

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Inquiry into the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Policy

Response from Non Jenkins

I write to praise the work of Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments: its collection of plans, pictures and documents is invaluable, and the scholarship and knowledge of the Commission's staff is a huge asset when it comes to interpretation of the collection.

My experience of Cadw is as a visitor to buildings in its care, where I've been impressed with their work. However I have the impression that Cadw is expected to play an important role in the Welsh tourist industry, and that they have to give priority to the kinds of buildings, such as castles, that will appeal to today's tourist. This is very different from the work of the Royal Commission which records buildings which may have no obvious appeal to the layman but which hold in them information of great value to historians of the future. The Commission's mapping of longhouses in Wales, for example, helps us to discover much about regional variations in the history of agricultural society.

If you are considering a restructuring of our institutions I hope you will bear in mind the need to preserve the detailed research that underpins any good history, let alone a popular history programme, and that this is what the Commission supplies.

Yours sincerely

Non Jenkins