for 2012/13. We feel that these letters should also put an emphasis on increasing participation levels.

### ***Partnership Working***

82. If participation levels are to be increased, there needs to be joint-working at a strategic level. We note that the Welsh Government is including partnership working as a specific requirement in the annual remit letter and, of course, welcome this.

83. There needs to be effective joint working between the Arts Council of Wales, Local Authorities and voluntary sector networks. There are examples of good practice on this issue e.g. 'Arts Connect' and work around the Simpson Compact. This needs to be built on and developed. The action plan therefore needs to involve partners and include a clear emphasis on partnership working.

84. We welcome the way that ACW's strategy includes support for network organisations such as Disability Arts Cymru, the Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales and Voluntary Arts Wales. We feel that, in terms of increasing levels of participation, these networks can play a central role. Therefore,

these networks should be consulted in the drawing up of the participation action plan and should play a role in ensuring that it is implemented.

### ***Opportunities for organisations to feed in to arts strategy***

85. A number of witnesses suggested that organisations should have more opportunities to feed into arts strategy. Indeed, it was also suggested that organisations should have the opportunity to feed into the Minister's annual remit letter. We do not believe that this is appropriate, but recognise that the views of organisations need to feed into the development of policy, particularly in matters such as participation in the arts, where experience 'on the ground' would prove useful.

### ***Co-ordination between Welsh Government Departments***

86. Welsh Government departments are already working together on a number of issues relating to the arts, e.g. health and education. This needs to continue so that scarce resources can be utilised for maximum impact. The participation action plan should include actions for multiple government departments, thereby ensuring effective collaboration.

### ***The roles of the Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales***

87. We were surprised that a number of organisations, some of which had received ACW support, did not understand how the Welsh Government and Arts Council worked together. We feel that some work could be undertaken to inform arts organisations in Wales about how the 'system' works so that they can appreciate more fully the different strands of work that are being undertaken.

**The Welsh Government should put in place a participation action plan, to alongside its accessibility action plan, with the purpose of increasing participation levels across Wales.**

**The action plan should include measures to monitor participation levels across the arts, and actions to identify inequality of provision (e.g. due to geographic, economic or social reasons).**

**In addition to accessibility and equality, the Welsh Government's annual remit letter should include an emphasis on increasing participation levels.**

**The action plan should include measures to ensure co-ordination across government departments and joint working by partners, including local government and the voluntary sector.**

## 4. Funding

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88. In this chapter, we will look at the key concern raised by witnesses, funding. In written and oral evidence, a number of issues were raised, particularly around the following:

- approaches to funding, including targeting and short and long-term funding;
- difficulties around accessing funding, including advice and guidance; and
- access to other sources of funding, including private investment.

89. The Arts Council of Wales (ACW),<sup>31</sup> Voluntary Arts Wales,<sup>32</sup> and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)<sup>33</sup> emphasised that the arts sector in Wales is resilient, creative and responsive to change. They noted that art will continue to be created with or without public subsidy, but reductions in funding will inevitably have an effect on the amount of opportunities that people have to participate, particularly for specific groups of people.

90. Consultees highlighted that budget reductions have not just come from the Arts Council of Wales, but also local authorities, the private sector, charitable trusts and foundations and other governmental departments like education and health. Some felt that budget reductions had forced some organisations to work more efficiently and creatively, which could improve their work in the long term.

91. Organisations commented that there is a continuing increase in demand for the arts, which is not being met by the supply. The ACW and WLGA stressed that although participation levels have not fallen significantly in recent years, there is the potential that budget reductions would affect levels in the long term, especially among specific groups of people.

92. The overall view from respondents was that there are not enough alternative sources of funding for organisations that were not funded by the Arts Council of Wales, and organisations needed help and advice to identify, apply for and manage funding.

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<sup>31</sup> Oral Evidence 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Oral Evidence 15 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s6979/15%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Oral Evidence 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>



93. Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre summarised the funding situation for arts organisations:

“The funding map has changed. The way the Arts Council of Wales delivers its funds has changed, the number of organisations receiving revenue funding has decreased. Local authority funding levels are static, this position is in reality an inflationary cut in resources. Charitable trusts and foundations are receiving significantly higher numbers of applications. Capital schemes are on hold until after the 2012 Olympics.”

### **Targeting**

94. The move towards outcome-focused funding that targets specific groups of people received both positive and negative responses. This issue was raised by fourteen respondents.

95. Head for Arts felt that organisations had to turn away individuals who didn't 'fit' into a targeted group, which had led to decreased participation levels overall. The Josef Herman Foundation stated that:

“There are also many examples of arts being funded just because they are focussed on minority communities, rather than being quality activities. Funders should of course support under-represented groups, but not just because they are under-represented.”

96. Arts 4 Wellbeing and Engage Cymru noted the concentration of funding on NEET groups, and commented that this had meant that there was less funding available for other groups of people.

97. Arts Active also pointed out that targeted funding to address geographic or demographic gaps could potentially lead to the dilution of provision:

“[...] That is not to say that inspiring and fantastic work is not happening in all sorts of places it is just a worry that work can be diluted and the experiences become standardised and deliverable rather than transformational and inspirational.”

98. However, some organisations thought that targeted funding helped to mitigate the disproportionate impact of overall budget reductions, for example, for people living in disadvantaged communities. Bagad Pibau Morgannwg noted the positive impact of the increase in funding for deprived areas of Merthyr Tydfil:

“There has been an increase in the amount of money available for arts activities in our area, Merthyr Tydfil, which is a very positive development [...] People in deprived areas will benefit more from an increase in arts funding. In Merthyr Tydfil there are new opportunities for young people to make drama, dance, music, visual art etc.”

99. Disability Arts Cymru also noted that they had received more funding to work with disabled artists across the whole of Wales:

“Our organisation Disability Arts Cymru has received enhanced funding from ACW, which enables us to provide a better, more effective service with a more equal spread across Wales.”

### **Short and long term funding**

100. Five respondents said that small revenue grants were more useful than long term core funding, but seven respondents said that stability in funding was the key to long term sustainability.

101. Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre thought that long term sustainability and core funding were the most pressing issues for arts organisations. The Centre emphasised that stability is the key to strategic development and Re-Live echoed this sentiment. The need for stability was also raised by Cyster, Theatr Fforwm Cymru and Hijinx.

102. ArtWorks Cymru stated that:

“Our research has told us that one of the things artists feel is key to good quality participatory arts is time around planning and delivery, and with reduced funding this is one of the things that may be affected.

“The current funding situation means that artists are not able to create long term, or multi art form projects and shorter term projects are expected to deliver longer term outcomes.”<sup>34</sup>

103. Many organisations commented on the lack of awareness about smaller funding pots, such as Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, who also suggested some good practice:

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<sup>34</sup> ArtWork Cymru - Arts 12

“Little is known about other possible sources of funding for the arts, particularly not for smaller pockets of funding and money to pay artists (often seen as a revenue rather than a project cost). [...]

“Sports Wales's model of Community Chest seems a really positive one and it may be worth considering looking at the viability of a similar model suited to community arts to assist with these issues among local groups, organisations and societies.”

104. Cardiff Community Housing Association highlighted the importance of speed and flexibility in funding for the voluntary arts sector:

“[The voluntary arts sector] has the power to adapt very quickly to community need and changing issues. It needs access to fast and flexible funds, it doesn't have to be huge amounts of moneys. They just need to be able to spend it on what ever makes the project work.”

105. Arts Active noted the value of ‘legacy’ events that kick start arts activity in an area, and Head for Arts suggested that capital funding was not being utilised effectively.

## **Competition**

106. Eight organisations noted that competition for arts funding had increased in recent years. Arts Active remarked that:

“There are many trusts and foundations but it is a very competitive landscape and hard to get long term sustainable funding.”

107. WAPA suggested some reasons for the increasing competition and barriers that organisations find when applying for funds:

“There are more and more charitable organisations chasing fewer and fewer pots of money, and the amount available from some UK based foundations is not that large in any case. The reserves and investments of all such Trusts have of course taken a hit over the last three years and with interest rates flat-lined, will remain in that state for the foreseeable future.

“For small organisations the time and expense in making applications to a variety of trusts is disproportionate to the amount that might be given out. It is also virtually impossible to find corporate sponsorship in the present financial climate.”

108. Disability Arts Cymru and the Josef Herman Foundation both stated that charitable trusts are particularly difficult to access for independent artists.

### **Advice and guidance**

109. In their oral evidence, Hijinx highlighted the lack of capacity and knowledge within small arts organisations to identify and apply for alternative sources of funding. Many other organisations, such as Rhondda Cynon Taff Community Arts and Ty Cerdd emphasised the need for more guidance and training for small arts organisations to identify and apply for funding.

110. Pontardawe Arts Centre stated that there is a lack of confidence in community groups to access funds for themselves, and said that they are seeking to address this. Powys County Council echoed this, commenting that the small scale and fragility of groups meant that their capacity to access funding is limited, therefore threatening their sustainability.

111. BVSNW, TAN Dance and Theatr Felinfach noted the importance of the ACW and umbrella organisations in providing funding advice. BVSNW said:

“There is a lack of guidance available for individuals and group for alternative funding sources if they are turned away from the Arts Council.

“BVNW has a role to play in assisting these groups with funding allocation.”<sup>35</sup>

112. Theatr Felinfach stated that VAW and the WCVA also play important roles:

“The VAW has a valuable role in acting as a "signpost" for organizations wishing to develop an idea. The WCVA plays an important role in terms of the voluntary sector as well and holds networking and information sharing events which are useful to the participatory arts sector.”<sup>36</sup>

113. TAN Dance highlighted some good practice from England:

“We note that Arts and Heritage in England have set up a Catalyst Arts and Catalyst Heritage fundraising capacity building grants programme and wonder if it would be possible to set up a similar

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<sup>35</sup> BVSNW Focus group

<sup>36</sup> Small World Theatre - Arts 23

programme in Wales? A grant from such a programme would solve our problem of insufficient capacity to pursue new funding avenues.”<sup>37</sup>

114. ACW highlighted that they are planning to create a new information service:

“We are going to invest more time and energy in producing better information.

“We are going to start running information and advisory surgeries across Wales. We will try to ensure that we are providing more advisory and information services at a local level, for people who perhaps cannot travel to our regional offices across Wales.”<sup>38</sup>

### **Private investment**

115. Eight respondents discussed private investment and corporate sponsorship. Arts and Business Cymru highlighted their existing work, and their response to the economic downturn:

“Arts & Business UK’s annual Private Investment in Culture Survey showed that the private sector in Wales invested over £18 million in the arts in 2010/11. Unlike other parts of the UK, business in Wales has, for many years, cited engagement with local communities as the primary reason for supporting the arts.

“Inevitably though, as budgets reduced, demand for such projects decreased during the recession. A&B Cymru addressed this and through advocacy, brokerage, and its programmes, enabled a renewed enthusiasm for community projects.”<sup>39</sup>

116. Oriol Myrddin, Hijinx, Literature Wales, SWICA, Cardiff Community Housing Association, and Jazz Heritage Wales all noted the increasing difficulty in obtaining private investment. Mid Wales Opera stated:

“We would appreciate greater support from the Welsh Government, ACW and Arts and Business in trying to persuade businesses (particularly those with a national reach across Wales) to invest in arts provision beyond the national companies and to work strategically

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<sup>37</sup> TAN Dance - Arts 05

<sup>38</sup> Oral Evidence, 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Arts and Business Cymru - Arts 14

with Trusts and Foundations to see how they can support touring arts provision.”

117. ACW noted that excellence is a key driver in encouraging private investment. They also commented that businesses are reluctant to connect to arts organisations through intermediaries, emphasising the importance of equipping organisations to attract sponsorship themselves.<sup>40</sup>

118. ACW stated in their written evidence that they:

“[...] are working in partnership with Arts and Business Cymru to provide practical assistance to revenue funded organisations to help them generate additional earned income.”<sup>41</sup>

## **Our View**

### ***Targeted Funding***

119. In terms of targeted funding, we feel that there is clear merit to this approach, particularly in terms of participation, but every effort should be made to ensure that the quality of the experience is not compromised.

120. There was a clear difference of opinion on the issue of short and long-term funding, with respondents outlining the strategic benefits arising from the security of long-term funding and others emphasising the importance of flexibility in accessing small pots of money, perhaps for a specific project. On balance, it is clear that a mix of funding opportunities is necessary, and the ACW approach seems to be appropriate.

### ***Access to alternative sources of funding***

121. We note respondents’ comments that alternative sources of funding are increasingly difficult to access and feel that more needs to be done to ensure that organisations have the ability to access alternative sources of funding.

122. However, the majority of organisations do not have the capacity or resources to continually chase funding. This is particularly a problem for the smallest of organisations, which may be run by volunteers, and who may not be aware of the different types of support available.

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<sup>40</sup> Oral Evidence 29 March 2012

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/s7173/29%20March%202012.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Arts Council of Wales - Arts 33

123. For this reason, we agree that umbrella organisations such as BVSNW and VAW can play an invaluable role in assisting organisations to access funding. This is why, as we outlined in the previous chapter, it is so important that such umbrella organisations are involved in strategic planning for the arts.

124. We also note that the ACW has introduced a ‘Creative Steps’ fund, for individuals or organisations who have not accessed ACW funding in the past. We welcome ACW’s commitment to provide more information on accessing resources, and request that ACW reports back to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on progress of both initiatives at an appropriate time.

### ***Private investment***

125. Making the most of private investment is vitally important at times where access to public money is difficult. There needs to be more advice in place to access these alternative sources of funding. There also needs to be strategies in place to ensure that the sector and private investors can work together.

126. We note the issues raised by witnesses in relation to private investment, particularly the comment from Arts and Business Cymru that business in Wales “cited engagement with local communities as the primary reason for supporting the arts”.

127. We feel, therefore, that as much as possible should be done to encourage such investment, not only at a national level, but for smaller, local organisations and projects.

128. Finally, we note the evidence from ACW, emphasising the importance of equipping organisations to attract sponsorship themselves. We endorse this approach and encourage the ACW to ensure that individuals and organisations have the opportunities to develop these skills, including through training and development.

**The Arts Council of Wales should keep under review its funding policies, to ensure that they are delivering excellence, while increasing participation levels.**

**The Arts Council of Wales should ensure that organisations are able to access information on alternative sources of funding. This should be in the form of training, if necessary.**

**The Arts Council of Wales should ensure that it uses its relationships with networks to ensure that information reaches relevant organisations.**

**The Arts Council of Wales should put in place a strategy to increase levels of funding from business.**



## Witnesses

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The following witnesses provided oral evidence to the Committee on the dates noted below. Transcripts of all oral evidence sessions can be viewed in full at

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=3377>

### *15 March 2012*

Val Hill, Administrative Director	Hijinx Theatre
Mike Clark, Chair of Trustees	Hijinx Theatre
Chris Ryde, Chair	Wales Association for the Performing Arts
Stephen Stockton	Wales Association for the Performing Arts
Robin Simpson, Chief Executive	Voluntary Arts Wales
Maggie Hampton, Chief Executive	Disability Arts Cymru
Leanne Rahman, Senior Arts Development Office	Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales

### *29 March 2012*

Chris Llewellyn, Director of Lifelong Learning, Leisure and Information	Welsh Local Government Association
Peter Gomer, Interim Policy Officer for Leisure, Culture and Heritage	Welsh Local Government Association
Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive	Arts Council of Wales
Diane Hebb, Director of Engagement and Participation	Arts Council of Wales

## List of written evidence

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The following people and organisations provided written evidence to the Committee. All written evidence can be viewed in full at <http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=3128>

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Oystermouth Art Society	Arts 01
Carmarthenshire County Council	Arts 02
Oriel	Arts 03
Hijinx Theatre	Arts 04
TAN Dance	Arts 05
engage Cymru	Arts 06
Mid Wales Entertainment Circuit and Cyster	Arts 07
Welsh National Opera	Arts 08
National Dance Company Wales	Arts 09
Voluntary Arts Wales	Arts 10
Wales Millennium Centre	Arts 11
ArtWork Cymru	Arts 12
Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum of Wales	Arts 13
Arts & Business Cymru	Arts 14
Federation of Museums & Art Galleries in Wales	Arts 15
Adamsdown Arts Association	Arts 16
Llenyddiaeth Cymru Literature Wales	Arts 17
ArtsConnect	Arts 18
Aberystwyth Arts Centre	Arts 19
Age Cymru	Arts 20
South Wales Intercultural Community Arts	Arts 21
Performing Arts Aberystwyth Arts Centre	Arts 22
Theatr Felinfach	Arts 23
Wales Association for the Performing Arts	Arts 24
Small World Theatre	Arts 25

Theatre Gwent	Arts 26
Theatr Torch	Arts 27
Community Dance for Conwy, Gwynedd and Ynys Môn	Arts 28
Gwynedd County Council	Arts 29
National Theatre Wales	Arts 30
Cwm Taf Local Health Board	Arts 31
Welsh Local Government Association	Arts 32
Arts Council of Wales	Arts 33

<i>Organisation (SurveyMonkey)</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Powys County Council	Arts SM01
Newport Museum and Art Gallery (Newport City Council)	Arts SM02
Theatres Trust	Arts SM03
Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales	Arts SM04
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff	Arts SM05
Youth Inclusion Programme (Conwy & Denbighshire Youth Justice Service)	Arts SM06
Theatre Fforwm Cymru	Arts SM07
Cwmni'r Frân Wen	Arts SM08
Ballet Cymru	Arts SM09
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Arts SM10
Cerddoriaeth Fyw Rwan Cymru	Arts SM11
Spectacle Theatre Ltd.	Arts SM12
Touch Trust	Arts SM13
Rhondda Cynon Taff Community Arts	Arts SM14
Pontardawe Arts Centre, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	Arts SM15
Ty Cerdd – Music Centre Wales	Arts SM16
Cyster – The Constellation Project	Arts SM17
Re-Live	Arts SM18
Nofit State Circus	Arts SM19

The Gwent Theatre Company	Arts SM20
ArtWorks Valleys Kids	Arts SM21
Mid Wales Opera	Arts SM22
Cwmni Theatr Arad Goch	Arts SM23
Harlech and Ardudwy Music Society	Arts SM24
Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre	Arts SM25
Cadw/ACW Cultural Olympiad Project – Power of the Flame	Arts SM26
Josef Herman Foundation	Arts SM27
Swansea Metropolitan University	Arts SM28
Breaking Barriers Community Arts	Arts SM29
Jazz Heritage Wales, Swansea	Arts SM30
Wrexham Youth Justice Service	Arts SM31
Cardiff Community Housing Association	Arts SM32
Pembrokeshire Youth Offending Team	Arts SM33
Torfaen County Borough Council – Arts Service	Arts SM34
Bagad Pibau Morgannwg	Arts SM35
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Arts SM36
Head for Arts	Arts SM37
Arts Active – St David’s Hall	Arts SM38
Flintshire County Council	Arts SM39
Anonymous	Arts SM40
Anonymous	Arts SM40
Anonymous	Arts SM41

20 SurveyMonkey questionnaire responses were also received from individuals.

#### Focus Groups

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Arts – Cofio
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Arts – Reach the Heights
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Arts – Flippers
- Ruthin Craft Centre – Threads in Time

- Galeri - Promometheus
- Galeri - Tonic
- Celf o Gwmpas
- Arts Alive
- Arts 4 Wellbeing

#### Other Submissions

- Gwent Theatre Video
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Arts - Journeys and Discoveries DVD
- India Dance Wales

## Agenda Item 3.2

### **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

## **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.



# Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION

ADRAN GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL

...yn gofalu i wneud gwahaniaeth

Minaeron, Godre Rhiw Goch, Aberaeron, SA46 0DY



# CEREDIGION County Council

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

...taking care to make a difference

Minaeron, Vicarage Hill, Aberaeron, SA46 0DY

**A. Parry Davies**

Cyfarwyddwr

Director

☎ 01545 572616

Ffacs/Fax 01545 574917

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

Dyddiad  
Date

22 January 2013

Gofynnwch am  
Please ask for

Mrs Sue Darnbrook

Llinell Uniongyrchol  
Direct line

01545 572694

FY nghyf  
My ref

SD/JVJ

Eich cyf  
Your ref

P-04-366

Dear Mr Powell

## Aberystwyth Day Centre Review

Sorry for the delay in responding to your letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012 regarding the above.

I can now confirm that an Independent Reviewer was commissioned in mid December 2012 to undertake the above work. The agreed framework for conducting the review is attached for your information.

If I can be of any further assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

*S.H. Darnbrook*

**Mrs Sue Darnbrook**  
**Assistant Director Adult and Mental Health Services**

Enc

## **ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE**

### **Outcome to be achieved**

A report to be completed by the end of the first week in March, in readiness for consideration by Cabinet in April.

This report to present a review into the first year of the service provided at the newly relocated Day Centre.

The report will review whether the outcomes for the Day Centre are being met from the perspective of service users and their carers, staff, care managers, senior managers and council members.

The report will be framed within the context of a) the model of services for Older People in Ceredigion and b) the Department's budgetary position.

### **Process and timescales**

- 1) Meeting with Assistant Director, Adult Services and Mental Health to finalise the scope of the Review, gather relevant documentation, plan the meetings schedule and visit the Day Centre
- 2) Reading and preparation for meetings
- 3) Meetings with stakeholders
- 4) Final meeting with Assistant Director
- 5) Report writing

In order for the report to be as current as possible the first two actions will be completed before Christmas, the meetings will take place in early January and the final actions at the end of February.

## **P-04-366 - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerk, 08.02.13**

Dear Naomi,  
FOR THE ATTENTION OF MR. WILLIAM POWELL, Petitions Officer.

Save the Day Centre Committee would like the following points to be raised at the Petitions Committee on 19 February 2013:

The Committee do not consider Sheila Wentworth to be Independent. Ceredigion County Council who has commissioned the Independent review via Susan Darnbrook Member of All Wales Adult Heads (AWASH), and Parry Davies is The Presiden (AWASH) Sheila Wentworth is listed as an Associate Member (AWASH). Therefore Ceredigion County Council is not carrying out an Independent Review.

Although this Independent Review is not within the remit of CSSIW, perhaps Care Quality Control (England) could undertake this Independent Review.

We also note the following: ABERYSTWYTH DAY CENTRE REVIEW - Questionnaire for Family Carers (Sheila Wentworth)  
"in order for me to write this report, it is essential that I include the views of people attending the Day Centre..."

At the Park Avenue Day Centre the following Groups attended: Arthritis Group, RNIB, Retinopathy Clinic, WRVS. Wednesday Luncheon Club, Gateway Club  
The impact on these Groups being excluded by Ceredigion County Council is enormous.

Having collected approximately 6,000 signatures we continue our Vigil. All visitors are barred from entering The Day Centre, so there is no interaction and socializing.

The lack of space at the Basement does not allow the Clients room to raise their swollen feet.

The Ramp is still uncovered, and Clients AWOSH.!

There is still only 8 easy chair between 32 Clients.

The Christmas Dinner this year, owing to lack of space in the Basement, had to be held at the local Football Club.

This entailed transporting clients to this venue.

The Dinners daily are transported.

The clients are transported for a bath.

The SPADC Committee consider the Questionnaire to be too narrow, an not including the above. (Number 9. and 10. on the Questionnaire are omitted)! Fewer people are being Assessed, therefore, this is discriminating against the people needing to attend the Day Centre.

We have not, as yet, been able to obtain the accurate figures needing to be

assessed. As it is an ageing society figures naturally will have increased. This Day Centre facility enables the Client to get out of the house to socialize. Importantly, too, enables a few hours respite to the unpaid carer at home.

Many thanks,  
Yours sincerely,  
Pam Hughes

## **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



Ref: DDG/jld

31 January 2013

Naomi Stocks  
Clerk of the Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Naomi

I refer to the letter from your Committee Chair reference P-04-424 dated 14th December 2012.

The Wales Deanery is accountable to the UK Regulator, the General Medical Council (GMC) in accordance with the Medical Act 1983. The Deanery is required to ensure that training posts meet the published GMC standards and approved quality monitoring and assurance processes are in place to deliver this within Wales.

With regards to the withdrawal of posts from Neath Port Talbot Hospital this decision followed two years of discussions and negotiation with the Health Board.

The Deanery initially met with Clinical Directors, Consultants and the Medical Director of Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMuHB) in April 2010 to discuss issues around staffing on-call rotas at Neath from August 2010 following recruitment issues.

In December 2010 the Deanery committed to work with the Health Board to develop a sustainable model for the middle grade tier and agreed an interim solution.

Over the past few years the Deanery has monitored the training posts in Neath, feedback has revealed issues around :

- Consultant / Senior Supervision
- the lack of adequate/appropriate unselected medical intake
- the overall quality of teaching was rated to be poor
- Royal College exam pass rates

The 2012 GMC Trainee Survey identified 8 patient safety concerns in Neath Port Talbot Hospital.

In August 2012 following detailed discussions with the Health Board the decision was made to remove the 6 Core Medical Training year 1 posts from Neath and place them in Princess of Wales (1), Singleton (1) and Morriston (4) hospitals.

School of  
Postgraduate  
Medical & Dental  
Education  
Wales Deanery  
9<sup>th</sup> floor  
Neuadd Meirionnydd  
Heath Park  
Cardiff CF14 4YS

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Ysgol Addysg  
Fedydol a  
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Raddedig  
Prifysgol Caerdydd  
Neuadd Meirionnydd  
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Caerdydd CF14 4YS

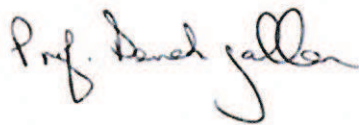
With regards to your query about whether staffing issues are acting as a driver for service reconfiguration across Wales I can only comment for training. Throughout the UK there are difficulties in recruiting to certain specialties.

Recruitment gaps impact heavily upon rotas which then puts undue service pressures on the trainees, to the detriment of their educational experience. It is the Deanery's recommendation, based upon findings from the Temple Report, that rotas should have 11 participants to prevent vulnerability from recruitment gaps, less than full time (LTFT) training, sickness absence, out of programme training opportunities and maternity leave.

For most specialties trainees are placed across 15 Units in Wales where rotas consist of less than 11 participants. This therefore means that our trainees in these specialties are spread too thinly across too many hospitals. For more information on this area you may wish to access the evidence provided by the Deanery to the Health and Social Care Committee at their meeting on the 10th January 2013.

The aim of the Wales Deanery's Programme of Reconfiguration is to develop and deliver training programmes which are high quality, sustainable, attractive to potential applicants and appropriate for the future needs of the Health Service in Wales.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Derek Gallen**  
**Postgraduate Dean and Head of School**

Copied to: Professor Peter Donnelly, Deputy Dean  
Dr Helen Baker, Associate Director - Secondary Care  
Dr Chris Callander, Sub Dean - Quality  
Dr Mike Page, Specialty Adviser - Medicine

## **P-04-424 - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerk, 06.02.13**

Thank you for the information, reading through the response from the deanery it seems to be quite unacceptable that ABM cancelled emergency services to NPT hospital in the way that they did when they had been discussing the issues with the Deanery for two years. Having worked in the NHS for forty years I would have thought that the issues discussed by the deanery were within the reach of managers had they had the motivation to address them, obviously patients need to have the best quality of care that can be provided, patients should expect no less.

A further concern for patients in Neath Port Talbot continues to be the unacceptable response rates of the Ambulance service in the trust. Failure to meet the targets on these response rates are putting many of us, particularly those in the upper valley areas, from accessing emergency services at the other hospitals within the trust within safe limits.

I also feel that the Community Health Council should have been more supportive of patients in this matter.

I am happy to discuss these issues further if necessary.

*Carolyn*



**P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land - Anglesey**

**Petition wording**

We call upon the Welsh Government to examine ways to prevent the destruction of amenities on common land, including for example the Marian Common in Llangoed, Ynys Môn.

**Petition raised by:** JE Futter

**Petition first considered by Committee:** 15 November 2011

**Number of signatures:** 156

Alun Davies AC / AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Amaethyddiaeth, Bwyd, Pysgodfeydd a  
Rhaglenni Ewropeaidd  
Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and  
European Programmes



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref AD-/05380/12  
Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-343

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@wales.gsi.gov.uk

15 November 2012

*Amryi Din,*

**P-04-343 PREVENT THE DESTRUCTION OF AMENITIES ON COMMON LAND**

In my letter of 20 June I informed you that I had referred the case to the Rural Inspectorate Wales to investigate if regulations other than Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations had been breached.

I am sorry it has taken this long to confirm the position. I can confirm the investigation has revealed the person named within the press articles has not made a claim for European payments in relation to the common land. Furthermore the common land itself is not subject to a claim. This means the land is not subject to cross compliance; therefore associated regulations are not applicable on the site. I note both Llangoed Community Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council have already been contacted; they along with anyone else (including members of the public) may wish to consider utilising powers under section 41 of the Commons Act 2006 and take enforcement action through the courts. However, before taking such action it is recommended that they seek their own legal advice.

*Gwyn  
Alun*

**Alun Davies AC / AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Amaethyddiaeth, Bwyd, Pysgodfeydd a Rhaglenni Ewropeaidd  
Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Food, Fisheries and European Programmes

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

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

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

## **P-04-385 Petition regarding balloon and lantern releases**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to legislate against the intentional release of balloons and Chinese (or Air) lanterns into the air.

**Petition raised by:** Bryony Bromley

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 1 May 2012

**Number of signatures:** 564

### **Supporting information:**

The Cardiff Regional Eco-Committee (made up of pupil representatives from Cardiff Green Flag Eco-Schools) recently passed a motion to work towards legislation to prevent mass intentional Balloon and Chinese/ Air Lantern Releases due to the damaging effect that they have on wildlife, both on land and at sea.

### **Balloon Releases**

There have been many cases of wildlife being discovered with latex balloons in their stomachs, blocking their intestinal tract: Marine species, particularly marine turtles and some sea birds, may mistake floating balloons for their jellyfish prey and swallow them, or become entangled and drown. Once swallowed, a balloon may block the digestive tract and eventually lead to death by starvation. The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) have carried out autopsies on a considerable number of marine wildlife that have been found washed up on beaches, confirming the results of balloon litter on the digestive tract.

The NFU has publicised the risk of grazing animals choking on balloons and in balloons contaminating hay, again posing a choking risk

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/agriculture/farming/8494881/Farmer-wins-compensation-after-Red-Nose-Day-balloon-kills-cow.html>)

Recent marketing campaigns have suggested that it is possible to carry out an 'eco-friendly' balloon release using biodegradable balloons able to decompose at the same rate as an Oak leaf.

- Oak leaves are very high in tannins and can take two years to fully decompose if not exposed to high levels of sunlight or water.

Following research in 2008, Keep Wales Tidy has stated that intentional balloon releases should be considered a form of littering. Since beginning to

record balloon litter as part of their LEAMS surveys in 2008–09, Keep Wales Tidy has observed balloon litter in each of Wales' 22 local authorities. In one county balloon litter has been observed on 17% of streets.

The Marine Conservation Society has run campaigns to stop balloon releases, since 1996 and there are currently at least 23 authorities in the UK who have upheld a ban on mass balloon releases. Data shows that the amount of balloon litter found on Welsh beaches has unfortunately trebled over the last 15 years as the practice becomes more popular.

Approximately 10% of balloons released into the air fall back to earth intact. This figure is higher when the balloon is tied with plastic ribbons and tags.

<http://www.mcsuk.org/downloads/pollution/dont%20let%20go.pdf>

### **Chinese/ Air lanterns**

The Marine and Coastguard Agency has warned of the dangers of Chinese lanterns, based on them being confused with distress flares.

The RSPCA has warned that the wire structure of lanterns could cause "extreme discomfort" to cattle if ingested.

The National Farmers Union has called for a ban on Chinese lanterns, owing to the danger posed to grazing animals.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-11265560>

Owing to the fire hazard, the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) recently warned people against releasing the lanterns, saying although they looked spectacular "once airborne they cannot be controlled".

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-13934378>

The Irish Aviation Association has highlighted the risk lanterns pose to aviation and is now demanding that permission be sought from them for any releases in the Republic of Ireland. They also insist that the nearest Air Traffic Control Unit, the Irish Coastguard and local Garda Station be informed.

(Publication by the Irish Aviation Association, Sky Lanterns and the risk to Aviation.)



William Powell AM

William.powell@wales.gov.uk

23 January 2013

Dear William,

Re: Research on the impact of sky lantern and helium balloon releases.

I can confirm that the Welsh Government and Defra have jointly commissioned an independent research project to establish a substantial body of dependable evidence on the impact of sky lanterns and helium balloons on livestock, plants and the environment. The research will provide us with an evidence base to inform actions to mitigate the impact of balloon and sky lantern litter. It will report by the end of March this year.

The research study will include input from local authorities in England and Wales; veterinary and farming groups; Fire Services and HM Coastguard; Charities, for example the Keep Wales Tidy and Marine Conservation Society; Sky lantern manufacturers; local authorities and other EU Member States.

The desired outcomes from the investigation include:

- an assessment of the impacts of the various types of sky lanterns and helium balloons,
- an assessment of the numbers and types of incidences reported,
- a comparison between fireworks and sky lanterns in terms of the number of human accidents caused over the last couple of years,
- an assessment of measures that have already been taken by local authorities in England and Wales and in other EU Member States; and their effectiveness in addressing the impacts of sky lanterns and helium balloons,
- an evaluation of the current value of the market for sky lanterns and helium balloons in England and Wales and any trade implications.

The research study will be funded by Defra with a contribution from Welsh Government. The contract has been awarded to ADAS UK Ltd. ADAS is the UK's largest independent provider of science-based environmental and rural consultancy and contracting services to organisations in the private and public sectors.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff

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

# Agenda Item 3.7

## **P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register**

### **Petition wording:**

Please sign in support of a 'Animal Offenders Register', a central Welsh database which will consist of name, address and convictions of people who have been convicted of any form of animal cruelty and abuse within Wales. Breeders / sellers of animals will be required to check this central database before allowing any animal they own / bred to go to a prospective owner / new home; if it is found that someone who has been convicted of animal cruelty or abuse has an animal the supplier / breeder will be held liable and prosecuted. At the moment there is no law to stop anyone who has been convicted of animal cruelty from moving a few miles up the road and then obtaining another animal to inflict further abuse on. Stricter laws need to be implemented to help protect animals, heavier fines and longer prison sentences as well as a Animal Offenders Register.

New York City and various states in the USA have already implemented this law, what is there to stop Wales taking the lead in the United Kingdom? You've heard of Sarah's Law, designed to keep sex offenders from striking again. Now we hope for a law created in the hope of preventing animal abusers from inflicting more cruelty, or moving on to human victims. Research has shown that there is a very strong correlation between animal abuse and domestic violence. Many murderers start out by torturing animals, and we could end up also protecting the lives of people.

**Petition raised by:** Mari Roberts & Sara Roberts

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 19 June 2012

**Number of signatures:** 69

## Petitions Committee

### Consultation on petition P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register

#### Response from Animal Aid



January 30<sup>th</sup> 2013

#### Consultation on the Formation of an Animal Offenders' Register

The proposal is that a central Welsh database is established, which will record the details of anyone who has been convicted of animal cruelty. Those who profit from selling animals – breeders, traders and sellers – will be required to consult this list before they allow an animal to be sold. They will be held responsible should an animal be sold to someone with convictions for cruelty.

##### Benefits and Drawbacks

There are two clear benefits of such a scheme. One is that it could prevent those who have harmed animals from obtaining more. Currently, anyone over 16 can walk into a pet store, buy an animal, cause terrible and deliberate suffering to him or her, and then go back and buy another.

There is no duty on shopkeepers to conduct home checks to see whether a home is suitable, nor do they need to conduct a follow-up check to ensure that the new 'owner' has understood what that animal requires in order to be healthy and happy. The pet industry remains one area where animals can be freely traded without due care for their wellbeing.

The second benefit is more general: the creation of such a database sends a message across society that the lives of animals matter, and that it is a duty for all those who obtain an animal to treat him or her with due care. This would be a positive development, and is in keeping with the Welsh Assembly's drive towards the better care of domestic species, following on from its Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Cats, Dogs, Equines and Rabbits.

That someone could simply buy an animal from across the border remains a drawback, as does the prevalence of unregistered breeders and suppliers who will sell to anyone via local adverts.

While we would not necessarily see these as reasons not to pursue this objective, we would question whether – if legislation is to be enacted to better protect domestic species – a different route might achieve more. Other ideas that might be considered include a licensing scheme under which people have to microchip all cats and dogs; a duty on dealers and breeders to first conduct a home check; a fixed levy on those

profiting from the sale of animals to provide for the tens of thousands abandoned at sanctuaries (which are almost always charities, relying on donations); and a ban on the importation and sale of 'exotic' species.

If an Animal Offenders' Database were to be created, we would like to see it have a wider remit. Rather than simply relating to the sale of pets, we would like it to guide employers when employing staff who will work with animals, such as farmers, slaughterhouse workers and zoo keepers.

#### Legal and Practical Implications

A new Regulation could be made under s.12 of the Animal Welfare Act, following a public consultation on this issue.

In terms of how the database would work practically, no sensitive information need be revealed to the seller of animals. He or she should input only basic details (such as name, date of birth), which must be verified with a passport or other photographic documentation, and the database should confirm whether that person is eligible to buy an animal.

Would convictions become spent as under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?

Would the prohibition apply to an address where an offender lives or just to the offender? If the latter, there would be nothing to stop someone from the same household from buying an animal, and that would remain a problem.

#### Administration and Funding

The register could be administered centrally, or through a trusted partner, such as the RSPCA. Since the information in it is sensitive, it should not be publicly available.

Practically, the RSPCA brings most prosecutions and so would be in a good position to keep the database current.

Details held should include name, address, date of birth, town of birth, the nature and date of the conviction, and the date it becomes spent.

Funding the register is not a simple matter. Ideally, the costs would be passed onto the industry but this may simply give greater advantage to the unregistered and unlicensed breeders/sellers, and these are unlikely to consult the Register in any case. Private sponsorship might support the creation of the Register, although its running costs may need to be provided by Government.

#### Policing and Penalties

If a Regulation was to be made under s.12 of the Animal Welfare Act, it could create an offence triable on indictment and punishable with up to 51 weeks imprisonment, or a level 5 fine on the standard scale. The police or the RSPCA could have responsibility for investigating non-compliance and bringing prosecutions, as under the Animal Welfare Act.





## **PETITIONS COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES CONSULTATION ON A PETITION IN SUPPORT OF AN ANIMAL OFFENDERS REGISTER FOR WALES – JOINT BVA – BSAVA - BVA WELSH BRANCH RESPONSE**

- 1) The BVA is the national representative body for the veterinary profession in the United Kingdom and has over 13,000 members. Its primary aim is to protect and promote the interests of the veterinary profession in this country, and it therefore takes a keen interest in all issues affecting the veterinary profession, be they animal health, animal welfare, public health, regulatory issues or employment concerns.
- 2) The BVA's Welsh Branch brings together representatives of the BVA's territorial and specialist divisions, government, academic institutions and research organisations in Wales. The Branch advises BVA on the consensus view of the Welsh members on Welsh and United Kingdom issues. We have also consulted the BVA's Ethics and Welfare Group (EWG), a standing committee of BVA Council, which considers ethical and welfare issues arising from the interaction of animals with human society.
- 3) The BSAVA is the largest specialist division of the BVA and of the veterinary profession. It represents approximately 7,500 members, the majority of whom are in general practice and have an interest in the health and welfare of small animals, namely dogs and cats.
- 4) We were pleased to have been given the opportunity to contribute to the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales' consultation on a petition in support of an animal offenders register for Wales. We understand that a central Welsh database is proposed consisting of the name and address of those convicted of any form of animal cruelty and abuse within Wales. It is proposed that breeders and sellers of animals would be required to check the database before allowing an animal to go to a new home and would be held liable if found to have supplied an animal to anyone convicted of animal cruelty or abuse.
- 5) We do not support the current proposal for an Animal Offender's Register to be set up in Wales with the requirement for breeders and sellers to check a central database before supplying an animal as we believe that there are a number of practical implications which would make the 'Register' unworkable. However we are in full support of the principle of introducing ways of enabling enforcement authorities to keep a check on those who are disqualified from keeping animals and further consideration might need to be given to whether a more limited register, only available to the enforcement authorities, would have any merit.  
We have organised our comments in line with the specific questions posed by the Committee, detailed below:
- 6) **The legal and practical implications of placing a duty on sellers/breeders to consult a Register**  
In order to place a duty on a seller or breeder to consult the proposed Register before selling an animal to a new owner there would need to be in place a clear definition of seller/breeder. Consideration would also need to be given to whether the legal duty would or could reasonably extend to owners who were not licensed breeders but did produce animals for onward sale, intentionally or otherwise. It is

unclear from the proposals whether all disqualifications relating to all types of domestic animal, or indeed livestock/farmed animals, would be included and whether donating or giving an animal not for profit would also incur a duty to check the Register. It must also be kept in mind that not all convictions for animal cruelty or abuse result in a disqualification and refusal to provide an animal to someone convicted of cruelty, but not disqualified, could lead to a legal challenge. We believe that the proposal would place an unreasonable burden on the seller and would rely on buyers to provide definitive proof of ID. In the case of a convicted offender attempting to breach a disqualification it is possible that falsified ID would be provided, or a friend or family member enlisted to obtain the animal on their behalf, therefore rendering the Register ineffective. We believe that funding and manpower would be better spent keeping close track on the activities of convicted offenders rather than placing the responsibility on largely law abiding animal breeders and sellers, effectively creating a new offence of failure to check the Register. Compliance checks on those disqualified from keeping animals would be a much better use of resources. Another critical consideration is how breeders / sellers would be given access to the Register and whether access by the public to information about animal welfare offenders could lead to vigilante attacks.

**7) The administration and funding implications of such a Register**

As we do not support the creation of a Register we do not have any suggestions for the administration and funding. Similar bodies created for similar purposes as the proposed Register have been fraught with problems and have proven expensive and unwieldy.

**8) Policing of a Register and who should be responsible for ensuring the compliance of sellers/breeders with any requirement to consult the Register.**

Whilst we believe that the protection of animal welfare should remain high on the agenda we also believe that the response must be proportionate and workable in the long term and we do not believe that the current proposal would achieve this. The administrative burden of policing such a Register may not be proportionate to the size of the problem in Wales. To make an informed assessment it would be useful to see animal welfare conviction statistics, including the number of disqualification orders and subsequent breaches.

We do not believe that sellers / breeders should be required to consult the register; therefore there would be no need to ensure their compliance.

**9) The penalties and offences that should be associated with non compliance of both offenders and sellers/breeders.**

We do not consider it within our remit to recommend penalties particularly as disqualification orders under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 are already enforceable. If the RSPCA or the Police become aware of a breach of an order they will take enforcement action and we do not consider that the introduction of a Register and the suggested prosecution of sellers/breeders would make a positive contribution to this process. If the Welsh Government wishes to tighten animal welfare legislation then we believe that efforts should be focussed on increasing sentencing powers for serious intentional animal welfare offences and directing time and money into effective follow up to reduce breaches under existing legislation.

**10) The cross-border implications of developing an Animals Offenders Register for Wales only.**

The proposed Register would be extremely limited in its ability to identify breaches of a disqualification order as it only applies to Wales. Anyone convicted of an offence outside Wales would not be identified on the Register and the proposals would not do anything to prevent an offender convicted in Wales from travelling over the border, acquiring an animal and then returning to Wales. A Wales only register could result in claims of discrimination if a seller or breeder supplied an animal to

someone convicted in England, but refused to provide an animal to someone convicted in Wales. We believe that any proposal to address breaches must be applied UK wide for there to be any chance of achieving meaningful results.

PET(4) CAR 03

## Petitions Committee

### Consultation on petition P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register

#### Response from Blue Cross



#### Introduction

Blue Cross is one of the UK's leading pet charities. Every year we rehome thousands of pet animals through our network of rehoming centres across the UK. In addition, Blue Cross offers free veterinary treatment to pet owners on low and reduced incomes.

Blue Cross is pleased to respond to the Welsh Assembly Petitions Committee consultation on the legislative and practical implications of creating an animal offenders register for Wales. As a rehoming and veterinary organisation that often takes in animals that have been abandoned and neglected by their previous owners, we understand the strength of public feeling on this issue and we welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

For further information on any of the answers given below please contact

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Public Affairs Officer

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- **The risks and benefits of creating an animal offenders register for Wales**

In 2011 84 people were convicted for animal cruelty in Wales, a rise of 31 % from the 2010 figures. Although there are no statistics available centrally on the number of people who transgress, it should be presumed that a proportion of those people who are banned from keeping animals will try and purchase another animal whilst subject to that ban. An animal offenders register would enable breeders, rehoming organisations and retailers to check whether someone had been convicted before releasing an animal into their care, therefore potentially preventing further cruelty and other welfare offences from taking place. The introduction of such a register could also act as a disincentive and could potentially result in a decrease in the number of animal cruelty incidents occurring throughout Wales.

Blue Cross can see merit in the establishment of a centralised database containing information on all those convicted of animal welfare offences in Wales. Access to this information could prove useful to a range of agencies, which in the long term could help to prevent and reduce incidents of animal cruelty.

There is much evidence to support the petition claim that there is a link between interpersonal violence and animal cruelty. A register that records those individuals convicted of animal cruelty could also have some use in this area.

The identification of individuals by use of such a register could be an important part of a multi-agency approach to reducing the escalation from animal cruelty to interpersonal violence.

Although we can see the merits of the proposed system, including the wider animal welfare benefits, we have a number of concerns relating to the practical implications of such a system. There is the possibility for the system to be misused, for data protection to be breached, and for vigilantism. Particularly when the issue is as emotive as that of animal cruelty.

Any register would need to be maintained and regularly updated to ensure that it was a useful resource. The risk is that anyone managing the system would not have the time or resources to effectively run it, resulting in a scheme that would allow animal offenders to slip through the net.

A similar risk would be abuse of the system by both sellers and buyers. There are implications to this being introduced solely in Wales. Although the system may be effective with Welsh offenders trying to buy animals in Wales there are going to be clear problems with offenders from other areas in the UK and also with Welsh offenders who cross the border to avoid the register. There is also the problem that a third party could buy the pets from a responsible seller who will check the register and then the third party could go on to sell them again avoiding the register.

- **The legal and practical implications of placing a duty on sellers/breeders to consult a register/ The administration and funding implications of such a register and how these could be addressed.**

As already stated above Blue Cross considers this an idea with some merit, which in theory could help to reduce instances of animal cruelty and other welfare offences in

Wales. It is however important to note that there are a significant number of legal and practical issues which would make this system difficult to implement in practice.

It is important to ensure that whoever is responsible for administering the register is able to implement a suitable system that would enable information sharing amongst all interested bodies and agencies. This also needs to work across regional and potentially, national boundaries.

We feel the best way to do this may be for a database to be held centrally by the relevant government department. The feasibility of that would have to be examined in detail by the Welsh Government and widely consulted upon.

Access to the information contained in the register needs to be wide enough to ensure that it is useful, however as previously mentioned it is important to ensure that the data is not used for vigilante style attacks or campaigns.

The introduction of 'Sarah's Law' in the UK faced similar challenges when establishing the system for naming registered sex offenders. This was addressed by ensuring that those parents who requested the data were not able to pass it on. This could provide a useful blueprint.

In the US, where a number of states have tried to introduce a similar system, it has been suggested that an animal offenders register could be funded through a fee system paid by offenders when they sign the register. The number of people convicted of animal cruelty in Wales however is probably not going to be sufficient to make the scheme self-funding.

Proposals would need to be examined in detail by the Welsh Government to see if funding for the scheme could be allocated. Given the current financial climate this appears unlikely.

The details of individuals recorded on a database would also need to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. How long the data is kept and the way it could be used would also have to be governed by the Act.

- **Policing of a register and who should be responsible for administering the register**

The policing of any register of animal offenders is integral to its success. We can see a number of practical problems with this.

We fear that the register may only be used by the most responsible breeders and animal retailers. There is still going to be the problem of irresponsible and unscrupulous sellers/breeders who do not check the register. Furthermore there is the problem of individual private sellers and the informal, hobby breeders who may not have access or knowledge of the register. In recent years we have seen an enormous growth in the number of pets being sold on online classified websites by private individuals.

The sheer number of pets sold in Wales in any one week makes the policing of the

proposed system extremely difficult. It seems impractical to suggest that there will be the resources within such a system to check that every pet sale in Wales has been checked against the register; and in our opinion this could leave the system open to abuse. The system will rely on an element of co-operation from sellers which again leaves it open to abuse. There are also the practicalities to consider of having a system which is instantly accessible for breeders and sellers to use. Online database systems are expensive to operate however the alternative of some sort of paper-based system would be wholly impractical. A customer in a pet shop who wants to buy a goldfish for example is not going to be happy about having to fill into a form and wait for a number of days to see whether they are able to complete the purchase.

The goldfish example also highlights another practical issue - which animals being purchased would require a check against the register? Would the same check be necessary for someone buying an insect or a fish as for someone buying or seeking to rehome a cat or a dog?

- **The penalties and offences that should be associated with noncompliance of both offenders and sellers/breeders.**

There are a number of ways to address noncompliance with the register. These include fines for sellers and breeders, and/or the removal of breeding/pet shop licences. For those who try to purchase an animal when they are subject to a ban we feel it may be appropriate to extend their ban or enforce a lifetime ban from owning animals.

Again we would like to highlight the practical problems with enforcement which may make it difficult to identify and trace those who fail to comply with the system.

- **The cross-border implications of developing an animal offenders register for Wales only.**

There are a number of cross border implications which may make such a scheme more difficult to introduce in Wales alone.

The first clear problem relates to those people convicted of an animal welfare offence who then choose to cross the border to deliberately avoid being picked up by the register when they purchase another animal.

The second linked concern relates to those purchasing a pet in Wales who have been convicted of an animal welfare offence in another part of the UK. These people will not be recorded on the register.

These problems however do not mean that the scheme doesn't necessarily have merit. If such a system was introduced in Wales and shown to be an effective way of dealing with the problem of repeat cases of animal cruelty, there is the possibility of using a Welsh scheme as a blueprint for a UK-wide animal offenders register.

## Petitions Committee

### Consultation on petition P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register

#### Response from the Farmers' Union of Wales



Dr Hazel Wright, Policy Officer, Farmers' Union of Wales, Llys Amaeth, Plas Gogerddan, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3BT

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Committee Clerk  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

[petition@wales.gov.uk](mailto:petition@wales.gov.uk).

5<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Dear Sir / Madam

#### **Petition Regarding the Establishment of an Animal Offenders Register in Wales**

Thank you for inviting the Farmers' Union of Wales to contribute to the above consultation. Following an internal consultation with its twelve County Branches, the Union submits the following comments for your consideration.

#### **General Comments**

The Union believes that maintaining the high animal health and welfare standards already achieved by the Welsh livestock sector is of paramount importance. Welsh livestock producers adhere to strict animal welfare regulations and maintain an on-going commitment to high standards of livestock care. Stringent animal welfare conditions must be met by producers claiming payments under the Common Agricultural Policy and, each year, livestock producers in Wales are subject to animal health and welfare inspections under cross compliance statutory management requirements.

However, whilst the Union fully supports high welfare livestock production, the present petition offers no ground-level support for the establishment of an Animal Offenders Register and the Union is concerned that the actions of animal rights lobby groups who represent only a small but vocal minority in terms of public opinion has led to a plethora of regulations which have little impact on animal welfare. It is perhaps worth noting that the FUW has consistently expressed concern that the expertise of impartial bodies such as the British Veterinary Association is often overlooked in favour of the views of bodies such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; despite the former being the more highly qualified authority on many issues pertaining to animal welfare.

FUW members unanimously opposed the establishment of an Animal Offenders Register due to significant concerns about the associated administrative and financial burdens that would be placed



upon compliant producers. Indeed, the costs associated with establishing the register, maintaining up-to-date information on offenders, policing the buying and selling of livestock in relation to the register and compensation for damage to businesses for errors in registration, would make the establishment of an Animal Offenders Register untenable.

An Animal Offenders Register without the funding and enforcement requisite to policing, maintaining and protecting the register would be ineffectual at protecting or improving animal welfare and, as previously stated, would function to reduce the competitiveness of compliant, high welfare, premises by imposing unnecessary administrative and financial burdens upon them. With this in mind, the Union believes that the proposed changes will mainly function to increase bureaucracy and that the overall effect of the proposal on animal welfare will be neutral. However, the impact of the register on the cost to industry could be substantial.

Members suggested that an increase in the resources offered to Local Authorities would make a greater impact on animal welfare than the establishment of an Animal Offenders Register.

The majority of livestock sold in Wales are handled by livestock markets and the present petition lacks clarity and an understanding of the complexities inherent in livestock sales. Members stressed that engaging with an Animal Offenders Register during high volume livestock sales would be completely impracticable. Moreover, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 specifies that persons with temporary responsibility of livestock, such as market operators, have a duty of care to ensure animal welfare is protected at all times. There is also specific legislation<sup>1</sup> covering the welfare of animals at markets and shows. Such legislation applies as soon as an animal is unloaded at a show or market and remains in force until the animal is removed. Several members therefore queried which party would have ultimate responsibility for utilising the register during livestock sales.

The very nature of livestock auctions means that market operators selling livestock would only be able to identify if a successful buyer was named on the animal offenders register *post* sale. Aside from the obvious financial and administrative burden on livestock markets conducting a high volume of checks, the petition makes no allowances for the provision of compensation to the livestock keeper following any resultant lost sales. A very high volume of livestock pass through livestock markets each month and consultation with a register under these circumstances would be highly costly and highly impracticable. Members believed it utterly inappropriate that compliant producers, keepers and markets could be held responsible for the actions of a small minority of individuals acting against the underlying values and aspirations of the livestock sector and under their own volition.

Persons convicted of offenses against animals are punishable under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Animal cruelty convictions are the responsibility of the relevant authorities and members believed that placing the burden of responsibility on law-abiding producers and keepers was discriminatory and an unwarranted and unfair diversion of responsibility.

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<sup>1</sup>The main legislation that governs animal welfare at shows and markets includes the:

- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Welfare of Animals at Markets Order 1990
- Welfare of Animals at Markets (Amendment) Order 1993
- Welfare of Horses at Markets (and Other Places of Sale) Order 1990
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007

Several members suggested that the additional costs associated with the use of an Animal Offenders Register will likely lead to animal sales – and thus animal sales revenues - moving from Wales to England in order to avoid the additional administrative and financial implications of consulting with a register.

Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales – is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of red meat in Wales. Hybu Cig Cymru is funded by a levy collected from farmers and processors in Wales at the point of slaughter. Given that the levy monies collected relate to the provenance of slaughter, any register which facilitates an increased movement of sales from Wales to England could also function to decrease the amount of levy collected in Wales. Amongst other issues, Hybu Cig Cymru works with the livestock sector to improve the health and welfare of farmed livestock through livestock research and development, knowledge transfer and best practise initiatives. Any reduction in revenue would therefore have serious detrimental implications for Welsh livestock producers and the Welsh red meat sector as a whole.

Several members commented that convictions for failing to comply with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 do not automatically lead to a ban on keeping animals. Indeed, individuals may have those animals currently in their possession removed under the 2006 Act but may not be banned from keeping animals in the future. When using the proposed Animal Offenders Register in this type of situation, the seller of an animal could be prosecuted for selling to an individual convicted under the Animal Welfare Act, but the buyer could not be convicted for being in possession of another animal.

Notwithstanding the concerns and statements provided above, several members also provided several additional comments regarding the establishment of an Animal offenders register:

Members believed it would be inappropriate for the register to keep information on holding numbers as this could affect future tenants or buyers of a given land parcel.

Members noted that one justification for the establishment of the Animal Offenders Register contained in the present petition was that there is currently *'no law to stop anyone who has been convicted of animal cruelty from moving a few miles up the road and then obtaining another animal to inflict further abuse on'*. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, convictions which lead to a ban on keeping animals apply to the individual convicted and not the address at the time of conviction. An individual banned from keeping animals under the 2006 Act would therefore already be legally prohibited from purchasing or keeping new animals under a different address. However, without proper enforcement, convicted individuals may still obtain animals illegally from a third party and the FUW fails to recognise how any of those methods employed by individuals seeking to circumvent a current ban on keeping animals would be mitigated by the establishment of an Animal Offenders Register. The FUW therefore believes that increased attention to ground-level enforcement, rather than the addition of an Animal Offenders Register, will better aid in enforcing convictions under the 2006 Animal Welfare Act.

Several members stated that serious consideration would need to be offered to the types and severity of convictions included in the register and the time period for removal of information after any ban on keeping animals lapses.

Members expressed concern that the lack of broadband facilities in rural areas would prohibit the use of an on-line register.

I trust that due consideration will be given to the preceding information.

Yours sincerely

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

Dr Hazel Wright  
**FUW Senior Policy Officer**

PET(4) CAR 05

## Petitions Committee

### Consultation on petition P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register

#### Response from Dominika Flindt

Via email: [petition@wales.gov.uk](mailto:petition@wales.gov.uk)

The Petitions Committee  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1NA  
Wales

5 February 2013

#### **Animal Offenders Register in Wales (Ref: P-04-398)**

Following the receipt of a petition the Petitions Committee has agreed to examine ‘*the legislative and practical implications of creating an Animal Offenders Register for Wales which sellers/breeders of animals would be required to consult prior to the sale of any animal.*’

I would like to commend the Welsh Petitions Committee for setting up this consultation. I strongly believe that with the rise of animal cruelty in Wales (31% according to the 2011 RSPCA figures) a register for animal abusers would be revolutionary and take protection of animals to, hopefully, another level essentially aspiring to minimise animal cruelty. Should the Welsh Assembly decide to adopt and implement an animal offenders register it would provide an excellent example not only to the rest of the UK but also to the rest of Europe which are in dire need of improvement of animal protection. As the Commission is aware, even though the UK has one of the strongest animal welfare legislation in Europe horrific animal abuse still takes place. Other means, including animal abusers register, need to be adopted and put to work in order to stop unnecessary animal suffering.

Before I move on to submit my thoughts and ideas on creating a Welsh animal offenders register I would like to add that should such a register come into existence it should ideally extend beyond the sellers/ breeders parameter. By this I mean that animal shelters, farmers and individuals wishing to put their animals up for adoption (this is a non – exhaustive list) should also be required by law to consult an animal

abusers register before they pass on an animal to a person thus ensuring that an animal would not end up in the wrong hands.

I will now move on to provide my views on the six areas which the Petitions Committee enumerated in the letter of 12 December 2012 and that will be taken into account as evidence in consideration of animal offenders register for Wales.

### The risks and benefits of creating an Animal Offenders Register for Wales

#### Risks

The fact is that with any new endeavours there will always be risks. However, we will not know if a Welsh animal offenders register will work until it is tried and tested. In my view the main risk of creating an animal offenders register would have to do with keeping such a register up-to-date so that it could be of real use. This is for two reasons. The first one is to inform and warn sellers/ breeders about individuals who are forbidden from owning an animal; someone would need to make sure that a register is immaculate. As I mentioned above it would be best to also allow society at large to consult such a register. The second reason is to make sure that those offenders which are rehabilitated are taken off the list. Inaccurate entries could be life damaging. I strongly believe that humans make mistakes and if they learn from those mistakes they should be given a second chance.

#### Benefits

Setting up an animal offenders register would ensure, at least to some extent, that sellers/ breeders would know that an animal will not end up in a dangerous environment. I believe that such a register would help to prevent animal abuse in the future and thus possibly prevent individuals from re-offending. By having to consult a register sellers/ breeders would be better educated about the risks and keep in mind the safety of animals. It will also send a clear message that society takes animal cruelty seriously.

### The legal and practical implications of placing a duty on sellers/ breeders to consult a Register

A new, legal duty placed on sellers/ breeders is crucial in order for a register which is the subject of this consultation to work. The Animal Welfare Act would need to be amended for such a duty to be enforceable. In my view, without a threat of the law it would be unlikely that sellers and/or breeders would be consulting the register.

Practical implications need not be thought of as difficult to overcome. Consulting a register could be set up via a public website where a seller/ breeder would be required by law to check a name of a person asking to acquire an animal. In my view a seller/ breeder should be required to fill out an on-line form essentially confirming that a background check has taken place.

There is, of course, a precedent with the sex offenders' register. That can be used as a model, with appropriate modifications.

The administration and funding implication of such a Register and how these could be addressed and in particular:

- Who should be responsible for administering the Register?

The Welsh Assembly, via an appointed Minister, should be responsible for the overall workings of a register. However, administration of the Register should be delegated to the local councils that would cooperate with the police force attached to that particular council. A centralised animal abuse register system should be set up to link the whole of Wales so that any council and police force would be aware at all times of the whereabouts of a person who has been convicted of animal abuse.

- Who should have access to the information contained in the Register?

The public should have free access to the Register and the database should be set up to allow easy access and search functionalities.

- How should administration of a Register be funded?

An animal abusers register should be funded by the public via tax contributions, however, a fund could also be set up for voluntary contributions from individuals and organisations.

- What details about offenders should be held in a Register?

A register should provide anyone seeking information as to whether a person has been convicted of an animal abuse with the following information: name, address, age, description of an offence, as well as photograph of an offender.

Policing of a Register and who should be responsible for ensuring the compliance of sellers/ breeders with any requirement to consult the Register

Local councils via appointed animal welfare officers together with police force should be responsible for policing of an animal offenders register. The responsibility for ensuring the compliance of sellers/ breeders with a requirement to consult a register should fall on the same authorities but a strong involvement of the police force and magistrate courts would be ideal as in many instances only the police and courts appear to have a strong influence on peoples compliance with their legal obligations.

### The penalties and offences that should be associated with non-compliance of both offenders and sellers/ breeders

In case of offenders' non-compliance with a register a penalty imposed should depend on the gravity of offence committed against an animal. The penalties which I would like to propose are not too far off from the punishment imposed under the Animal Welfare Act. For less serious offences an offender would be asked to pay a fine, face a longer ban before being able to own and keep an animal in the future and complete a community service with animals. In cases of individuals who commit more serious offences a jail sentence, considerable fine and life ban on keeping and owning animals should be an option. I strongly believe that all animal abusers should undertake rehabilitation in an animal shelter. Without understanding that what they have done is wrong, there is a chance that offenders might commit further and graver crimes.

A seller/ breeder would not be complying with a register, for instance, in cases of not consulting a register or selling an animal to a person who has been convicted of an animal abuse. As above, depending on the gravity of an offence a seller/ breeder should pay a fine, be banned from selling/ breeding animals or face jail.

### The cross-border implications of developing an Animal Offenders Register for Wales only

If Wales adopted an animal offenders register it would be the first register of this kind in the country and not enforceable in the rest of the UK which may, understandably, seem unsatisfactory. The real problem might arise in cases where an offender moves to, for instance, England and will then be able to get hold of an animal from a seller /breeder who will be unaware of the fact that that person committed an offence involving animal abuse in Wales. However, I strongly believe that Wales would provide an example for the rest of the country and it is quite likely that with a high number of animals being abused every year the rest of the Union would follow in Wales's steps.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dominika Flindt



# Cymdeithas Frenhinol Atal Creulondeb i Anifeiliaid Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Committee Clerk  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales,  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA  
Submitted to: [petition@wales.gov.uk](mailto:petition@wales.gov.uk).

## Petitions committee consultation Animal Offenders Register

February 2013

RSPCA Cymru would like to apologise to the Committee members for the brevity of our response, we have been unable to allocate the resources this complex issue deserves due to capacity issues beyond our control at this time. If the Committee felt able to allow a longer or extended consultation period, we would of course be happy to respond in full. In the mean time we have supplied some initial points for the Committee's consideration under the questions posed in your consultation. We would also be more than happy to attend a meeting to discuss these issues in more detail if that were convenient.

To reiterate our first response to the Committee on this issue in September 2012 – as the main enforcer<sup>1</sup> of animal welfare legislation in Wales (and England) the RSPCA certainly welcomes a comprehensive investigation into the practicalities and legalities of a register of offenders. The RSPCA would be pleased to support the Assembly in this endeavour and as such we very much hope this consultation by the Committee marks the beginning of a very forward-thinking and innovative development in policy and legislation by the National Assembly for Wales.

### Committee questions

#### **The risks and benefits of creating an Animal Offenders Register for Wales.**

The RSPCA is currently reviewing its position across the whole spectrum of sentences for offences involving the cruelty and neglect of animals, but it is widely thought that the sentences available, certainly for the more serious offences, are not a sufficient deterrent nor are they perhaps a proportionate punishment. Having said that we are also keenly interested in the developments within the restorative justice sector where perhaps both the issues of deterrence and punishment may present better opportunities.

An Animal Offenders Register in Wales could perhaps offer two functions, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, that is a) a form of punishment for the offender and

<sup>1</sup> Please see [www.politicalanimal.org.uk/wales](http://www.politicalanimal.org.uk/wales) for data and statistics on the work of the RSPCA and the prosecutions taken in Wales each year

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#### **Cruelty Line**

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Elusen a gofrestrwyd yng  
Nghymru a Lloegr  
Rhif. 219099

A charity registered in  
England & Wales  
Charity no. 219099

[www.rspca.org.uk/wales](http://www.rspca.org.uk/wales)

Noddwr Ei Mawrhydi  
Y Frenhines

Patron HM The Queen

Is-noddwr Ei  
Ras Archesgob Caergaint

Vice Patron His Grace  
The Archbishop of Canterbury



# Cymdeithas Frenhinol Atal Creulondeb i Anifeiliaid Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

b) to prevent some forms of re-offending, in terms of that offender firstly acquiring another animal after having been banned by the court, and secondly potentially going on to make that new animal suffer.

In respect of the issue of punishment, the RSPCA's main goal in court cases – of a severity that merits it – is to secure a ban on the keeping of animals. This, and where appropriate custodial sentences, are important both as a means of punishment and to prevent further suffering to those, or other, animals. The proposal to add the offender to a register is possibly not a strong form of punishment if it is – as it would likely to be – a closed list i.e. not publicly available information. In terms of the second function of preventing offending, this is more complex because what is not known is how many people go on to repeat their offences although we certainly come across a significant number of such cases each year.

As stated earlier, the RSPCA is the main enforcer<sup>2</sup> of animal welfare legislation in Wales (and in England) and as such we already hold the majority of relevant data on the offenders we have prosecuted, indeed all potential new employees face a background check using this database. What we are not able to do however, due to the level of resources involved, is to monitor those that have been convicted. RSPCA Cymru has 29 Inspectors, six Animal Collection Officers, four Animal Welfare Officers, three Chief Inspectors and one Superintendent, but we receive 60,000 calls from the public in Wales, each year, which amounts to 1 in 50 people calling for advice or to report an animal suffering. In 2011, 11,152 of these calls were subsequently investigated as complaints and from these 84 defendants were convicted of 239 offences with an additional 47 offenders cautioned. There are consistently similar numbers each year and thus it is not possible to monitor the accumulated total of offenders in Wales. As such it would indicate that a system whereby a person must be checked against a register of offenders before they can acquire an animal may provide additional safeguards.

It would be *imperative* however that the same requirement for a pet shop or breeder to check the person against the register should apply to animal rescues and sanctuaries that rehome animals, otherwise there would be a significant loophole in the legislation.

**The legal and practical implications of placing a duty on sellers/breeders to consult a Register.**

**The administration and funding implications of such a Register and how these could be addressed and in particular:**

**a) Who should be responsible for administering the Register?**

Because the RSPCA takes the majority of prosecutions there are implications of added responsibilities about our obligations to return that data to the Register. Therefore this is a more complex issue that in our opinion requires a

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<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary answer by Harriet Harman (the then Solicitor General): "The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals undertakes most prosecutions for animal cruelty. It has long established expertise in both the investigation and prosecution of cases involving animal welfare." (Hansard, 13 March 2003, col 427)

# Cymdeithas Frenhinol Atal Creulondeb i Anifeiliaid

## Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

thorough investigation and a dialogue between the RSPCA and legislators, which we would welcome.

### **b) Who should have access to the information contained in the Register?**

The RSPCA is unaware of the access rights in the systems that exist elsewhere in the world (perhaps they would be willing to provide details to the Committee if approached) and it would seem prudent to collect such information to determine the correct way forward because the intention should be to limit access to only *precisely* those that have a legitimate need.

The requirement to check the database for the potential purchaser/adopter's status in terms of any offences, does not require the pet shop/animal rescue to have 'access' to the data, only the results of the search.

As the main enforcer of legislation it would seem clear that the RSPCA would need full access, as would the police/CPS and local authorities who also take prosecutions for animal cruelty.

### **c) How should administration of a Register be funded?**

As stated above the RSPCA has not studied the comparable systems in operation however it would appear that those Registers are funded through a fee charged to the offender when their details are added at the time of conviction(s). At first glance this would seem to be the fairest option however we would urge some caution on this point because current court prosecutions taken by us rarely result in any funds paid to the RSPCA by the offender when they have been awarded to us by the court.

We would also recommend that a project is undertaken to ascertain the costs of such a system utilising our data, plus Local Authorities and Police, on the numbers of offenders in Wales.

We would not wish to see the Register funded by either a) the organisation or company commissioning the search of the Register nor b) the person acquiring the animal. This is with animal welfare and rehoming charities and organisations in mind. Firstly adoption fees charged by us and contemporary organisations are usually only a fraction of the cost of rehabilitating, rehoming, neutering and microchipping that animal. As such it would not be fair that any cost of checking the register should be borne by the RSPCA or other animal welfare organisations who are already struggling to find homes for the many hundreds, if not thousands, of unwanted animals in Wales each year. Similarly we would expect to see the numbers of potential adopters drop dramatically if they had to first pay to demonstrate they were not on the Register.

### **d) What details about offenders should be held in a Register?**

Only the most relevant details should be retained, such as names, locations, contact details and the precise details of offences the individual was convicted of and also the sentences given.

---

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# Cymdeithas Frenhinol Atal Creulondeb i Anifeiliaid Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

It would also need to be made a requirement that the offender update their details should any such details change and it might even be more prudent to require an annual registration to ensure their details are regularly checked and remain correct. The latter would also increase the monitoring effect and intention from introducing such a Register.

## **Policing of a Register and who should be responsible for ensuring the compliance of sellers/breeders with any requirement to consult the Register.**

Compliance with any legislation is always fraught with problems and a difficult issue to resolve satisfactorily without infinite resources. This requires further thought but in the first instance we would suggest that pet shops could be spot-checked as part of their licensing by the local authority. The RSPCA also supports the proposal to regulate Animal Welfare Establishments<sup>3</sup> otherwise known as 'sanctuaries' and if this was introduced the same system could apply as part of their licensing by the local authority.

## **The penalties and offences that should be associated with non-compliance of both offenders and sellers/breeders.**

The RSPCA would welcome further research into this field to make a scientific assessment of the effectiveness of such penalties and offences. But we would not expect any sentence for the offender (on the Register) to be lower than those currently provided for under the Animal Welfare Act for instance.

For pet shops who sell an animal without checking the purchaser's status on the Register first could be punished through a suspension of their licence. It should perhaps remain irrelevant as to whether the purchaser of the animal in that situation had indeed been convicted of cruelty, what would be more important is the consistent and effective compliance by the pet shop in checking every purchaser.

For animal welfare organisations the same conditions could be applied if a system of licensing existed – as advocated by the RSPCA and many other organisations (please see the earlier reference to the AWWN report), however if no system existed there would still need some form of penalty, which would involve the prosecution of the individual or the organisation.

## **The cross border implications of developing an Animals Offenders Register for Wales only.**

This is perhaps not a new issue considering that municipalities that have introduced such a register in the USA must be presented with the same problems. The fact will remain that an individual will be able to secure an animal through various legal – such as a gift from an individual - and *illegal*<sup>4</sup> means, including theft as well as visiting other nations within the UK and further afield. Indeed the illegal trade and movement of animals as

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.awnwales.org/userimages/AWWN%20AWE%20Report.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> If they had been banned and placed on to the Offenders Register then acquiring any animal for that individual would be illegal

# Cymdeithas Frenhinol Atal Creulondeb i Anifeiliaid Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

well as the suffering of animals being moved legally is of constant concern to the RSPCA.

## **Conclusion**

We hope that this brief response is somewhat helpful in your considerations. As stated earlier, we would be extremely pleased to work with the Assembly further to develop these proposals further and determine what help and role the RSPCA can provide.

We would also suggest that this area is in urgent need of criminological study to examine sentences and their relationship to recidivism in this sector, coupled with an analysis of how restorative justice may present opportunities for thorough and long-lasting behaviour change. We have strong links to the criminology departments of the main Universities in Wales and we would be happy to assist in designing such a study.

## **Petitions Committee**

### **Consultation on petition P-04-398 Campaign for a Welsh Animal Offenders Register**

#### **Response from The British Horse Society**

I would like to respond to the consultation as follows:

The benefits of creating an Animal Offenders Register would mean that a central database to list all those offenders with animal cruelty convictions would be created. Currently there is nothing to stop anyone with such a conviction/ban from buying another animal as checks to ensure this doesn't happen are impossible with the resources available.

The main problem of such a register however lies in the enforcement (a problem with any register/law) and the risk that breeders may sell to a person who has no record and who is buying on behalf of a third party who has previous convictions.

The Local Authority should be responsible for the administration within the remit of the TS Departments and the local Animal Health Officers within those departments. At point of conviction the offender can be entered onto the register – in a similar process to the Sex Offenders Register.

Access to the information held should be available to LA AHOs (of course if the admin lies with them this will already be the case) RSPCA, Police and rehoming charities/breeders. This information would have been made public at any court and conviction process. Addresses and contact details however would have to remain confidential with data protection law and only those recording the details should have access. Any individual selling an animal could simply request a basic yes or no from the administrator.

Funding should come from the Welsh Government with a percentage input from the RSPCA. Similar projects in America have shown that there is a huge potential to protect human life from this initiative as many serious offenders start with the ill treatment of animals.

Offenders names, addresses, DOBs and conviction details/penalties should be recorded. For parties who need information the disclosure would only need to include name/date and details of conviction and postcode area of offence.

From the equestrian point of view it has now become impossible to identify owners and check equine passport details as the National Equine Database has been closed by DEFRA last September. Serious welfare cases are on the rise and we would welcome the creation of this

Register so that anyone with a past conviction against an equine could be stopped from trying to own another. I can think of several cases where people have flouted the law and the result has been yet another horse being destroyed after months of suffering.

I understand that a similar proposal is being put forward at Westminster – there would need to be tight cross border discussion and a fluid strategy to ensure a workable solution.

Many thanks

**Jan Roche**  
**Regional Development Officer**  
**The British Horse Society**  
**Wales and The Channel Islands**

## **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

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-04-144  
Ein cyf/Our ref SF

William Powell AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Howell  
Cardiff Bay  
CF991NA

FAO Naomi.stocks@wales.gov.uk

 November 2012



I refer to your letter of 10 October enclosing further submissions from the Guide Dogs for the Blind in relation to their petition about the use of shared space.

Thank you for sharing the further information that the Petitioner has submitted which sets out their experience of shared space schemes. I am aware that other organisations in Wales are also preparing information on this issue.

All of these perspectives will be considered in our continuing assessment of shared space schemes. We will require more comprehensive evidence and to learn lessons from the application of the Department for Transport Guidance Note in England to inform future Welsh Government policy in this area.

Although not directly a shared space issue, I will ensure that the Design Guidance that is being developed to accompany the Active Travel Bill is subject to a rigorous Equality Impact Assessment. We will be consulting widely on the Guidance and the Guide Dogs for the Blind will have the opportunity to comment in due course.





**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**

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

**Our Ref/Ein Cyf:**  
**Your Ref/Eich Cyf:**  
**Date/Dyddiad:**  
**Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:**  
**Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol:**  
**Email/Ebost:**

P-03-144  
28<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
Tim Peppin  
029 20468669  
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WLGA • CLILC

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

Dear William

### **P-03-144: Guide Dogs for the Blind petition**

Thank-you for your letter of 10<sup>th</sup> October and please accept my apologies for the delay in replying. In order to provide a full answer to your letter I needed to gather information from local authorities and that has taken a little time.

I have divided the response into two sections:

- Local authorities' use of / plans for implementing shared space schemes
- Equalities issues relating to the petition (provided by my colleagues in WLGA responsible for equalities)

#### **Use of shared space schemes**

There have been a limited number of local authority projects across Wales that have incorporated elements of shared space in their design. There are, too, authorities who are considering using shared space in the future. Equally, though, there are some who have looked at the idea and decided *against* using shared space in schemes they have developed in recent years. The picture is therefore a mixed one.

However, in all cases the local authorities stressed that decisions are taken only after careful consideration, making full use of design guidance, road safety audits, discussions with local Members and community consultation. The helpful input of local Access Groups as part of scheme design was mentioned by most authorities, with Guide Dogs for the Blind themselves also noted as having contributed to the planning of a number of schemes. Social Services staff have been asked for views in some cases too. One authority referred to its staff taking part in 'Walk a mile in my shoes' with Guide Dogs for the Blind to help raise awareness and understanding of the difficulties faced by people with visual and/or mobility impairments.

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Chief Executive  
Prif Weithredwr

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[www.wlga.gov.uk](http://www.wlga.gov.uk)

Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken and, for larger schemes, external consultants have been employed to carry these out in some cases to ensure they were robust and independent. Authorities referred variously to a range of steps they have taken and alterations that have been made in response to feedback and these included the following:

- Some footway widening
- Prohibition of vehicles for parts of the day
- De-cluttering of street signs, posts and other features
- Careful selection of the design of street furniture
- Use of tactile paving
- Provision of above the recommended levels of parking for blue badge holders in key locations
- Use of civil parking enforcement staff to tackle inconsiderate parking
- Use of Shopmobility schemes

The authorities also referred to post scheme monitoring after works implementation to pick up any issues that might arise. The petitioners' submission identifies instances in Wales where remedial work has been undertaken, with the councils mentioned learning from the experience. Clearly, though, everyone agrees that it is best to get the design right from the outset through appropriate involvement and engagement.

It is encouraging to see that the petitioners recognise there are good examples of local authorities demonstrating willingness to take on board the concerns of disabled, blind and partially sighted people over shared spaces. WLGA are also keen to see this good practice spread across all authorities.

In these difficult financial times the number of schemes being planned has reduced substantially. However, where shared spaces are being considered as part of any such schemes investment of time and effort at the design and planning stage will outweigh any costs associated with having to undertake alterations afterwards. Indeed, the forthcoming Sustainable Development Bill is likely to assist in this process as planning for the long term, inter-generational equality and community engagement will all be central requirements

## **Equalities considerations**

As 'public authorities', local authorities are covered by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and must advance equality by having due regard to its general duty. Having due regard means;

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Therefore, an authority would need to consider these points in relation to the development of any shared space scheme. As described above, evidence from authorities shows

examples of where they have taken steps to meet the needs of different groups when planning such schemes.

In addition to these considerations, in replacing provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Equality Act requires that, where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a 'substantial disadvantage' in comparison with persons who are not disabled, service providers are required to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage. Each local scheme will inevitably be different; therefore any authority considering the development of such a scheme would need to work with local disability and access groups to determine the level of risk and what the appropriate adjustments would be. As outlined previously, most authorities reference the broad consultation and engagement undertaken in relation to such schemes and the helpful input of local Access Groups.

Furthermore, under the specific duties for Wales there is a requirement to 'assess impact'. Consequently, equality considerations should feature strongly in the planning, development and design of any shared space scheme helping to ensure the eventual outcome does not impact negatively on any protected characteristic group. Evidence above shows these have not only been undertaken but have had a positive influence.

Local authorities are aware of their responsibilities as set out under the Equality Act and this awareness, combined with the active involvement of local stakeholders and the consideration of equality issues throughout can help to ensure they meet both their statutory requirements and the needs of their communities.

I hope that the above information is of use to you and your Committee.

Yours sincerely



T.K. Peppin  
Director of regeneration and Sustainable Development

## P-04-144 - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Deputy Clerk, 05.02.13



Guide Dogs Cymru  
Building 3  
Eastern Business Park  
Waun Fawr Lane  
St Mellons  
Cardiff  
CF3 5EA

Date 5 February 2013

Kayleigh Driscoll  
Petitions Committee Deputy Clerk  
National Assembly For Wales  
Cardiff Bay,  
Cardiff,  
CF99 1NA

Dear Kayleigh

### **Petition about the Use of Shared Space**

Many thanks for sending me copies of the responses from the Minister and the WLGA.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to comment further:-

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372 7481

Access Groups, where they exist, are made up of volunteers. They are generally well informed and have a lot of experience of examining plans but cannot be expected to understand the concerns of all disabled people. This is the responsibility of planners and equality officers within the local authority.

Typically plans are presented in print so it is difficult for blind and partially sighted people to understand the full implications of a proposal. Shared surfaces, where kerbs are removed to facilitate free movement of vehicles and people, can appear to be helpful by creating a level surface without physical barriers. Unless the Access Group understands and conveys the importance of building in the appropriate tactile warning surface on dropped kerbs, the result could inadvertently put blind and partially sighted people in danger.

We campaign for inclusive environments which encourage safe independent mobility for all pedestrians. This can be done by ensuring that where kerbs are dropped to facilitate easy movement for wheelchair users, parents with pushchairs, and so on, they are replaced with a colour contrasted tactile surface to warn blind and partially sighted pedestrians that they are about to step into an area where vehicles are moving around.

There is nothing complex about this concept but in our experience design consultants value the aesthetic appearance of a scheme beyond its usefulness to all members of the community. This can lead to the creation of a frighteningly featureless landscape which has no clues for a cane user, and lacks the vital orientation points which a guide dog will look for to orientate its owner.

When people lose their sight they have to learn techniques to get about safely. This mobility training is provided by Rehabilitation Officers in Social Services on a one to one basis. When local authorities consult on regeneration schemes, they use conventional methods such as public meetings and exhibitions to tell the community what they are proposing.

Blind and partially sighted people will often struggle to interpret plans and may not even know about public notices or newspaper articles. We are therefore pleased to note mention of involving social services by some local authorities, but this is not consistent.

In our experience, local authorities find it hard to engage with blind and partially sighted people so they assume that the advice they get from the local Access Group will cover all issues. The first indication of a problem is when the Rehabilitation Officers or professionals working with blind and partially sighted people get requests for help from an individual who has, until the new shared surface was developed, been getting around independently.

This takes us to the issue of Equality Impact Assessment, EIA: Sadly, we can give examples of schemes where an EIA has not been conducted. We wholeheartedly agree that engagement should identify the risks to blind and partially sighted people as a protected group from the start, but if the local authority does not consult them the specific issues affecting them are not taken into account.

We believe that understanding of the EIA process is variable and that apart from a few pockets of good practice, (Swansea, Cardiff, and Merthyr), application of the engagement duty when it comes to regeneration and planning is not at the level which the WLGA suggests.

Guide Dogs Cymru has provided several “walk a mile in my shoes” events across Wales involving local councillors, assembly members and organisations working with and for blind and partially sighted people. We would argue from this experience that understanding of how blind and partially sighted people get about independently is poor. Without exception planning and highways officers have found the events enlightening and educational. We suggest that the reason for this is that understanding barriers for physical mobility is easier, installation of ramps, dropping kerbs and so on.

The current trend towards shared surfaces has created the biggest barrier to safe independent mobility for blind and partially sighted people in recent years. The paper we presented to the Petitions Committee sets out the serious consequences of such schemes. We would ask that, in line with its commitment to the Social Model of Disability, the Welsh Government does all it can to prevent shared surface schemes creating an unnecessary barrier to the safety and wellbeing of people with sight loss. We would welcome the support of the WLGA to do this and in particular to challenge the introduction of any shared surface schemes in the current financial climate. Blind and partially sighted people are likely to lose benefits under the UK government’s welfare reform and potential reductions in social services’ budgets mean that access to help with mobility is even harder to get. Why would we not do all we can to prevent the creation of another obstacle to their independence?

We are very happy for this letter to be placed in the public domain. It might be helpful if the Petitions Committee asks the Minister for a progress report on this matter at the end of the year. We will write to the Petitions Committee Chairman at that time to inform him if difficulties for blind and partially sighted people in Wales, with shared surfaces, are continuing.

Yours sincerely,

*Andrea Gordon*

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Andrea Gordon  
Engagement Manager



## **P-04-370 Petition for the improvement of Psychic and Intuitive services in Wales**

### **Petition wording:**

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to raise awareness with providers of Psychic services and the public of the Consumer Protection from unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

**Petition raised by:** Ant Edwards

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 13 March 2012

**Number of signatures:** 38



*Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Lleol ac Amgylcheddol*  
Head of Local & Environmental Services  
*Steve Holdaway, B.Sc., D.M.S., C.Eng., M.I.C.E., M.C.M.I*

*Gwarchod Y Cyhoedd /*  
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Mr Williams Powell AM  
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*Dyddiad / Date :* 26 October 2012

*Os yn galw gofynnwch am /*  
If calling please ask for : K M Yorston

Dear Mr Powell

**PETITION REGARDING PSYCHIC SERVICES AND  
CONSUMER PROTECTION FROM UNFAIR TRADING REGULATIONS 2008**

Thank you for your letter dated 22 October 2012 regarding the above Petition.

I can confirm that Powys Trading Standards has not had any issues regarding the subject of Psychic Services recently and I am aware that the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 would apply were a consumer to be misled in respect of these issues.

Thank you for your enquiry.

Yours sincerely

K M YORSTON  
TRADING STANDARDS MANAGER

*Gwasanaethau effeithiol ar gyfer calon werdd Cymru*  
Efficient services for the green heart of Wales



## **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

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/07293/12

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

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

5<sup>th</sup>  
November 2012

Thank you for your letter of 10 October about the reinstatement of plans for a bypass of the villages of Pant and Llanymynech.

My officials will raise this matter with colleagues in the Highways Agency, Area 9 in Birmingham. I will arrange for a further response to be sent to you on receipt of their advice.

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



Mr Powell  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Shropshire Council  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 6 November 2012  
My Ref: 259  
Your Ref: P-04-393

Dear Mr Powell

## **A483 PANT AND LLANYMYNECH – BYPASS PETITION**

Thank you for your letter dated 10th October requesting further information regarding accidents or safety issues at the above location, to assist in consideration of a request to the Petitions Committee.

The on-going concerns over the unsafe nature of the A483 through the communities of Pant and Llanymynech has caused this to be a standing issue reported against on the Parish Council agenda and also on the agenda for the Local Joint Committee of Shropshire and Parish councillors. It has led to a local action group being formed to press for a Bypass and meetings with the local MP and the local Powys MP – Owen Paterson and Glyn Davies – together with representatives of the Highways Agency. This has resulted in some mitigating measures including the previously unprecedented provision by Shropshire Council of Vehicle Activated Signs on this Highways Agency road but it remains the case and is the Community view that only a Bypass will solve the underlying safety problems.

Essentially the carriageways and footways are too narrow. The HGVs, which comprise in excess of 10% of the total traffic flow, fill the width of the carriageway, which is reduced to 6m wide in places. The footways are so narrow that pedestrians feel threatened to the extent that parents are frightened to allow their children to walk to school or in many cases frightened to walk with them. This is borne out by the data returned from the annual travel to school surveys carried out by Bryn Offa Primary School in Pant as part of their School Travel Plan. The Primary School is located on the northern side of the village and is accessed from a residential lane off the A483. The travel surveys show that in 2004, 29.5% of children walked to and from school however this figure has now dropped to just 18% in 2011 with travel by car also increasing to its highest level of 58% in the last survey. Relatively minor incursion of the hedgerows onto the narrow footways also renders some lengths totally unusable.

There are on-going maintenance issues on the surface water gully grids, causing vehicles to lurch and intimidate pedestrians even more; reporting of these damaged grids and their repair is a continuous process. This damage also exacerbates the noise that passing vehicles make to the annoyance of people living in the houses fronting the road particularly during quiet periods and has led to increasing concern over the vibration and damage to those properties.

North of the 40mph speed limit in Pant, where the road becomes derestricted, the A483 goes through Llyncllys Crossroads, over a railway bridge and on through a stretch known as the "Sweeney Bends". This whole length is a cause for concern, particularly the number of accidents and near misses at the Crossroads and its severely limited visibility. The provision of the Bypass, as previously designed and planned, would also provide the remedy here by replacing the crossroads with a much needed roundabout. The grids along this whole stretch of road are similarly damaged on a regular basis causing danger and inconvenience to all road users and a real danger to cyclists with motorists swerving to avoid them.

There is a history of personal injury accidents on the A483 through Pant, recording 7 slight accidents during the past 5 years, one of which involved a 15 year old pedestrian alighting from a school bus. The West Mercia Safer Roads Partnership have Pant as one of their "community concern" sites, following local representation and concerns, with targeted enforcement being undertaken in the last few years, with some positive results to the vehicle speeds through the village.

In summing up all of the above points, it is the community severance, fear of the traffic and the noise pollution that is having the biggest impact on Pant. The typical village services such as school, children's playground, Post Office, local shop, pub and village hall are all provided adjacent to the A483 however with the areas of housing split either sides of the road, the community will never feel the safety and security that a community such as this should. The area is adjacent to the Llanymynech Rocks Nature Reserve, a golf course and disused section of the Montgomery Canal (under restoration) all of which adds to the tourism and increased pedestrian activity in this part of the Shropshire/Powys borders.

In addition to the above, is the recent development of the use of the A483 through Pant by the huge vehicles transporting wind turbine components and associated equipment to construct the wind farms in Mid Wales. This brings about great community concern over not only safety issues but also noise and damage/vibration to properties which all confirms how this situation would be greatly enhanced from the construction of a bypass.

Yours sincerely

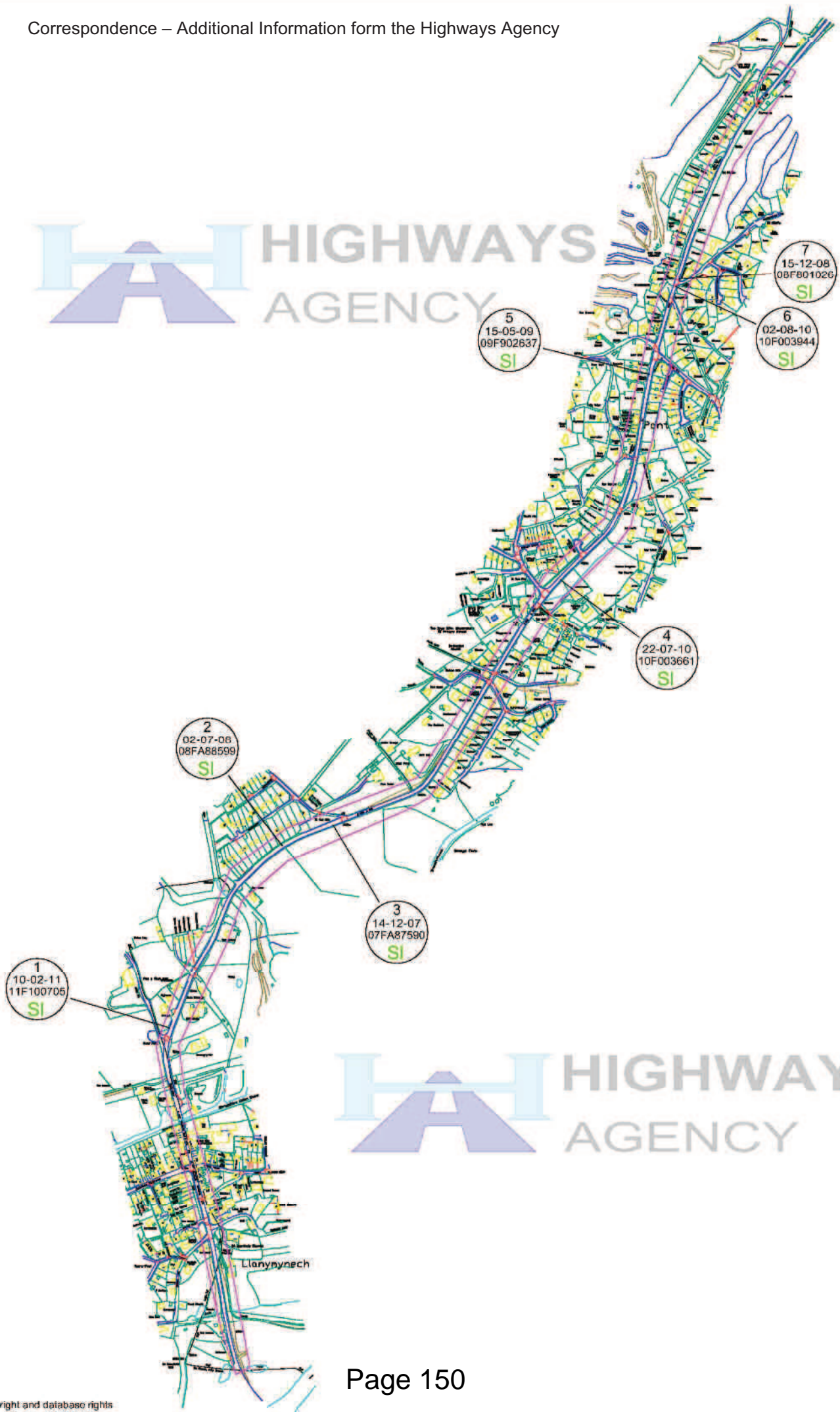


**George Candler**  
Area Director (North)

Direct number: 01743 255003

Email: [george.candler@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:george.candler@shropshire.gov.uk)

cc: Cllr Keith Barrow – Leader & Local Member  
Cllr Arthur Walpole – Local Member  
Ron Buzzacott – Highways & Transport Manager





A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system  
data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

ACCIDENT SEVERITY UPTO 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serious	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slight	1	2	1	2	1	7
Damage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	2	1	2	1	7

ACCIDENTS BY MONTH AND YEAR UPTO 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
January	0	0	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0	1	1
March	0	0	0	0	0	0
April	0	0	0	0	0	0
May	0	0	1	0	0	1
June	0	0	0	0	0	0
July	0	1	0	1	0	2
August	0	0	0	1	0	1
September	0	0	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0	0	0
November	1	1	0	0	0	2
December	1	2	1	2	1	7
Total	14%	29%	14%	29%	14%	100%

A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

ACCIDENTS BY DAY AND TIME

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
Midnight - 00:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01:00 - 01:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
02:00 - 02:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
03:00 - 03:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
04:00 - 04:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
05:00 - 05:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
06:00 - 06:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
07:00 - 07:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
08:00 - 08:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09:00 - 09:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10:00 - 10:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11:00 - 11:59	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
12:00 - 12:59	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
13:00 - 13:59	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
14:00 - 14:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15:00 - 15:59	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
16:00 - 16:59	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
17:00 - 17:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18:00 - 18:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19:00 - 19:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20:00 - 20:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21:00 - 21:59	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
22:00 - 22:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23:00 - 23:59	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	7
<b>%</b>	0%	29%	0%	14%	29%	29%	0%	100%

JUNCTION DETAIL		
	Number	%
T OR STAGGERED	2	29
NOT AT JUNCTION	5	71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

JUNCTION CONTROLS		
	Number	%
GIVE WAY SIGN	2	29
NOT AT JUNCTION	5	71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

SPEED LIMIT		
	Number	%
30 MPH	4	57
40 MPH	3	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

ROAD CLASS		
	Number	%
A	7	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS		
	Number	%
	1	14

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS INVOLVING SKIDDING		
	Number	%
	1	14

A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system  
data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

WEATHER		
	Number	%
FINE	5	71
RAIN	2	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

ROAD SURFACE		
	Number	%
DRY	5	71
WET	2	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

LIGHT CONDITIONS		
	Number	%
LIGHT	5	71
DARK	2	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	

A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system  
data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

CASUALTY SEVERITY UPTO 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Fatal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serious	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slight	1	2	1	2	2	8
Total	1	2	1	2	2	8
%	13%	25%	13%	25%	25%	100%

CASUALTIES BY MONTH AND YEAR UPTO 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
January	0	0	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0	2	2
March	0	0	0	0	0	0
April	0	0	0	0	0	0
May	0	0	1	0	0	1
June	0	0	0	0	0	0
July	0	1	0	1	0	2
August	0	0	0	1	0	1
September	0	0	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0	0	0
November	0	0	0	0	0	0
December	1	1	0	0	0	2
Total	1	2	1	2	2	8
%	13%	25%	13%	25%	25%	100%

A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

CASUALTIES BY DAY AND TIME

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
Midnight - 00:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01:00 - 01:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
02:00 - 02:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
03:00 - 03:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
04:00 - 04:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
05:00 - 05:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
06:00 - 06:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
07:00 - 07:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
08:00 - 08:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
09:00 - 09:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10:00 - 10:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11:00 - 11:59	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
12:00 - 12:59	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
13:00 - 13:59	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
14:00 - 14:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15:00 - 15:59	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
16:00 - 16:59	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
17:00 - 17:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18:00 - 18:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19:00 - 19:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20:00 - 20:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21:00 - 21:59	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
22:00 - 22:59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
23:00 - 23:59	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	0	2	0	1	3	2	0	8
<b>%</b>	0%	25%	0%	13%	38%	25%	0%	100%

CASUALTIES BY TYPE AND AGE GROUPING

	Unknown Age	0 to 4	5 to 15	16 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 59	60 Plus	Total	%
PEDESTRIAN	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	13
CAR DRIVER	0	0	0	1	0	4	1	6	75
GOODS DRIVER	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	
<b>%</b>	0	0	13	13	13	50	13		

Number of Casualties with unknown age: 0

VEHICLES INVOLVED BY TYPE AND AGE OF DRIVER

	0 to 15	16 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 59	60 Plus	Unknown	Total	%
CAR	0	1	0	5	4	0	10	71
GOODS < 3.5T	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	14
GOODS > 3.5T	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>%</b>	0	7	14	50	29	0		

VEHICLE MANOEUVRES

	Number	%
WAITING TO GO AHEAD BUT HELD UP	1	7
STOPPING	1	7
WAITING TO TURN RIGHT	2	14
GOING AHEAD LEFT HAND BEND	1	7
GOING AHEAD RIGHT HAND BEND	1	7
GOING AHEAD OTHER	8	57
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	

A483 Pant Last 5yrs (07 to 11)

Database: "\\tbprs001\data\area 9 mac\safety engineering team\keyaccident system  
data\databases\area 9"

Query Conditions: 01/01/2007 - 31/12/2011 Search Conditions:

**BREATH TEST**

	Number	%
POSITIVE	1	7
NEGATIVE	9	64
NOT REQUESTED	1	7
DRIVER NOT CONTACTED	2	14
MEDICAL REASONS	1	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	

**P-04-393: Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group - West Mercia Police to Clerk**

Naomi,

I refer to our earlier conversation in respect of the collision data requested as result of the letter received by your Petitions committee.

At your request I have searched our personal injury collision database in respect of the A 483 at Pant for the period January 2007 to date.

I can confirm that there have been 7 slight injury collisions recorded on this section of the A 483 during the above period.

Date	Severity of accident	
	Slight	Total
2007	1	1
2008	2	2
2009	1	1
2010	2	2
2011	1	1
Total	7	7

I enclose a map indicating the location of the collisions recorded during that period.

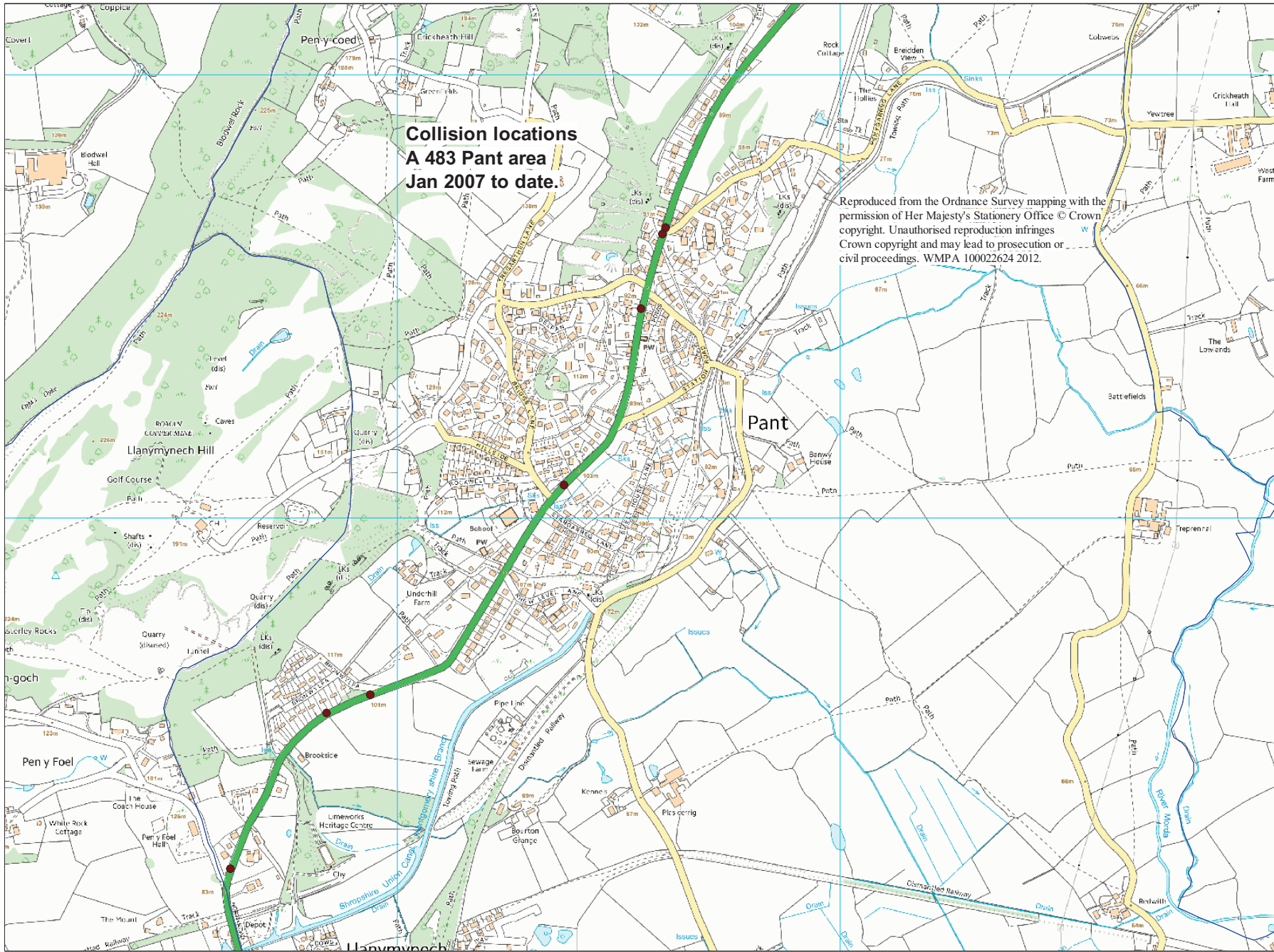
If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Paul Hobday.

Casualty Reduction analyst.

West Mercia Police,

Force Operations Department,





**P-04-393: Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group - MSIG to Deputy Clerk**

Hi Kayleigh

I would refer to your email below, I have spoken to the Chair of the Midlands Service Improvement Group and we don't believe we could add anything to the information you have already been provided with from Shropshire Council.

The purpose of the MSIG group is to share best practice and service improvements with member authorities rather than comment on specific highways schemes.

Kind regards

David

David Massey

Head of Performance and Engagement

Environmental Services Department

Derbyshire County Council

# Agenda Item 3.11

## **P-04-402 Council Prayers**

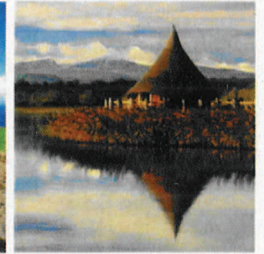
### **Petition wording:**

We the undersigned call upon the Welsh Government to amend the Local Government Act 1972 to afford each local authority in Wales the opportunity to decide whether it would like to hold council prayers during each council meeting and have it formally recorded on the official business agenda.

**Petition raised by:** Rev Alan Hewitt

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 2 July 2012

**Number of signatures:** 155



NATIONAL PARKS WALES  
Britain's breathing spaces

Mr William Powell AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff CF99 1NA

15 November 2012

Dear Mr Powell

**P-04-402 Local Authority Prayers**

Thank you for your correspondence dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> October on behalf of the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales, and your invitation to National Parks Wales to present views concerning the above petition. National Parks Wales is a partnership of the three Welsh National Park Authorities (NPAs).

We believe that there is no need for amended provisions to enable National Park Authorities, should they wish to do so, to introduce prayers before Authority meetings.

If you require any additional information concerning our position, please contact me in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Greg Pycroft  
Policy Officer



**Our Ref/Ein Cyf:**  
**Your Ref/Eich Cyf:**  
**Date/Dyddiad:**  
**Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:**  
**Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol:**  
**Email/Ebost:**

28<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
Naomi Alleyne  
029 2046 8660  
[naomi.alleyne@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:naomi.alleyne@wlga.gov.uk)



WLGA • CLILC

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

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012 seeking the views of the WLGA on the petition your Committee has received requesting amending the Local Government Act 1972 to enable local authorities in Wales to hold prayers at Council meetings as part of the official business agenda should they wish to do so.

This is not an issue that has been considered by the political leadership of the WLGA however it has been discussed by the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors as the relevant professional body. You will no doubt be aware that following the 'council prayers' decision of the High Court in the case of R v Bideford Town Council, the UK Government introduced a new power of general competence in England through the Localism Act. This power has not been introduced in Wales and although Welsh councils have a statutory power to promote the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of their areas (as introduced in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000), this statutory well-being power is not all encompassing and councils need to ensure that existing legislation does not impose limitations on the use of the power. It should also be noted that the power of wellbeing was also available to English authorities prior to and at the time of the above High Court case.

There are different views as to whether the well-being power is appropriate for councils in Wales to rely upon should they wish to hold prayers as part of formal Council business and should there be a legal challenge. As the Minister notes in his correspondence with the Committee, councils will also need to consider their public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 before introducing prayers as part of council meetings. As it currently stands, this is a matter that each council must consider and determine its position for itself however the lack of clarity on the legal basis is an issue of concern.

As is highlighted in the letter from the Minister to you some councils have decided to take a more cautious route and are now holding prayers prior to the commencement of formal business while others are continuing with their practice of holding prayers at the

*Steve Thomas  
Chief Executive  
Prif Weithredwr*

Local Government House  
Drake Walk  
CARDIFF CF10 4LG  
Tel: 029 2046 8600  
Fax: 029 2046 8601

Tŷ Llywodraeth Leol  
Rhodfa Drake  
CAERDYDD CF10 4LG  
Ffôn: 029 2046 8600  
Ffacs: 029 2046 8601

[www.wlga.gov.uk](http://www.wlga.gov.uk)

commencement of formal business. Some do not hold prayers at all. Such decisions have been taken by councils themselves having sought their own legal advice however there is not a defined position across all authorities on the appropriateness of whether prayers should be held before or as part of a council meeting.

In terms of the specific request in the petition that legislative change is required to afford authorities the opportunity to hold prayers during council meetings, further consideration of the issues would be required and a discussion amongst our members would be necessary before coming to a clear position from the WLGA. However, it is our view that further clarity on the legislative basis is required and we would suggest that the Welsh Government consider issuing a note that provides a summary of the legal advice they have received on the issue which may assist and provide guidance to local authorities in then developing their own position and practice locally. For information, the Welsh Government has recently consulted on new statutory guidance on the power of well-being (see <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/lgwellbeing/?lang=en>) and this draft guidance does not refer to using the power to allow council prayers.

I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

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

Steve Thomas CBE  
Chief Executive

# Agenda Item 3.12

## **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

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

02920 720668

30 October 2012

Dear Mr Powell

**PETITIONS COMMITTEE ITEM – RAIL SERVICES BETWEEN HOLYHEAD AND CARDIFF**

Thank you for your letter dated 10 October addressed to Bob Holland, Managing Director, Arriva UK Trains Limited, regarding the above petition which is being considered by your Committee. Mr Holland has read your letter and has asked that I respond to you on this matter as responsibility for train services on this route falls to me as Managing Director of Arriva Trains Wales.

I can confirm that Arriva Trains Wales would welcome the opportunity to explore developing further capacity enhancements to rail services on the Wales and Borders network with Welsh Government.

I hope that the above will prove useful to your Committee and I thank you for considering our input on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Tim Bell  
Managing Director

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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref SF/CF/3496-12

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

13<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Thank you for your letter of 10 October, on behalf of the Petitions Committee. I am grateful to the petitioners for bringing the topic of express rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff forward for consideration by the National Assembly. I am a regular user of these services myself, so fully understand their importance to the travelling public and business community.

The Welsh Government, together with its predecessor the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), has played a key role in strengthening direct rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff.

Historically, it is thanks to WAG that Wales benefits from direct services between North and South Wales via Wrexham as it initiated funding for the first of these in 2000.

Subsequently, the former Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) awarded the current Wales and Borders franchise to Arriva Trains Wales (ATW) from 2003. WAG set out its strategic priorities for services under this unified franchise in the Transport Framework for Wales in 2001. Following this, the SRA's franchise required ATW to introduce a consolidated Standard Pattern Timetable (SPT) from 2005. Under the SPT, ATW built on the funding of the original service to introduce the current regular two-hourly service of Holyhead-Wrexham-Cardiff trains.

From 2008, in addition to the regular services, the Welsh Government introduced the original Y Gerallt Gymro fast service Holyhead - Cardiff mornings and afternoon return. This had the objectives of:

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

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

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

Printed on 100% recycled paper



- reducing journey times between North and South Wales;
- allowing arrival before 1000 and sufficient time in Cardiff for a full day of business or leisure before the afternoon return;
- the option of Premier service and dining; and,
- encouraging sustainable transport.

At the time, due to constraints of the rail network, timetabling, and the capabilities of rolling stock, it was not possible for the original express service to call at Wrexham, which had always been a key objective.

A commitment to continuing express services was set out in the former Welsh Government's National Transport Plan of 2010. From 2011, a second, slightly later, limited stop service was introduced, using Diesel Multiple Units and where timetable constraints and rolling stock capabilities did enable calls at Wrexham. This service, however, was unable to provide the dining options of the original service.

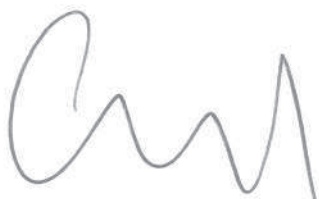
When the current Welsh Government took office last year, I committed to prioritise the NTP, and announced the results last December. Under the prioritised NTP, I am continuing to support the Y Gerallt Gymro service, as well as a programme of continued improvements for rail services between North and South Wales.

In September of this year I introduced a single enhanced Y Gerallt Gymro service. It combines the characteristics of both previous services including travel via Wrexham along with business class and buffet facilities, as well as delivering savings of more than half a million pounds per year.

I am also committed to delivering the north-south Wales enhancement project, which will include redoubling the majority of the single track between Wrexham and Saltney Junction, and associated track and signalling work. The construction phase of this £45 million project will commence in 2013. This project will enable faster journey times and increase capacity.

I also want to see North Wales properly connected to the electrified network that would deliver the potential of further reduction in journey times for all services using these lines. Following the Welsh Government's success in securing electrification of the Great Western Main Line to Swansea, and the electrification of the Valley Lines, I have opened discussions with the Secretary of State for Transport about a similar programme for North Wales.

As outlined above, the Welsh Government has a strong track record of providing better and faster direct services between Holyhead and Cardiff, and this work is continuing. I trust that the Committee will find this information useful for its inquiry.



**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**

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

**P-04-416 - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Clerk, 07.02.13**

**VALE OF CLWYD TRADES UNION COUNCIL  
CYNGOR UNDEBAU LLAFUR DYFFRYN CLWYD**

Secretary/Ysgrifennydd  
Neil Taylor (NUJ)

Our Ref/Ein Cyf        NT/Feb 13.

Your Ref/Eich Cyf

Date/Dyddiad        7 February 2013

Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CARDIFF

Dear Sir

**Petition on improving north/south rail services**

Thank you for your e-mail attaching copies of letters from Arriva Trains and The Minister for Local Government and Communities. This letter outlines my position on behalf of the Vale of Clwyd Trades Council. This will put my Petition in perspective and explain the background. My comments are based on the Arriva and Virgin Train's timetables from Holyhead operating from 9<sup>th</sup> December to 18<sup>th</sup> May.

The Arriva Trains Wales north/south rail service is a cobbled together system trying to make a long distance timetable out of three local services – North Wales Coast to Chester, the English Marches and Abergavenny to Cardiff.

Asking for improvements is easy but it needs something to aim for, an example that is attainable. For us in the north there are two examples. Firstly the Virgin Trains service from Holyhead to London. The difference in travel times from Holyhead to London and Cardiff is about an hour. Virgin's Service to London has about 9 stops, whilst Arriva's Cardiff service has about 22.

The number of stops after Chester confirms the major difference. Virgin's London train only stops twice, at Crewe and Milton Keynes. The journey time is literally two hours. I accept that Arriva's Cardiff service should stop at Wrexham and Shrewsbury but are the stops through the Marches really necessary for most journeys? This is the issue.

Its not just the number of stops that is different it is the number and frequency of trains. There are 14 Virgin trains from Holyhead to London some with changes but not much waiting time. They run between 0448 and 1921, 12 of

them hourly until 1544 arriving around 40 minutes past the hour. Return trains to Holyhead are hourly from 0710 to 2010, throughout the working day.

Arriva's Cardiff service has 9 trains, one starting at Llandudno Junction. These are only hourly to 0805 then about two hourly to 1610. There are only three return trains from Cardiff that are hourly being 1621, 1721 and 1821. The only express service to Holyhead is the 1821 arriving at Holyhead at 2238. The 1621 ends at Chester at 1904 where there is a connection. I have used the express service and found it verging on overcrowded.

Secondly there are express services by Arriva but only two a day. The first leaves Holyhead at 0533 and has only 10 stops taking 4 hours 25 minutes. There is now a second express service leaving Llandudno Junction at 0839 with nine stops arriving at 1208.

These must be the basis for an express service from North Wales to Cardiff. The service must allow time for meetings or shopping and return in one day. This could be done by making other services express.

The time between arriving in, and leaving, Cardiff with the 0533 service is 8 hours 20 minutes, longer than the working day. Those coming from Holyhead would spend 17 hours 22 minutes until arriving back. This is after an extremely early start possibly missing up to a third of a night's sleep.

My Petition has been prompted by the fact that since the establishment of the Assembly the number of all Wales meetings in Cardiff has increased considerably. I worked for the FSB and served on its Wales Policy Unit and three all Wales Partnerships some with regular meetings in Cardiff. Most times I travelled by car and stayed overnight before or after meetings.

The time away from the work place for employees and time off in lieu has to be a disincentive to sending staff to Cardiff for meetings. Many complain that people from the north do not attend all Wales meetings, this is a reason.

We are continually being asked to leave our cars at home and use public transport. Making all Wales meetings in Cardiff worker friendly will go a long way to achieving this.

I attend four-hour meetings in London at 1100 using the 0655 Holyhead. For shorter meetings starting between 1300 and 1400 I use 0855. My return train is the 1710 from Euston. For the longer meetings my Station-to-Station time is 12 hours, from Holyhead it is 14 hours, 0655 to 2059, which is better than the 17 hours 22 minutes for the Cardiff service. My train journey to London from Rhyl is 2 hours 40 minutes. The time to Cardiff is an hour longer.

The purpose of the Petition is to secure for Wales an express rail service Holyhead to Cardiff, similar to Virgin's Holyhead to London service. To achieve this I would make the following suggestion.

The Assembly discuss with a range of organisations; public, private and third sector that have all Wales meetings in Cardiff. This is to establish an acceptable start and finish time bearing in mind travelling to and from Cardiff Central station. This is to allow attendance at meetings without a very early start, long

travelling times by train and return on the same day. The information gained could be shared with Arriva and the Minister.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N'.

Neil Taylor LL.M, MCIPR  
Secretary/Ysgrifennydd

## **P-04-426 Introduce a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth Ceredigion**

### **Petition wording:**

We, Aberporth Community Council call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to introduce a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth Ceredigion.

### **Supporting Information:**

#### **Background: -**

Blaenporth village straddles the main South/North coastal road; the A487. Roughly two thirds of the village live to the South of the main road; the remainder of the population are mostly clustered around the local Church to the North. As far as Aberporth Community Council can ascertain this village is the only one without a mandatory speed limit from Fishguard in the South to Porthmadog, Gwynedd in the North, the length of Cardigan Bay.

#### **Historic Data to April 2012: -**

Numerous letters and e mails have been sent to the Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (MWTRA) and Ceredigion County Council (CCC).

Submissions to the MWTRA elicited no replies. Ceredigion Highways Department letters and e mails replies but no support for the change.

October 2009 came the Welsh Government Circular 24/2009; Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales. For 2 years CCC did nothing and then in a Cabinet Meeting 25/10/2011 a moratorium on the introduction of new speed limits was put to CCC cabinet members this was Page 8 of 9 being considered by Cabinet, a fait accompli! CCC Officers decision to start the process 2 years after the date of the circular and then take 3 years (until December 2014) to implement it seems to stretch the credibility of the process.

This decision prompted Aberporth Community Council to write to the Chief Executive of CCC, the reply just supported "The Party Line".

During this period Ceredigion AM Elin Jones was also attempting to implement a mandatory speed limit with no effect.

#### **May 2012 Onwards: -**

After the May Local Elections Aberporth Community Council felt it had a fresh mandate from the electorate to try once again for the mandatory speed limit at Blaenporth.

The start of the campaign was a site meeting with CCC Cabinet Member for Transport Cllr Alun Williams who supported our case and emailed CCC Highways Department and the Go Safe initiative.

The chair of Aberporth Community Council Highways Committee met with Ceredigion's MP Mark Williams and he also offered full support.

The opportunity was also taken to "Copy In" Mid and West Wales Regional Assembly Members. Rebecca Evans AM, finally had a reply from Mr Deio Evans MWTRA with the same mantra i.e. end of December 2014 before new speed limit decisions will be made. William Powell AM had suggested the petition's committee as a place of last resort.

**Addition Safety Information: -**

At the end of Summer Term 2012 CCC closed the local school; Blaenporth CP along with several other schools and opened a new school T Lewis Area School at Brynhoffnant Ceredigion, some 5 miles North on the A487.

As stated in the background paragraph two thirds of the homes in Blaenporth are on the south side of the village. These pupils and their parents have two options open to them for their children to attend their new school.

1. Take their primary school children in the morning across the road to the Bus Stop in what is an advisory speed limit with a legal speed of 60mph (more than half the traffic is estimated to exceed this National Limit). School pick up times also coincide with commuter traffic. or
2. Take them by car to the now closed Blaenporth School car park so that they can safely get on the bus. This option also has risks in that there is a finite time window to meet the school bus unlike previously when the School was open.

Of course children on the North side of the village will then have to cross this dangerous road at the end of school.

This situation has been highlighted in the local press Tivy-Side Advertiser 25<sup>th</sup> September 2012 edition.

**Summary: -**

Aberporth Community Council is at a loss to why there is no mandatory speed limit in Blaenporth and the lack of support by MWTRA and CCC to implement one. Ceredigion is not a large County and 3 years to check speed limits on Class A and B Roads seems an extraordinary amount of time for this exercise.

Just one village with no speed limit on the A487 within the County should be relatively easy to implement.

**Petition raised by:** Aberporth Community Council

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 16 October 2012

**Number of signatures:** Aberporth Community Council

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-04-426  
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/07367/12

William Powell AM  
Chair Petition's committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

7 November 2012

*De Bill*

Thank you for your letter of 22 October following the submission of a petition from Aberporth Community Council about the speed limit on the A487 through the village of Blaenporth.

Guidance on the setting of speed limits in Wales is currently provided by The Setting of Speed Limits in Wales Guidelines. The Welsh Government has an objective to complete a review of speed limits on the trunk road network in Wales for which it is directly responsible by 2014.

I can confirm that the speed limit at Blaenporth will be reviewed as part of the review of all trunk road speed limits and we hope to complete this by the end of the current financial year. Any changes identified from the review will then require the agreement of the Welsh Government and the relevant Police Authority before they can be introduced.

*CS*

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
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Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk  
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**P-04-426: Introduce a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth Ceredigion - Dyfed Powys Police to Chair**

I refer to your letter dated 22nd October 2012 in respect of a petition submitted by Aberporth Community Council to introduce a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth, Ceredigion. Having researched statistics available to us I can confirm that there have been 8 injury RTC's recorded since 2005 in Blaenporth, over a 1.5 km stretch of the A487 (all but one, a serious were slight injury).

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Huw Rees

Uwcharolygydd/Superintendent

# Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION

Miss Bronwen Morgan, LL.B.  
Prif Weithredwr  
Chief Executive



# CEREDIGION County Council

Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, SA46 0PA

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bronwenm@ceredigion.gov.uk  
www.ceredigion.gov.uk  
DX 92401 ABERAERON

Dyddiad  
Date

1<sup>st</sup> November, 2012

Fy nghyf  
My ref

BM

Eich cyf  
Your ref

P-04-426

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

Dear William Powell,

## Blaenporth, Ceredigion

I refer to your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2012. As far as the Authority is aware Blaenporth is included in the on-going Trunk Road Speed Limit Review being led by the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NAMWTRA). Whereas any future proposals emanating from the Trunk Road Review would involve consultation with the County Council, ultimately, any decisions will be a matter for Welsh Government to determine. It is therefore suggested that the Petitions Committee contact the NAMWTRA for a comment.

The current moratorium referred to in the petition relates to those roads under the jurisdiction of Ceredigion County Council (County roads).

I trust the above information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Bronwen Morgan  
Prif Weithredwr  
Chief Executive

# Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION

Miss Bronwen Morgan, LL.B.  
Prif Weithredwr  
Chief Executive



# CEREDIGION County Council

Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, SA46 0PA

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Dyddiad  
Date

7<sup>th</sup> February, 2013

Fy nghyf  
My ref

BM

Eich cyf  
Your ref

P-04-426

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

Dear Mr. Powell,

## Blaenporth, Ceredigion

I refer to my letter of 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2012 in response to your letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2012 regarding the above.

For the purpose of clarification, the moratorium referred to in the supporting information of your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2012 regarding the introduction of new speed limits applies to county roads and not trunk roads. Ceredigion County Council has no jurisdiction over the provision of a speed limit on the trunk road through Blaenporth; however, the Local Authority would be consulted on any proposals and indeed where appropriate, may consider complementary proposals for any non trunk road highway links i.e. side-road intersections.

I trust the above information clarifies the situation.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Bronwen Morgan  
Prif Weithredwr  
Chief Executive

# Agenda Item 3.14

## **P-04-428 : Alternative energy for street lighting**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh government to convert streetlights on the trunk road system in Wales to an alternative energy source and to issue guidelines to the local authorities requesting day convert local streetlights to alternative energy.

**Supporting Information** : The Welsh Assembly Government claim that they are working along the lines of Agenda 21, which is to reduce pollution by reducing our energy consumption. During the night, street lighting sends our energy consumption levels to a high peak. So I feel that the Government should convert the street lights in the country to an alternative energy source. For example, Solar and wind energy is already used for some street signage and to convert all street lighting so this would provide extensive and sustainable employment for thousands and the electricity providers would then be able to reduce their prices to the consumer and the Local Authorities.

**Petition raised by:** Ethan Gwyn

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 16 October 2012

**Number of signatures:** 22

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-04-428  
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/07364/12

William Powell AM  
Chair Petition's committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

13 November 2012

I am responding to your letter dated 22 October regarding converting street lighting on trunk roads to use alternative energy sources and issuing guidelines to Local Authorities requesting they convert local streetlights to alternative energy.

Reducing carbon and energy consumption is a key driver when designing roadside equipment. Alternative energy sources have been considered for a number of elements of roadside equipment such as lighting, illuminated signs and CCTV etc.

Installing and maintaining equipment such as solar panels and wind generators would incur significant capital investment and ongoing revenue liability with little perceived overall benefit in comparison to cost. A particular challenge for lighting would be storage of energy from the proposed wind/solar panels which would require batteries, fuel cells etc. The costs and complexity for the number of lighting units the Welsh Government own would result in this being a significant engineering undertaking.

The Welsh Government are aiming to look at a centralised method of gathering renewable energy that would feed into the energy grid rather than a high number of small roadside installations. I must stress however that this is in the very early stages of investigation.

As an alternative, the Welsh Government are actively looking at reducing the energy that the equipment uses as this is more effective than changing the source. For example, Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting units are being installed in areas where major maintenance is required. Where replacement equipment is required, an energy consumption review will be completed for the whole life of an installation.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400  
Correspondence: Carl.Sargeant@wales.gsi.gov.uk  
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Also, in line with design standards, best practice and the principles of the draft Welsh Government road lighting strategy, the need and extent of lighting is being challenged prior to any major maintenance interventions.

At present we are not developing any guidance documents for dissemination for Local Authority use, however officials from my Transport Department hold regular meetings with the County Surveyors organisations where information is shared, with regard to new technology and their potential for use in these areas.

While I realise this may not be the answer the committee was hoping for, as you can see we are actually addressing the issue of green energy for our road network and sharing this information with our counterparts in the local authorities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a wavy line.

**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**

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

## **P-04-438 : Shopping Access**

### **Petition wording:**

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

Investigate the provision of off-street disabled parking in line with Department for Transport Guidance

Create a law stating the minimum number, and dimensions of disabled parking spaces Investigate the current minimum size for disabled spaces to find out if they take into account vans used to transport wheelchair users

Set a standard, higher fine for misusing disabled space across all car parks that is enforced on first offence

Make taxi companies carry the correct clamps and inertia reels for use with motorized wheelchairs

Investigate whether current disabled toilet provision is of adequate size for users of motorised wheelchairs and attendant carers

Create a scheme where shops with fixed, or portable ramps display a badge in their windows

**Petition raised by:** Mencap Cymru & Ysgol Erw'r Delyn

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 20 November 2012

**Number of signatures:** 55



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-438  
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/07721/12

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

William.powell@wales.gov.uk

January 2012

Thank you for your letter of 28 November about the petition from Mencap Cymru regarding access to parking provision and other services for disabled people.

In January 2010, the Welsh Government published an Action Plan that set out our priorities for modernising the Blue Badge scheme. One of the priorities in the Action Plan is to produce guidance on the provision of disabled parking spaces by local authorities and others. We are working closely with local authorities, the British Parking Association and key partners on this guidance and this will be published in due course. In addition, we are working closely with the UK Government on the Disabled Person's Parking Bill that will provide local authorities with new powers to tackle the abuse and misuse of the Scheme. These plans will help to address many of the concerns about parking for people with disabilities that were raised in the petition.

In taking forward these plans we will explore with the British Retail Consortium the opportunities for introducing a scheme for displaying a sign where fixed or portable ramps are available.

I understand that building regulations cover the requirements for WC provision for ambulant and wheelchair users, but are only applicable where building work is being undertaken e.g. new buildings and where alterations or refurbishments are undertaken (provisions may not always be required in some alterations or refurbishments depending upon the work being undertaken).



However, the Welsh Government is currently part of the Changing Places Charter which includes MENCAP, transport operators, shopping centre and tourist organisations. The intent is to try and increase the provision of Changing Places facilities in the UK. These are specialist changing areas that include hoist, changing bench and are larger in size to allow carer assistance. Because of the specialist nature and cost of the facilities the Welsh Government are undertaking research to try and identify "hotspots" where there is a need for further facilities in Wales.

You also mention the need for taxi companies to carry the correct clamps and inertia reels for use with motorised wheelchairs. We are working closely with the Law Commission on plans for modernising the regulatory and licensing regime for taxis and private hire vehicles. This will provide an opportunity for us to explore how we can use the licensing arrangements to improve the provision of accessible taxi services for people with disabilities.



**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**

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

**Our Ref/Ein Cyf:**  
**Your Ref/Eich Cyf:**  
**Date/Dyddiad:**  
**Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:**  
**Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol:**  
**Email/Ebost:**

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013  
Tim Peppin  
029 20 468669  
[tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk)



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

Dear William

### **P-04-438: Mencap Cymru disabled parking**

Thank-you for your letter of 28<sup>th</sup> November regarding Mencap's petition in relation to disabled parking provision. Once again, please accept my apologies for the delay in responding but I have been collating responses from local authorities in order to prepare a more informed response.

In your letter you ask if local authorities adhere to the Department for Transport's guidance on disabled parking, Traffic Advisory Leaflet 05/95 Parking for Disabled People. Based on the feedback I have received it would appear that authorities do use TAL 05/95. The responses suggest that authorities seek to meet the guidance wherever practical. Some added that the bays are regularly enforced to ensure compliance with the restrictions in place and, in some cases, the parking is available free of charge for badge holders. In a very limited number of cases where authorities have admitted they have not been able to meet the guidance it is for practical reasons/space constraints.

You also asked for any other comments on the issues raised in the petition:

- Bullet point 2 - Some authorities pointed to the Equalities Act, which covers discrimination and reasonable adjustments, which they believe effectively covers this area already in terms of providing a legal requirement.
- Bullet point 3 - from the feedback I received there was a view that the minimum size for disabled spaces is sufficient to accommodate vans used to transport wheelchair users.
- Bullet point 4 - It was noted parking in a designated disabled bay without a valid disabled badge is already a higher level contravention with respect to the Traffic Management Act 2004 contravention codes which some authorities now use as part of Civil Parking Enforcement.
- Bullet point 5 – The Equality Act 2010 outlines provisions that

Steve Thomas CBE  
Chief Executive  
Prif Weithredwr

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Ffacs: 029 2046 8601

[www.wlga.gov.uk](http://www.wlga.gov.uk)

place duties on drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxis and Private Hire Vehicles to 'take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort'. Local Authorities will therefore be required to reflect this in their regulation and licensing when the UK Government brings these provisions into force.

I hope that this information is of use to you

Yours faithfully



Director – Regeneration and Sustainable Development

# Agenda Item 3.16

## **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

## **P-04-446 : Business Rate Relief for Welsh Charity Shops**

### **Petition wording:**

Charity shops make a vital contribution to raising income for a huge range of good causes in Wales. 100 per cent of their profits go to charity, raising over £12 million every year in Wales.

Proposals which reduce business rate relief for charity shops in Wales will reduce this income, and will cause charity shops to close, leaving more empty shops on Welsh high streets and threatening 700 full time jobs and 9,000 volunteering opportunities offered by charity shops in Wales. It will significantly reduce the services that charities are able to provide in Welsh communities.

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reject proposals which will restrict the vital business rate relief for Welsh charity shops.

**Petition raised by:** Charity Retail Association

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 15 January 2013

**Number of signatures:** +22,600

Edwina Hart MBE OStJ AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Busnes, Menter, Technoleg a Gwyddoniaeth  
Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-446  
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00141/13

William Powell AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

29<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 14 January, following the Petitions Committee receiving representations from the Charity Retailers Association asking that the Welsh Government reject proposals which will restrict the business rate relief for Welsh charity shops.

Professor Brian Morgan, who has chaired the Independent Task and Finish Group, has been undertaking further work on business rate relief for charity shops. He has received a number of representations in response to the call for evidence issued in December. Professor Morgan will be reporting back to me with his recommendations in early March and I will be making a Statement once I receive this.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

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

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
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## **P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren**

### **Petition wording:**

We call upon the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to make ELS skills training, including vital cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) a compulsory part of the curriculum at secondary schools in Wales, forming part of the core knowledge and understanding that children acquire at school. This would create a new generation of lifesavers across Wales.

**Petition raised by:** British Heart Foundation

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 19 June 2012

**Number of signatures:** Petition brought by the British Heart Foundation. An associated petition collected approximately 4,000 signatures.

**Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc  
Children and Young People Committee**

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

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

5 November 2012

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 22 October 2012, regarding Petition P-04-388 on Emergency Life Support Skills. The Children and Young People Committee considered your request to take forward the issues raised by the petition in a private meeting on Wednesday 24 October.

Whilst the Committee is extremely supportive of the requirement for children and young people to receive emergency life support skills training, we do not believe that our undertaking further work in this area would add to the excellent work already being carried out by the British Heart Foundation, particularly as the Minister for Education and Skills has already indicated that he has no plans, at the moment, to review the statutory nature of the PSE framework. The Committee is therefore not inclined to take this any further at this time but has written to the Minister for Education and Skills asking that he reconsider his position should any review of the statutory nature of the PSE framework be undertaken in the future.

Yours sincerely



**Christine Chapman AM  
Committee Chair**



## **P-04-396 Emergency Life Support Skills (ELS) for Wales Schoolchildren**

**Public Affairs Officer for the Children's Commissioner for Wales to Deputy Clerk**

Dear Kayleigh

Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your letter. The Commissioner has requested I respond on his behalf. Whilst acknowledging Emergency Life Support Skills are certainly valuable skills for children and young people to acquire, the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Keith Towler, does not think it appropriate to involve himself in this specific discussion on statutory PSE provision at this time.

We understand that Welsh Government currently has no intention to review the current mandatory content of the PSE curriculum, however when any review of PSE is undertaken, would expect a wide ranging analysis of the needs of children and young people in Wales. This should include listening to the views of children and young people as part of a participatory education system. A review of the PSE curriculum would also need to comply with the Welsh Minister's duties under the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

Despite his current stance on PSE, the Children's Commissioner for Wales would be supportive of any awareness raising activity relating to this particular issue and wish the British Heart Foundation well in its promotional activity.

Kind regards  
Gwion

Gwion Evans  
Swyddog Materion Cyhoeddus | Public Affairs Officer  
Comisiynydd Plant Cymru | Children's Commissioner for Wales

# Agenda Item 3.19

## **P-04-441 : Gwaith i Gymru – Work for Wales**

### **Petition wording:**

In light of the most recent Welsh youth unemployment figures, Plaid Cymru Youth calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put effective and positive steps in place to ensure a brighter future for this generation of young people.

Specifically, we call on the Welsh Government to (1) create a scheme to support 30,000 apprenticeships and to expand the Young Recruits programme; (2) develop a modern, high-value, in-work training programme to increase young people's employability; and (3) extend local authorities' borrowing powers to £350 million so that they can support small and medium enterprises with 'local loans funds'. In addition to these steps, we call on the Welsh Government to do everything in its power to reverse this worrying situation and to do everything it can, in spite of public sector cuts being imposed by the UK Government, to create work for Wales. These are difficult times and Plaid Cymru Youth believes that the cuts that the Westminster coalition government is imposing on us are utterly unreasonable. Those cuts, however, must not stop the Welsh Government from acting now to help the Welsh economy. Youth unemployment is at record levels and worryingly, is worse in Wales than other parts of the United Kingdom; we seem to be bucking the UK trend. There is a real risk that this generation of 16-24 year olds will become a lost generation. They are in danger of being faced with financial hardship for the rest of their lives because of the jobs crisis that they are facing today. Having a quarter of our young people out of work is not a sustainable situation, and it is the start of a dangerous path to economic difficulties for Wales for decades to come. Effective and positive steps must be put in place now to reverse this alarming trend and ensure that we are creating work for Wales.

**Petition raised by:** Cerith Rhys Jones

**Date petition first considered by Committee:** 4 December 2012

**Number of signatures:** 129



Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref JC/05518/12

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

14 January 2013

Dear William,

### **Youth Unemployment in Wales**

Thank you for your letter of 14 December 2012 outlining a petition from Plaid Cymru Youth, regarding concerns about youth unemployment.

Our absolute priority in these tough times is to create jobs and enable growth. Increasing employment opportunities for our young people remains a key aspect of this priority for the Welsh Government.

As part of our Programme for Government, we have introduced measures to increase employment opportunities for young people. These measures include: establishing Jobs Growth Wales for young people aged 16-24, extending apprenticeship opportunities, and establishing key employability programmes such as Traineeships for young people aged 16 to 18 and Steps to Employment for adults aged 18 plus.

### ***Jobs Growth Wales***

Jobs Growth Wales was launched in April 2012 following a successful pilot. The programme aims to create 4000 jobs opportunities across Wales each year, for the next three years, for unemployed young people aged 16-24, giving them real experience of work for a 6-month period. Participants will be paid at or above the National Minimum Wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week. To date the programme has created 4570 job opportunities and 2540 young people have taken up these opportunities. I anticipate that many young people will progress from Jobs Growth Wales into Apprenticeships.

## ***Apprenticeships***

The Apprenticeship programme is a modern, high-value, 'in work' training programme and the Welsh Government is encouraging employers to recruit new apprentices via its Pathways to Apprenticeship programme, Young Recruits Programme, engagement with Anchor and Regionally Important Companies and via its Apprenticeship Matching Service.

We are committed to extending our Young Recruits Programme (YRP) initiative, which offers a wage subsidy to employers recruiting a 16-24 year old apprentice. The programme is available to support employers who are unable to recruit and support an apprentice due to the economic downturn. We have increased the number of places from 1000 in 2011/12 to 2000 in 2012/13.

The Apprenticeship Matching Service (AMS) is a web based service that enables employers to register their vacancies and AMS allows potential apprentices to search for, and apply for, apprenticeship vacancies online. The service is accessed through the Careers Wales website: [www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com).

Our Pathways to Apprenticeship programme offers an intensive, college-based option for young people unable to find an Apprenticeship place with an employer. We will continue in our commitment to increase apprenticeship opportunities through the Pathways to Apprenticeship programme, with a special focus on youth engagement and employment and tackling long term unemployment.

On 8 November 2012, the First Minister in a joint statement with Leanne Wood, Leader of Plaid Cymru, announced an additional £20m in the 2014-15 Draft Budget to support apprenticeships in Wales, targeted especially at those in the 16-24 age group. This is further to the £5m additional funding I announced to support apprenticeships at the National Training Federation Conference in October 2012.

I will be discussing with Plaid Cymru colleagues various proposals relating to this additional funding in due course. The petitioner's concerns about creating additional apprenticeship opportunities and the expansion of the Young Recruits programme will be considered.

## ***Employability Programmes***

The Welsh Government also introduced the Traineeship programme for 16-18 year olds and the Steps to Employment programme for adults aged 18 plus. These programmes aim to support the development of young people and adults by building confidence, improving employment skills and offering work experience with a view to the individual entering sustained employment or further training.

## ***Borrowing Powers***

The petition references the possibility of extending Local Authorities borrowing powers. Under the Local Government Act 2003, I can confirm that the extent of borrowing is actually controlled by local authorities themselves. There is no existing limit. However, in determining any borrowing they undertake, local authorities have to make reference to the "Prudential Code" which ensures that any borrowing is prudent, sustainable and affordable.

It is for Local Authorities to determine whether their funds should be used to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Welsh Government offers support to SMEs and information on the support available can be found by accessing the following internet address:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/businessandconomy/publications/110112wagsmeguide/;jsessionid=7EA128D349371D1CAF463B3FEC4DF52C?lang=en>.

*Best wishes*  
*Jeff Cuthbert*

**Jeff Cuthbert AC / AM**  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau  
Deputy Minister for Skills