

## Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 26 March 2003

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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### Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language

#### Books in English and Welsh

**Q8 Brian Gibbons:** Can the Minister give details of the number of books in English and Welsh published with assistance from Assembly sponsored bodies over the last three years? (OAQ23634)

**The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson):** During the last three years, 982 books have been published with assistance from Assembly sponsored bodies within my portfolio. Of this total, 724 were Welsh-language books, 221 were English-language books and 37 were bilingual books. Most of these books were published with the assistance of either the Welsh Books Council (642) or the Arts Council of Wales (258).

#### Women's Participation in the Arts

**Q9 Christine Chapman:** What action has the Minister taken to promote women's participation in the arts in Wales? (OAQ23632)

**Jenny Randerson:** I firmly believe in the benefits of the arts for everyone and my culture strategy 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol' underlines this. I was delighted to give my support and open the International Women's Day celebrations on Saturday, 8 March at the Old Library in Cardiff. Assembly Government funding to the Arts Council of Wales has supported Permanent Waves to provide participatory arts activities for women in Cardiff and south-east Wales. Permanent Waves has also been funded to act as a strategic body for women in the arts in Wales.

#### Encouraging Sculpture in Wales

**Q10 David Melding:** Will the Minister make a statement on measures she is taking to encourage sculpture in Wales? (OAQ23624)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Assembly Government supports Cywaith Cymru/Artworks Wales and CBAT: The Arts and Regeneration Agency through the Arts Council of Wales. Both organisations commission and promote sculpture. The council also supports sculptors through its artists in residence programme. The arts council is currently undertaking a review of public art.

#### Participation in Sport

**Q11 John Griffiths:** Will the Minister make a statement on progress in widening participation in sport among Wales's most deprived communities? (OAQ23664)

**Jenny Randerson:** The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to providing sporting opportunities for all. The social inclusion in sport initiative aims to encourage participation and improve access to sport for those located in Wales's deprived communities.

### **Changes to the Conditions of Grant (Arts Council of Wales)**

**Q12 Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Will the Minister make a statement on the changes to the conditions of grant issued by the Arts Council of Wales? (OAQ23629)

**Jenny Randerson:** One of the actions in the Arts Council of Wales's restructuring process was that its lottery and Assembly Government funding streams should be streamlined and integrated. These changes to the funding schemes have meant that new standard conditions of grant have been introduced. Most arts council revenue clients were familiar with previous grant conditions, which have now been combined for the first time. I am aware of some concerns about the clauses in the combined conditions on organisations' use of surpluses/profits and reserves. I understand that the arts council is issuing guidance to organisations on the operation of grant conditions. It will also, in light of comments made, be simplifying the wording of the relevant clauses.

*Question 13 (OAQ23619) withdrawn.*

### **50-metre Swimming Pool for Cardiff**

**Q14 Owen John Thomas:** What discussions has the Minister had with the Sports Council for Wales concerning the provision of a 50-metre swimming pool in Cardiff? (OAQ23622)

**Jenny Randerson:** From time to time, I have had discussions with the Sports Council for Wales regarding overall provision of a 50-metre pool in Cardiff.

### **The Profile of Women's Sport in Wales**

**Q15 Val Lloyd:** What action is the Minister taking to raise the profile of women's sport in Wales? (OAQ23626)

**Jenny Randerson:** Our aim, together with the Sports Council for Wales and supported by programmes such as Girls First, is to halve the gap between men and women's participation in sport by 2005. The most talented female athletes are supported by the sports council's Elite Cymru scheme. Increasing numbers of female athletes are making their mark on the world stage.

### **Questions to the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Rural Development and Wales Abroad**

#### **Rural Development Policies (Benefits for Swansea)**

**Q6 Peter Black:** What benefits have accrued to Swansea as a result of the Welsh Assembly Government's rural development policies? (OAQ23610)

**Michael German:** The partnership Government has introduced a wide range of measures to help promote sustainable rural communities. These include support for agriculture and food processing and measures to help broaden the rural economy and tackle social exclusion in the countryside. All of the Assembly Government's agriculture and food processing support, including Farming Connect, is available to farmers, their families and other businesses in Swansea. These measures are backed by the rural development plan for Wales and Objective 1. In addition, Swansea benefits from the Objective 1 community regeneration measures.

### Organic Farming Scheme Payments

**Q7 Peter Rogers:** Will the Minister give a progress report on organic farming payments? (OAQ23593)

**Michael German:** Yes. Organic farming scheme payments recommenced yesterday—25 March. I expect the backlog of payments, accrued since the computer was shut down last October, to be cleared shortly.

### Ardaloedd Amgylcheddol Arbennig (Taliadau Hwyr)

**C8 Ieuan Wyn Jones:** A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad ar daliadau hwyr ar gyfer ardaloedd amgylcheddol arbennig? (OAQ23658) [W]

**Michael German:** Gwnaf. Cafodd y taliadau ardal amgylcheddol arbennig eu hailgychwyn ar 6 Mawrth, a hyd yma mae £6.79 miliwn wedi'i dalu. Y gobaith yw clirio'r holl daliadau sydd wedi cronni ers mis Hydref erbyn diwedd y mis.

### Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Late Payments)

**Q8 Ieuan Wyn Jones:** Will the Minister make a statement on late payments for environmentally sensitive areas? (OAQ23658) [W]

**Michael German:** Yes. Environmentally sensitive area payments recommenced on 6 March and £6.79 million has been paid to date. The backlog of payments that have accrued since October should be cleared by the end of the month.

### Fallen Stock

**Q9 Mick Bates:** What discussions has the Minister had with the rendering industry to plan Welsh capacity for fallen stock? (OAQ23597)

**Michael German:** The Welsh Assembly Government has strongly supported efforts to develop workable UK-wide arrangements for the collection and disposal of fallen stock when the EU animal by-products regulation comes into force. In line with the principle that the polluter pays and our own policies for a sustainable countryside, responsibility for dealing with fallen stock lies mainly with the industry itself. Since April 2002, the UK Government has been holding discussions with livestock and disposal industry stakeholders with the aim of developing such a scheme. Welsh Assembly Government officials met key Welsh livestock and disposal industry personnel last month for further discussions on this issue. Disposal industry representatives have told us that effective arrangements for collecting and disposing of Welsh fallen stock do not depend on the size on the rendering capacity within Wales.

### The Growth of Farmers' Markets

**Q10 David Melding:** Will the Minister make a statement on the growth of farmers' markets? (OAQ23608)

**Michael German:** Over the last two years, the number of farmers' markets in Wales has grown significantly. The WDA Food Directorate, through the agri-food partnership, is supporting a number of initiatives throughout Wales, and all regions of Wales have seen the development of new markets within principal towns.

### Tyfu Cnydau GM (Deddfwriaeth Newydd)

**C11 Cynog Dafis:** Pa gynlluniau sydd gan y Gweinidog i gyflwyno deddfwriaeth newydd parthed tyfu cnydau GM? (OAQ23656) [W]

**Michael German:** Nid oes gennyf unrhyw gynlluniau o'r fath. Mae'r Rheoliadau Organebau a Addaswyd yn Enetig (Eu Gollwng yn Fwriadol) (Cymru) 2002, a ddaeth i rym ar 31 Rhagfyr 2002, yn cyflwyno fframwaith rheoleiddio llawer llymach ar ollwng organebau a addaswyd yn enetig i'r amgylchedd na'r trefniadau blaenorol.

### **Growing GM Crops (New Legislation)**

**Q11 Cynog Dafis:** What plans does the Minister have to introduce new legislation on growing GM crops? (OAQ23656) [W]

**Michael German:** I have no such plans. The Genetically Modified Organisms (Deliberate Release) (Wales) Regulations 2002, which came into force on 31 December 2002, introduce a regulatory framework that is much tougher on the releasing of genetically modified organisms into the environment than previous arrangements have been.

### **Strategaeth y Diciâu mewn Gwartheg**

**C12 Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** Pa drafodaethau y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cynnal gydag Adran yr Amgylchedd, Bwyd a Materion Gwledig parthed strategaeth y diciâu mewn gwartheg? (OAQ23655) [W]

**Michael German:** Yr wyf yn cynnal trafodaethau rheolaidd ar faterion yn ymwneud â'r diciâu mewn gwartheg gyda Mrs Beckett a Gweinidogion eraill. Yn ystod y trafodaethau, yr wyf wedi pwysleisio'r angen am adolygiad sylfaenol o'r diciâu, a chyhoeddwyd adolygiad o'r strategaeth diciâu bresennol ar gyfer Prydain yng nghyfarfod cyffredinol blynyddol Undeb Cenedlaethol yr Amaethwyr ar 18 Chwefror.

### **The Bovine Tuberculosis Strategy**

**Q12 Rhodri Glyn Thomas:** What discussions has the Minister had with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs regarding the bovine tuberculosis strategy? (OAQ23655) [W]

**Michael German:** I have had regular discussions on bovine tuberculosis matters with Mrs Beckett and other Ministers. During the course of these discussions, I have pressed for a fundamental review of tuberculosis, and a review of the current TB strategy for Britain was announced at the National Farmers' Union annual general meeting on 18 February.

### **Farm Enterprise Grant Applicants**

**Q13 Owen John Thomas:** What undertaking is given to farm enterprise grant applicants regarding the committed timescales for processing applications? (OAQ23603)

**Michael German:** A decision on an application will be taken within eight weeks of receipt, provided that all necessary information, including a fully completed and accepted farm development business plan, is provided, and any appropriate consent letters are attached.

### **Farm Incomes in Wales**

**Q14 John Griffiths:** Will the Minister make a statement on cash and net farm incomes in Wales over the last five years? (OAQ23652)

**Michael German:** The following figures are drawn from the farm business survey. This survey is carried out annually for the Welsh Assembly Government by the Institute of Rural Studies at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Results are normally published in February each year. The figures below are averages for all dairy and livestock farms in Wales (derived from a sample of 550 full-time farms).

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03 (forecast)
<b>Net farm income (£)</b>	11,500	6,000	5,700	4,300	9,100	10,100
<b>Cash income (£)</b>	22,800	21,100	20,500	16,900	24,100	25,500

The figures show net farm income (return to the farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and tenant-type capital) and cash income (cash return to all those with an entrepreneurial interest in the farm business, including labour and investments) fell between 1997-98 and 2000-01. Figures for 2001-02 indicate increases in both figures. Upward movement is forecast to continue in 2002-03.

### **Cynllun Ymddeol ar gyfer Ffermwyr yng Nghymru**

**C15 Elin Jones:** Pa gynlluniau sydd gan y Gweinidog i gyflwyno cynllun ymddeol ar gyfer ffermwyr yng Nghymru? (OAQ23659) [W]

**Michael German:** Nid oes cynlluniau gennyf i gyflwyno cynllun ymddeol i ffermwyr. Byddai costau rhoi'r cynllun ar waith yn uchel iawn—tua £9.3 miliwn y flwyddyn ar gyfer hyd at 10 mlynedd i bob 1,000 o ffermwyr sy'n cymryd rhan. Mae 7,500 o ffermwyr yng Nghymru rhwng 55 a 65 oed a fyddai'n gallu dangos diddordeb ac nid wyf o'r farn y byddai hyn yn ddefnydd synhwyrol o adnoddau'r Cynulliad. Credaf y byddai'n well defnyddio'r adnoddau ar gyfer mesurau megis datblygu sgiliau entrepreneuriaid pobl ifanc, a fydd yn helpu i ddatblygu amaethyddiaeth yng Nghymru yn y tymor hir. Dyma'r rheswm dros ddyrannu £1.5 miliwn i'r cynllun entrepreneuriaeth ifanc dros y tair blynedd nesaf.

### **A Retirement Plan for Farmers in Wales**

**Q15 Elin Jones:** What plans does the Minister have to introduce a retirement plan for farmers in Wales? (OAQ23659) [W]

**Michael German:** I have no plans to introduce a retirement scheme for farmers. Implementation costs would be very high—approximately £9.3 million per year for up to 10 years for every 1,000 farmers taking part. There are 7,500 farmers in Wales between the ages of 55 and 65 who could express an interest, and I do not believe that this would be a sensible use of the Assembly's resources. I believe that resources are better directed towards measures such as the development of the entrepreneurial skills of young people, which will help to develop agriculture in Wales for the longer term. That is why I have allocated £1.5 million to the young entrepreneurship scheme over the next three years.

## **Questions to the Business Minister**

### **Developing Open Government in Wales**

**Q8 John Griffiths:** What strategy will be followed to further develop open government in Wales? (OAQ23641)

**Carwyn Jones:** We are committed to making government in Wales as open as possible, and have demonstrated this in several ways: the Assembly's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information, incorporating the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000; the adoption of a far-reaching publication scheme; and our new approach to releasing the facts and analysis upon which Ministers take decisions. We will be monitoring the impact of these initiatives and extending them, where possible, in future.

### **Racism in Wales**

**Q9 Peter Rogers:** Can the Minister make a statement on the problems with racism in Wales? (OAQ23642)

**Carwyn Jones:** I am aware that a racist incident has recently taken place in your constituency. You can be assured that the Welsh Assembly Government is fully committed to tackling racism wherever it manifests itself in Wales. We are striving to create a Wales that upholds the values of justice, respect and fairness for all.

### **Public Access to Meetings of ASPBs**

**Q10 Peter Black:** Is the Minister promoting public access to the meetings of Assembly sponsored public bodies? (OAQ23647)

**Carwyn Jones:** I refer you to the answer that I gave in Plenary to your question OAQ23646.