

## **Agenda – Petitions Committee**

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Meeting Venue:

Video Conference via zoom

Meeting date: 16 March 2021

Meeting time: 08.30

For further information contact:

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In accordance with Standing Order 34.19, the Chair has determined that the public are excluded from the Committee's meeting in order to protect public health. This meeting will be broadcast live on [www.senedd.tv](http://www.senedd.tv)

- 1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**  
(Pages 1 – 69)
- 2 New petitions with a response from the Government**
  - 2.1 P-05-1104 Make any measures being brought in for Covid be subject to a vote in the Welsh Parliament  
(Pages 70 – 73)
  - 2.2 P-05-1106 Introduce Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales  
(Pages 74 – 87)
  - 2.3 P-05-1107 Allow outside live singers / entertainment to start again  
(Pages 88 – 89)
  - 2.4 P-05-1110 Reinstate free swimming for pensioners  
(Pages 90 – 92)
  - 2.5 P-05-1120 The Welsh Government should immediately stop all lockdowns  
(Pages 93 – 95)



- 2.6 P-05-1122 Allow new adoptive parents to form a support bubble in alert level 4  
(Pages 96 – 100)
- 2.7 P-05-1126 Allow organised outdoor sport for under 18s to put Wales in line with England's tier 4  
(Pages 101 – 103)
- 2.8 P-05-1149 Resume team sports for children in line with England on March 29th 2021  
(Pages 104 – 108)
- 2.9 P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence  
(Pages 109 – 116)
- 2.10 P-05-1134 Cap all Welsh county council tax at 3%. A referendum of the public must take place to exceed 3%  
(Pages 117 – 121)
- 2.11 P-05-1138 COVID-19 Weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical health needs  
(Pages 122 – 125)
- 2.12 P-05-1140 Revise the guidance for Free School Meals, removing the option for delivery of food parcels  
(Pages 126 – 132)
- 2.13 P-05-1142 Workout To Help Out Scheme  
(Pages 133 – 135)
- 2.14 P-05-1143 Fully re-open all schools immediately after February half-term  
(Pages 136 – 139)
- 2.15 P-05-1144 Re-open garden centres in Wales as soon as it is possible  
(Pages 140 – 143)
- 2.16 P-05-1145 Allow parents of young children to drive to use local parks and playgrounds during tier 4 lockdown  
(Pages 144 – 146)
- 2.17 P-05-1146 Provide a road map for how weddings can progress in Wales  
(Pages 147 – 149)

2.18 P-05-1147 Require all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school

(Pages 150 – 154)

### **New petitions without a response from the Government**

2.19 P-05-1103 Stop applying the same Covid 19 restrictions across the whole of Wales

(Page 155)

2.20 P-05-1141 Make the Senedd election fair – allow political leafleting during lockdown

(Pages 156 – 157)

2.21 P-05-1148 Fully open schools for all ages in Wales as the next step from 15th March

(Pages 158 – 162)

2.22 P-05-1150 Provide business rates holiday to holiday home sites in wales, the same as England

(Page 163)

2.23 P-05-1151 Provide a date for the return of Organised Children's Activities for Babies & Toddlers

(Pages 164 – 169)

2.24 P-05-1152 Close the schools! Keep our children safe. Due to the rise in covid. Save our future

(Page 170)

2.25 P-05-1153 To open outside gyms and sport in Wales the same as England March 29th

(Pages 171 – 173)

2.26 P-05-1154 Re-open the Welsh hospitality sector by 12 April 2021

(Pages 174 – 175)

2.27 P-05-1155 Allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns

(Pages 176 – 181)

2.28 P-05-1156 Match the funding for small businesses during lockdown with England – including the restart grant

(Pages 182 – 186)

### **3 Updates to previous petitions**

#### **Environment and Rural Affairs**

#### **The following three items are grouped together for consideration**

3.1 P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales

(Pages 187 – 188)

3.2 P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

(Page 189)

3.3 P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable

(Pages 190 – 193)

3.4 P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals

(Pages 194 – 196)

3.5 P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters

(Pages 197 – 226)

3.6 P-05-1010 An independent inquiry into the 2020 flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf so that lessons are learned

(Pages 227 – 234)

3.7 P-05-1079 Safeguard Kenfig Nature Reserve using compulsory purchase powers

(Pages 235 – 241)

3.8 P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages

(Pages 242 – 246)

## **Health and Social Services**

3.9 P-05-960 Fund the funeral costs of all NHS staff who die from or with Covid-19

(Pages 247 – 251)

3.10 P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers

(Pages 252 – 254)

3.11 P-05-1029 The Welsh Government should introduce mandatory testing of all passengers arriving at Cardiff Airport

(Pages 255 – 258)

3.12 P-05-1116 Prioritise people with a learning disability to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in Wales

(Page 259)

## **Culture, Sport and Tourism**

3.13 P-05-1013 Provide financial support for self-employed individuals within the Welsh live music industry

(Pages 260 – 263)

## **Education**

**The following two items are grouped together for consideration**

3.14 P-05-1080 Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes

(Page 264)

- 3.15 P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum  
(Pages 265 – 269)

## **Housing and Local Government**

- 3.16 P-05-1083 Protect leaseholders in Wales from paying for cladding remedial works  
(Pages 270 – 273)

## **Economy and Transport**

- 3.17 P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog  
(Pages 274 – 275)

- 3.18 P-05-1061 Give financial support to Pet Boarding businesses  
(Pages 276 – 279)

- 4 Review of petitions under consideration**  
(Pages 280 – 300)

## **5 Papers to note**

- 5.1 P-05-957 “Next Stop St Clears” – Support the bid for a railway station in St Clears  
(Pages 301 – 302)

- 5.2 P-05-1017 Allow pupils to wear masks in all areas of the school premises  
(Page 303)

- 5.3 P-05-825 Protect children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school  
(Pages 304 – 306)

- 5.4 P-05-882 Transforming the response for older people experiencing domestic abuse – a call for action  
(Pages 307 – 308)

5.5 P-05-1077 Stop the voting boundary change to Ystrad Mynach south  
(Page 309)

5.6 P-05-812 We call for the Welsh Government to encourage trusts to implement the NICE guidelines for Borderline Personality Disorder or justify why they do not do so  
(Pages 310 – 311)

**6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:**

**7 Legacy Report**  
(Pages 312 – 325)

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# Agenda Item 2.1

**P-05-1104 Make any measures being brought in for Covid be subject to a vote in the Welsh Parliament**

This petition was submitted by Dave Smith having collected a total of 155 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

The Welsh first minister has been taking upon himself to pass rules on the lives of the public without first gaining approval from the elected representatives of the Welsh Parliament. This means the rules are not democratic.

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Islwyn
- South Wales East



Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales](mailto:Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales)

10 March 2021

Dear Chair

I am writing in response to your letter dated 16 December regarding a petition asking for any coronavirus-related measures to be subject to a vote in the Senedd.

The Coronavirus Restrictions Regulations are made under Part 2A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. Section 45R of the Act allows Ministers to make regulations before they are approved by the Senedd if they are of the opinion that, by reason of urgency, it is necessary to make the regulations without a draft being laid before, and approved by, the Senedd.

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring the Senedd has appropriate time to consider and scrutinise all restrictions. We are in the middle of an unprecedented public health emergency and it has been necessary for restrictions be made under the emergency procedure for reasons of urgency. All restrictions have however been debated and approved in the Senedd. In addition, the Welsh Government has tabled a number of motions to give Members of the Senedd the opportunity to discuss changes to restrictions.

The existing Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) No.5 (Wales) Regulations 2020 require a review of restrictions to be undertaken every 21 days to ensure they are proportionate, effective and necessary.

Best wishes

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Mark Drakeford

**MARK DRAKEFORD**

**P-05-1104 Make any measures being brought in for Covid be subject to a vote in the Welsh Parliament, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 01.03.21**

I think its an absolute disgrace that the 1st minister can bring in rules in the name of covid without a vote prior to the change.

The prime example is the fact that supermarkets can't sell non essential.. essential items and this was brought in with no vote. This has resulted in me not being able to purchase toys for my son who is less than 1 years old and needs new toys frequently.

There should be due diligence.

# Agenda Item 2.2

## **P-05-1106 Introduce Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Rhys Bowler having collected a total of 779 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Rhys has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and lives in daily fear for his life, left alone for hours hoping the ventilator he needs to breathe doesn't break. He must choose between poorly funded social care and an NHS Continuing Healthcare package that takes away his choice over who cares for him.

If Rhys lived in England he would have a personal health budget, allowing him to use NHS Continuing Healthcare while still being able to choose who cares for him. This is not available in Wales

### **Additional Information:**

I'm Rhys, 33 and living with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy in Pontypridd, Wales. I have extremely limited mobility and need a ventilator to breathe.

I've employed my own care assistants for decades and have a lot of experience of training and employing them. I've had bad experiences using agencies and not having a say in who cares for me. I want to choose the care assistants I want. I want to know who is coming in my home to help me with my intimate personal care, and I want them to be people I trust and have trained in how best to provide my care. Don't let my experience go to waste!

I want a Personal Health Budget so I can have both 24 hour care and a choice over who my care assistants are. This has been available in England since 2014, it's time Wales took this seriously and started giving people real choice and control about the care they receive.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1106  
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/09903/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

26 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December, seeking my views on the petition you have received from Rhys Bowler regarding the introduction of Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales.

The clear, unambiguous expectation in Wales is for personalised, seamless integrated health and social care that enables individuals to maintain voice and control where they wish to.

We know, however, through personal experiences shared by Rhys Bowler and others that there continue to be concerns regarding people's ability to exercise voice and control over their care, when they are not able to receive direct payments under NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC).

We understand the importance of continuity of care for these individuals, especially those who are most vulnerable, have complex health and social care needs and those that require intimate care. The prospect of losing their team of personal assistants, who may have been providing care to them for a number of years, is understandably very distressing to them.

We recognise that enabling people to have control over their own care and support arrangements, through the provision of more flexible care, will improve the health and wellbeing of individuals as well as that of their families and carers.

We are committed to looking at different options around the interface between CHC and direct payments, including how direct payments may be used for CHC recipients, which would be equivalent to personal health budgets.

We will look at long term legislative options as well as considering any interim arrangements that could improve voice and control for CHC recipients in the short term.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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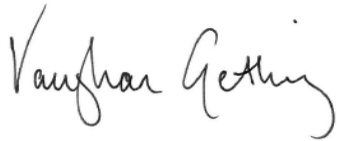
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

My officials have invited Rhys Bowler to join a working group to consider options to address these issues, once recovery from the pandemic allows us to recommence this work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

**P-05-1106 Introduce Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales,  
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 06.03.21**

Dear committee,

I have included a short video of my news interview. also i have included a copy of my response in word document format for ease of use. see appendix for testimony's.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s12H34rB8VQ>

thanks

Mr Rhys Bowler

Thank you for your letter responding to the petition regarding the introduction of Personal Health Budgets and Personalised Care in Wales. It is refreshing to know that the Welsh government has acknowledged our struggles as people will advance care needs. And how hard we have fought for 24 hour care within our own control not governed by anyone only our want to control our destiny the way we want it! Using my own personal experiences as an example of the damage that not having 24-hour care does, I hope I will demonstrate to you how this legislation must change and change quickly.

- This decision must be made with the utmost haste as many of us with advanced care needs, and life limiting conditions, have short lives, and our conditions are often incurable and progressive. The clock is ticking for us, far quicker than the rest of society.

***“My life is limited, and I wish to live it, not spend my time fighting the welsh government for a right which I believe, should have naturally been bestowed to me. In 2017, I watched my poor brother die of this awful condition. He was 27, we hardly left the house because of how little care hours we had! We merely sat in his bedroom, and pondered the life we could have had, if we didn’t have Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, and what we wished we could accomplish, if we had the right care! That was no life for my brother, his potential was trapped and wasted. I want to live before it’s too late for me also, and fulfill my vast potential.”***

***“My complex care needs clearly mean I require 24/7 care, from at least my local authority, and my health needs undoubtedly make me eligible for CHC. I am dependent on a ventilator; without it I would die! However, I have my reasons for staying away from the CHC assessment! I have been repeatedly warned what would happen if I underwent the assessment and went to CHC. Ministers, it should never be a threat that if my health deteriorates, I will lose control and autonomy over my life! I would be forced to have a care agency who are not commissioned by myself, I could not decide who provides my care, whether I choose to employ my***



***own personal assistants (as I have successfully done all my adult life), or commission an agency. To my mind this is completely unacceptable”.***

**Reference Rhys Bowler letter to Julie Morgan shadow health minister.**

This Current pandemic shows the fragility of human life and indeed how short truly it is! It has offered the non-disabled populace a new perspective on what it means to be imprisoned within their own homes. My greatest fear which has me utterly terrifying is that the world will be coming out of lockdown and I will be still Here stuck as a prisoner remaining in my isolation, without the care I need to get out of my home and live. It really makes me feel disheartened, and hopeless.

### **Key points**

***“The clear, unambiguous expectation in Wales is for personalised, seamless integrated health and social care that enables individuals to maintain voice and control where they wish to.”***

- This currently falls short when it comes to individuals with complex care needs, who require CHC funding, and those who have joint funding, (additional NHS funding alongside local authority funding.
- We have no voice or control over our care, when we are not able to receive direct payments under NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC) and do not have the ability to choose who cares for us.
  
- Although we are proud welsh citizens who because of devolution have to be seen as individualised, but we must have parity with England and Scotland in terms of care. And Have the same opportunities as they do we are after all a united kingdom.
- Bringing a welsh PHB into reality, and facilitating a direct payment format of care funding, would see the severely disabled people of Wales given the same rights and freedoms, that exist in the rest of the UK.
- However, by not having the PHB here in wales, the welsh government are disabling us further! It goes completely against the social model of disability, which has been written and was addressed in a speech by the shadow minister, Jane Hutt, on international disability day.

***“We understand the importance of continuity of care for these individuals, especially those who are most vulnerable, have complex health and social care needs and those that require intimate care. The prospect of losing their team of personal assistants, who may have been providing care to them for a number of years, is understandably very distressing to them”.***

## **When I go to continuing healthcare! The NHS preferred care method would be an agency!**

I can tell you from my point of view, and the people I represent, we absolutely do not want agency care, to be forced upon us!

- Agencies often struggle to provide, the individualized support, many like myself require.
- They dehumanise, the individual that should be at the heart of it.
- They do not have our best interests at heart!
- And there are many more issues, which I could talk about for hours, but at the heart of nearly all the problems is money and control.

***“The fact of the matter is, not having the ability to choose who provides our care, is very distressing, for countless reasons”.***

### ***Reference Rhys bowler speech to Jane Hutt***

- My needs are complex, but I do not require medically trained staff. I have a team of skilled personal assistants, who I employ myself. I have been doing this for 15 years, and I do not want to lose them, or the self-worth I get being an employer, and managing my own care. I merely need the additional joint funding via direct payments, to enable me to cover 24/7 care, rather than my current 108 hours.
- In my fight for my own care and others, I have received legal advice, and been told I should not be made fearful that my future is in the hands of the local authorities and the local health board officers, who erroneously believe that Direct Payments cannot be facilitated.
- Julie Morgan wrote in a statement to all, that there should be an unambiguous statement from Welsh Government, to health boards and local authorities, stating they must work together to meet people’s needs in a person-centred way. Continuing NHS Healthcare: The National Framework for implementation in Wales. Enabling individuals with care needs that require CHC funding to be able to maintain their independence, and facilitate them to keep their personal assistants, if that is their choice.

Some Welsh health boards have agreed, in principle, to look at adapting how it can provide joint CHC funding, in the event that individuals are assessed as eligible for CHC funding. Alternatively, if individuals are not fully funded by CHC, and their care and support continue to be provided in a joint package of care, health boards have agreed to work with local Councils to ensure the continuation of existing care packages, through direct payments.

In relation to Direct Payments, the Welsh Government’s 2014 Framework guidance advises (paras 4.46 – 4.50):

- ... If an individual has existing DP arrangements, these should continue wherever and for as long as possible within a tailored joint package of care.

I believe this clause needs strengthening in the interim, to allow Direct Payments to be made more easily attainable, and available to those with joint packages of care. After the pandemic, these individuals should not fear that this will be taken away. I urge you to implement this immediately.

**Our thoughts on the proposal by the Welsh government, to implement an independent user trust.**

- An IUT is described as similar to a PHB! It isn't.
- IUT's are in fact one of the methods, that an individual can use to manage a PHB, when a direct payment is not possible.
- So not a PHB, and not direct payments provided by the NHS.
- IUT's are not equal to PHB's as they don't provide us with a direct payment, giving us the choice of managing and purchasing our care directly. Putting us in control
- IUTs, totally obscure the idea of independence.
- IUTs fail to put individuals, at the heart of the decision-making process, instead taking away our choice and control over our care, which surely, we deserve.

**“We are committed to looking at different options around the interface between CHC and direct payments, including how direct payments may be used for CHC recipients, which would be equivalent to personal health budgets”.**

**We are strongly believe that direct payments supplied by the NHS the way forward for Wales as;**

1. It is a format that 100s of disabled individuals and their families are comfortable and familiar in using.
2. It provides a clear, unambiguous expectation that Wales wishes for a personalised, seamless integrated of health and social care, that enables individuals to maintain voice and control where they wish to.
3. If it is Wales intention is to pursue joint care packages, between local authorities and the NHS. Then it ensures consistency and a seamless merger of the two establishments in a familiar already proven and effective format.
4. If the reasoning for not implementing PHBs or an equivalent to allow the NHS to supply direct payments, is the possible misuse of NHS finances, then you merely have look at the individuals like myself, who will receive them, and thus achieve autonomy.
5. We are accountable adults, who have self-control over our lives, and finances, so why suggest, we are now incapable of taking care of our care finances ourselves. We have been providing tax returns, and documentation of how we utilise our funding, since we first received direct payments from our local authorities. The only thing that

makes us different from everyone else, is a physical disability, you should empower us, not discriminate.

6. A person who appreciates the funding as much as we would, would not abuse the system!
7. Independence to me and others with complex care needs, is as valuable as the very air we breathe, a direct payment provided by NHS to us, would be more precious than gold! We could live without the fear of inadequate care, from profit seeking care agencies, and thrive by giving us the choice of managing, and purchasing our care directly, through the channels that we choose. Putting us in control.

**“We will look at long term legislative options as well as considering any interim arrangements that could improve voice and control for CHC recipients in the short term”.**

*“There are exceptions to the rule where direct payments have been granted for CHC and joint package recipients. I have seen it! I have witnessed it! I know it can happen! Cwm Taff health board have repeatedly said that it can’t happen, I know that this is untruthful! This maybe the hundredth time I am stating this! Why can I not be granted an exception? Whether if maybe Covid 19 that is allowing these direct payments or otherwise! Why can I not be granted an exception? I am deteriorating now! I have been deteriorating for the past 10 years! Yet I cannot get an increase from my local authority and I cannot get direct payments for the NHS! Minister how long must I wait!”*

*Reference Rhys Bowler letter to Julie Morgan shadow health minister*

- During the pandemic some recipients of CHC and joint packages were granted special exceptions whereby the NHS supplied direct payments.
- These people are now used to having their care under their control and have discovered a more efficient way of having the care provided.
- Those recipients now need reassurance that their direct payments won’t be taken away from them when pandemic is over.

### **My Personal Ordeal!**

*“I’ll tell you one scenario, which I’m not just talking about if my ventilator cuts out unexpectedly, which would quickly lead to my demise, but a day that started off ordinary. My carer had just left after a quick call to feed and toileting me.*

*I was very tired, and cold, as is often the case after physically exerting myself: being moved about and repositioned during toileting is tiring, and my muscles don’t retain heat very well. I needed to regain heat again quickly, or I’m not able to drive my chair. My usual solution to this problem, is my trusty hairdryer, which I keep on a table near my workspace: it’s positioned at the appropriate height to warm my hand up, controlled by a switch linked to my environmental controls, which I drive over to switch it on!*

*Switching it on was successful as normal, “why wouldn’t it be, I do this all the time?” I warmed my hands and after a few minutes, they were more than comfortably warm, and I went to switch the hairdryer off.*

*The unthinkable happens! The power on my chair had cut out on me! I was going nowhere! Stuck 3 inches away from the searing heat of the hairdryer! My own personal hell began, it felt like an eternity!*

*I could smell my skin was slowly cooking, my sentimental silver bracelet which I have always worn with pride, became an instrument of torture! It bore deeper into my blistering, slowly roasting flesh. The heat now so intense that it dried my tears, as they fell. My screams of agony muffled by the drone of the dryer. It is a hopeless feeling, when you know no help is coming for 5 hours I prayed, and I pleaded for an end to my agonizing ordeal. Eventually my prayers were answered, as my electric ran out, cutting my tormentors power supply! Leaving me in sweet blissful silence, and cold darkness. My ordeal was finally ended, with a carer arriving and calling an ambulance.*

*I still get nightmares to this day, it scared me physically and mentally, and almost succeeded in slaying my independence as it temporarily turned me back into a child, who needed his mother! But me being the man I am, I quickly regained my hunger for independence.*

*I told you this story, not for sympathy but so you can understand me more and see the lengths I am willing to endure to keep my independence!"*

**Reference Rhys Bowler presentation to cross-party disability group.**

## **Conclusion**

Please help us to change the system for the good of those who wish to keep their independence, a God given human right which the government should be more than happy to bestow to us! We should not have to fight for this! I believe with your support to push for the implementation of PHBs, we can work towards an NHS Wales we can all be proud of and not just because of the bravery they've shown during the pandemic. Whose policies are more inclusive, more robust, and fit for the future? Let's make Eniran Bevan a proud welsh man's dream a true symbol of freedom just as our country has done for century's!

Appendix.

## **Testimonies**

*"I have a progressive muscle wasting disease, and have 24/7 care. Three years ago my life was torn from under me, as I began using NHS funding, and was told wrongly, that I must have an agency, and my direct payments stopped. Three agencies failed, and my independence was destroyed, my family relations were pushed to the limit, and my mental and physical health suffered. I have fought, with legal help, to get direct payments back via my local authority, with joint funding, which I now have. I live in fear that this will be taken away, and when my health needs become greater, I will be refused direct payments again and lose my wonderful and skilled staff. I'm the expert in my care, and agencies have proven not to be able to provide the support I need. A PHB or its equivalent would give me the option of using direct payments even with full CHC, and help me retain my fought for independence, I could continue to choose who cares for me, and thus get the*

*best individualised care for me. I beg you to bring in this legislation, as quickly as possible, and reinforce the current framework to ensure joint packages can be facilitated and continue to be provided through direct payments. I fear for myself and others with complex needs, as we are being stripped of our choice and control over our care, because we live in Wales”.*

Reference [REDACTED], condition Limb girdle muscular dystrophy 2e, Hails from Llandudno Conway.

*“I was fully able bodied before my disability in effect I had my life taken away from me. My condition means that all four of my limbs are affected, and comes with reduced hand function and mobility! I am now reliant on a wheelchair and have to be hoisted by carers. There are lots of manual handling and care support tasks needed in my daily life i.e. drinks, food prep, catheter care, bowels and managing medication! If these routines and maintained rigidly I can get symptoms of autonomic dysreflexia. Which is a very serious condition and is hazardous to my health! If ignored it could lead to a stroke and even death. Stating the obvious I can’t manage this on my own which is why I’m in need of 24 hour care. And liked Rhys bowler I cannot get it! I am not prepared go into environment where I lose all control over my care and independence. Currently I have 53.75 hours from my local authority but I obviously need more.*

*The reasons why the PHB should be brought to Wales in my opinion, is firstly as they’ve stated in the care act to promote independence to have a voice and say/ Choice in who provides my care. To have a better quality of care. To have the care I deserve which I am entitled to! It shouldn’t be a luxury whether or not somebody should have it, and have a life of independence and freedom. I want the same opportunities I had before my disability. I’m still the same person just sitting down now! My injury was traumatic as you can imagine! And enough of a burden. My life shouldn’t be a burden as well. More importantly it will prove that my chair isn’t stopping me from fulfilling my life! To have some normality to achieve the life I had before this injury. Currently I have lack of support to get me where I want to be.*

*My message to Vaughan Gething Mark Drakeford and the Welsh government is, I want to live! I want to be present! I want to be part of a community! I want to work! I want to be happy. I want to be healthy enough, so I can access more physio and become physically and mentally stronger. I want to get off antidepressants medication and mental health services! I want to get out of my bed and not feel so depressed. Please grant us our freedom and allow the NHS to supply direct payments”.*

Reference [REDACTED], Condition Transverse myelitis. Hails from Bridgend

*“Like Rhys I also suffer with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. I feel if you introduced a PHB in Wales it would be greatly beneficial to a lot of people as it would enhance care needs and give individuals a lot more choice and control of what best suits their care needs. With a care agency they try to dictate to you what will best suit you’re care needs also they can be unreliable as in can let you down by saying there’s no one to cover shifts etc. you’re not really given a choice of who comes to you. I’ve had my fair share of issues with the*

*care agency I have and also with my health board so I feel as though I'd benefit with a PHB."*

Reference [REDACTED], condition Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, hails from Pontyclun

### **How it is in England!**

*"I have Duchenne, like Rhys, and I'm at a similar level of progression of the condition. I've had challenges getting funding before, but unlike Rhys I had the option of getting a personal health budget PHB. I had a PHB since 2014 providing me with 24 hour care, but allowing me to have the choice over who cares for me, when they change shifts, and what they are allowed to do. It's not without challenges managing a care team, and you have to do it professionally, but with a good team in place I have independence and freedom to live my life, work and have a real social life with my partner. It's mind-boggling that Wales hasn't introduced PHBs yet - there's so much evidence that they work, and have been implemented really well in certain areas."*

Reference [REDACTED], Condition: Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, Hails from Redding

*"I have an ultra-rare/unique condition that my consultant calls a 'neuromuscular plus' condition, as it has features of other conditions too. I may never get a diagnosis, but my genome has been sequenced so maybe one day they'll find out what it is. It means I have multiple organ failure, I am dependent on near-constant intravenous drips including TPN (IV nutrition), IV fluids and IV medications, I have a double lumen Hickman line giving access directly into my bloodstream and the tip of this line sits just inside my heart, I have a PEG draining my stomach 24/7, I have an Ileostomy (stoma bag) and a Urostomy (aka an Ileal Conduit, another stoma bag), require daily nebulisers and at times, assisted coughs with an LVR bag, I have buccal and patch medications, I use a powered wheelchair for mobility but need to spend a lot of time in bed. I live a full and active life, I work multiple jobs including working for charities, working as an independent advocate and support broker, project management, research work, consultancy and speaking, and I have my own business.*

*I live at home with my mum Kate and Assistance Dog Molly and I have a Personal Health Budget for 24 hour care.*

*I have:*

*16 hours per day (07.00-23.00) with a Band 5 or Band 6 Registered Nurse who we have trained in all my needs (as TPN and central lines are a specialist skill, not a universal skill, even for nurses)*

*8 hours overnight (23.00-07.00) with a PA*

*6 hours doubled-up with a PA alongside the nurse during the day (variable timings depending on activity/need).*

*The reason I have nurses is because of the my TPN and IVs not being able to be a delegated task - well, in some areas TPN alone can be delegated to PAs but not the mixing and preparation of intravenous medications and administration via a central line, plus also there is a lot of clinical judgement in my care including fluid management and when to give extra IV fluids and how much, whether and when to give IV Paracetamol (there's no set fever level), when to give IV antibiotics and how many doses to give, how to manage pressure care and wounds, etc.*

*However, I have had 2 PHBs in my lifetime. In early 2014 I became one of the first people in Essex to be given a Personal Health Budget, but despite my needs being nursing based, they wouldn't fund nurses and so my mum was told if she wasn't prepared to do all my round the clock IVs and TPN, she could "dump [me] in a home". So I fought for my mum to be paid to do my nursing-based tasks, since they couldn't be managed otherwise and mum couldn't continue working full time and caring full time (she used to have to keep popping home from work to do my IVs), eventually - after a fight they agreed to pay mum 3 hours a day to give 1 infusion (despite doing IVs 24/7) and that was enough for mum to give up work and do most of my care.*

*Sadly, in 2015, my mum was diagnosed with a brain tumour and we had 3 weeks between her diagnosis and her surgery to put in place a 24/7, mostly nursing based care package. The CCG tried every which way to force me into a nursing home, but 6 days before mum's op, they finally relented and gave me a package. I should really have 24 hour nursing (as overnight the PA can do nothing to help if my drips go wrong or I need an extra IV) but 16 hrs nursing and 8 hours overnight care was sufficient to manage my needs for 6 weeks whilst mum had her op and recuperated (yes, my mum was expected to go back to caring 24/7 6 weeks after brain surgery!). Unfortunately, my mum suffered a brain haemorrhage and then a catastrophic stroke after her operation. I had to fight to make my emergency package permanent. I had an agency providing the care (6 days was not long enough to set up a new PHB!) and I hated it, the agency weren't great, I had no control or autonomy, they kept sending unsuitable staff, one nearly making 4 fatal errors had I not stopped her and despite this fact, the agency tried to continue sending her, all but 1 of the 35 odd carers they sent between 2015 and 2018 used to sleep on shift despite being an awake night, leaving me waking up my poorly, recovering mother to wake up the carer to care for me. Nurses weren't much better. After about 3 months from that permanent extension, I said "I want a Personal Health Budget again, when can I go back on a PHB?"*

*Finally in 2018, I moved my care worker support onto a PHB (Phase 1) and employed my own PAs, then this year (during lockdown) Phase 2 of my PHB was signed off and my directly employed nurses started. It's a shame covid happened as otherwise my nurses would be transforming my life and giving me more independence from mum and I'd be able to do so much more now I had my own nurses and no agency, but their support will make an impact once life goes back to some version of normality.*

*PHBs transformed my life. They allow me choice, control, freedom and flexibility to make my care work for me and to have the ability to be flexible in how the support is provided. I am able to choose who looks after me, what they do and how my care is provided. I can live the life I want to lead with my PHB. I even got aromatherapy massage training for my nurses and PAs funded in my new PHB to help with my pain relief. My PHB is saving the CCG (health board in Wales) over £100,000 per year compared with agency care. PHBs allow us to make better use of resources whilst giving me the control and choice I need.*



*I cannot understand why Wales does not have PHBs! There's so much evidence of their positive impact.”*

Reference [REDACTED] Hails from Essex

*“As similarly to Rhys I'm a fellow chap living with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and at the age of 36 I'm pushing the boundaries of what was originally expected life expectancy wise. As a resident of England I have access to a personal health budget, which has allowed me since 2013 to use money allocated to me to pay a care company to provide me with a bespoke package of carers/assistants I have chosen myself to do 2 12 hour shifts daily including awake at night. This has allowed me to have a life as independent as possible and enables me to do whatever any able-bodied person would do including living in my own home and trips both domestically and in Europe. I was unaware that our friends in Wales such as Mr Bowler did not have a possibility of such care, I feel that everyone should be able to live life to the full, something that a PHB definitely does. Hopefully we can make enough noise for the Welsh Assembly to take notice and make a change.”*

Reference [REDACTED], Condition: Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, hails from Cornwall

# Agenda Item 2.3

**P-05-1107 Allow outside live singers / entertainment to start again**

This petition was submitted by Nicola Woodfine having collected a total of 605 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

Outside entertainment to be allowed

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1107  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/03737/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

22 December 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your correspondence of 16 December with regards petition P-05-1107 asking the Welsh Government to permit the resumption of outdoor singing and entertainment.

Following the First Minister's announcement on 19 December, Wales has moved to alert level four in our published Control Plan, the highest level of restrictions. At this level there is a requirement for us all to stay at home to reduce the risk of transmission and not to take unnecessary journeys.

In light of the wider public health context, our test events programme is on hold. In our Control Plan our expectation is that test events will not resume until we are in level two and events more generally, including larger gatherings, will not resume until we are at level one in the plan. The £63m Cultural Recovery Fund will be supporting the sector and ensuring its long-term sustainability in the meantime.

Yours sincerely,

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

# Agenda Item 2.4

## **P-05-1110 Reinstate free swimming for pensioners**

This petition was submitted by Peter Roberts having collected a total of 78 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Restricting free swims to certain times means there are more people in pools at the same time, therefore restricting serious swimming. As a pensioner I no longer have regular swims.

### **Additional Information:**

Coming out of the present lockdown many pensioners are in need of the exercise only swimming can provide, from experience most pensioners use the pools at quiet and off-peak times. With the millions of pounds being spent trying to save the economy the amount of money saved by withdrawing the free swimming is pointless.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1110  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/03736/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

8 January 2021

Dear Janet

Thank you for your correspondence regarding a petition for the reinstatement of Free Swimming for pensioners.

While I appreciate that there may be ongoing concerns from some individuals, the broader picture of changes to Free Swimming centred on action taken in response to an independent review of the initiative commissioned by Sport Wales.

The review found that although the Free Swimming initiative enjoyed some significant successes in its early years, it had become no longer fit for purpose and was under utilised. In addition the scheme needed to be better aligned with Sport Wales' Vision for Sport in Wales and Welsh Government's Wellbeing objectives if it was going to reach those who would most benefit from it.

Young people and those over the age of 60 from deprived areas are the priority under the new scheme – Sport Wales and Swim Wales are working in partnership with Local Authorities and delivery partners to develop a programme of sessions in each public swimming pool which meet with the needs of these two target groups.

There has of course been significant disruption to the programme as a result of Covid-19 and although the programme had been largely reinstated across Wales with the majority of areas delivering against the minimum expectations of providing some free swimming opportunities for over 60s, unfortunately that has had to be paused.

Welsh Government and Sport Wales will continue to work with local authority partners on a return of the scheme as and where possible within the guidance around social distancing.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Consideration of course will be given at that stage to the best way to facilitate the scheme to reach the priority audiences in the most convenient and impactful way.

In addition to Free-Swimming, Sport Wales and partners have also been looking at launching the 60 Plus Offer: Active Leisure Scheme. Originally anticipated to be launched in January across all local authorities, we are mindful of current Covid-19 guidance changing and will adapt timings accordingly. When launched this scheme will create additional opportunities for those 60 plus in Wales to be physically active and we will use the insight and learning from the three month delivery in 2020-2021 to inform future delivery methods in 2021-2022 and beyond.

I trust you will find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

# Agenda Item 2.5

## **P-05-1120 The Welsh Government should immediately stop all lockdowns**

This petition was submitted by Adrian Mark Phillips having collected a total of 56 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

The death rate from Covid19 is relatively low and it makes no sense to exert unnecessary control over the Welsh population and to damage businesses and livelihoods.

### **Additional Information:**

There is no justification for such draconian measures when only a small amount of people die from covid19. We demand the Welsh Government immediately stop all lockdowns and re-open up businesses and allow the general public to make their own decisions on how they choose to live.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales](mailto:Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales)

02 March 2021

Dear Chair

I am writing in response to your letter of 5 January about the petition calling for the Welsh Government to stop all lockdowns.

In Wales – just as in the rest of the world – the past year has been dominated by the coronavirus pandemic. A great many people have become ill and, very sadly, more than 7,000 people in Wales have died from this terrible virus.

On 14 December, we published our updated *Coronavirus Control Plan*. The plan sets out four alert levels, which are aligned to the level of risk and outlines the measures needed at each level to control the spread of the virus and protect people's health. We have drawn on the expertise of the UK Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies and our Technical Advisory Group, to identify the interventions, which work and what we have learned during the pandemic.

Wales has been at alert level four – the highest level of restrictions – since 20 December. This has meant people are required to stay at home. Non-essential retail, close contact services, gyms and leisure centres, hospitality and accommodation have been closed.

Although these restrictions on people and businesses across Wales have been challenging, thanks to everyone's efforts we are seeing steady and encouraging falls in coronavirus cases across Wales.

The law requires that restrictions in Wales are reviewed every 21 days to ensure they remain proportionate and effective. We have started to take the first steps towards relaxing restrictions – Foundation Phase pupils returned to school this week (week commencing 22 February). If the public health situation continues to improve, we hope to get more children back into school ahead before the Easter break.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



At the last three-week review of the restrictions, I said the Welsh Government would be considering whether stay-at-home could be lifted at the next review in the week of 8 March. If this is the case, we will also consider options to start to reopen non-essential retail and close contact services.

This is set out in my written statement at: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-review-health-protection-coronavirus-restriction-no5-wales-regulations-2020-1>

We have also published a further update to the *Coronavirus Control Plan*, which takes account of the impact of vaccination on the pandemic and the emergence of the new variant strains of the virus. This is available at: <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-wales-coming-out-lockdown>

We can all be proud of the excellent progress of the vaccination programme in Wales. This brings with it the promise of a brighter future, but there is still a long way to go. Restrictions remain necessary to prevent the spread of the virus and keep Wales safe.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**MARK DRAKEFORD**

# Agenda Item 2.6

## **P-05-1122 Allow new adoptive parents to form a support bubble in alert level 4**

This petition was submitted by Ruby Hampton having collected a total of 387 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Allow new adoptive parents to form support bubbles in any move to do so for new parents with children under one years old.

### **Additional Information:**

I have just come across a petition to allow parents of children under the age of 1 to form a support bubble. The petition specifically states 'Mums who gave birth in 2020' as it is recognized that being a new mum is difficult even under normal circumstances. This new rule would be the same as the rule that is currently in place across England.

Unfortunately, overlooks new adoptive parents who may be extremely new to parenthood but with children over the age of one. Adopting a baby under one is very rare as almost all children in the care system are over 12 months by the time they are placed with their forever family. Adoption is a gruelling process and during early placement it is vital that parents of adopted children have the support of loved ones to ease the transition into parenthood while creating a bond with a new child.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Chair, Petitions  
Committee

[petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

24 February 2021

Dear Chair

**PETITION P-05-1122 ALLOW NEW ADOPTIVE PARENTS TO FORM A SUPPORT BUBBLE IN ALERT LEVEL 4**

I am writing in response to your letter of 5<sup>th</sup> January seeking views on the ability for new adoptive parents to form a support bubble in alert level 4.

We recognise that Covid-19 continues to affect our daily lives and we know that new parents have extra challenges to face due to the current restrictions imposed.

I recognise that becoming an adoptive parent is challenging especially in the current climate with restrictions making accessing support more difficult at times. The pandemic has also brought similar challenges and uncertainty for many people in Wales. As such, our legislation states that on compassionate grounds, any person, can access help and support, as and when needed and from whoever an individual needs it from at the time e.g. from friends and family.

This provision is sufficiently flexible to enable anyone who feels they are in need of help during this time to seek assistance which includes newly adopted families in need of support. This is outlined in the Welsh Government's Covid-19 Guidance, which can be accessed via:

<https://gov.wales/visiting-people-private-homes-alert-level-4>

Even though extra support is permitted, I urge everyone to think carefully about what is the most sensible thing to do to protect their family, friends and community.

These are difficult decisions and we always try to balance people's individual needs, along with our responsibility to protect the health of the population and help save lives.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am aware that the pandemic is regrettably imposing additional stress on our adoptive families in Wales. Our adoption agencies in Wales are available to offer help and advice to families throughout the pandemic and the National Adoption Service website provides adoptive families with up-to-date information on accessing support during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I trust you find this information useful.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**MARK DRAKEFORD**

**P-05-1122 Allow new adoptive parents to form a support bubble in alert level 4, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 02.03.21**

Dear Mr Drakeford,

First of all we want to thank you for your letter clarifying your position and explaining that we are one of many groups that come under the compassionate grounds section of the lockdown rules. This is useful for us to know and we will be able to seek some support now that those rules have been clarified.

Unfortunately we are still extremely disappointed. In your letter you explain that you feel that the provision of compassionate grounds are 'sufficiently flexible to enable anyone who feels they are in need of help during this time to seek assistance which includes newly adopted families in need of support,' however, we as a community feel that this is very dismissive of us as new parents who have become new parents during an impossibly difficult time.

On Saturday you announced that birth parents of children under the age of one will be allowed a support bubble. We would like to ask why this new rule was not inclusive of adoptive parents.

As we are sure you are aware, most adopters become new parents to children who are over the age of one or who turn one relatively soon into their placement. My son turned one, four days after he came to live with me in June last year. Prior to this we had had our introductions delayed by 8 weeks, having to skype call our son 3 times a week instead of meeting him, we had to isolate for 3 weeks before we were able to meet him, not leaving the house for any reason at all, while also preparing to bring home a new baby. Once he moved in we were then faced with parenting our newly adopted one year old child during a global pandemic with absolutely no support. Eight months down the line, we sat and watched your announcement on Saturday, stating that you understand the isolation and difficulties that new birth parents face at home with a new baby. We were deeply saddened. My story is far from unique and I know many many other adopters who have been through equally as difficult a journey only to be told they are not eligible for support due to their children being over the age of one.

Adoption is a difficult journey and during it we are told endlessly by social workers, how ESSENTIAL it is to have support, especially in the first year but also beyond. I am sure you are aware of this after speaking to the social worker who initially responded to me explaining that we were not entitled to support bubbles given the risk you felt was posed of us 'bubble hopping' We are not interested in 'bubble hopping' nor are we asking to be able to break or bend the lockdown rules. What we are asking for is equality and recognition. We have been forgotten throughout the pandemic and this has been made even more apparent since your announcement on Saturday.

We are aware that many people have been left disadvantaged due to the pandemic but the rule that you announced on Saturday has specifically excluded us as a minority group. We would like to know why? We have the same trials as new birth parents.. I would actually argue we face MORE challenges due to the additional strains that come with adopting a child who may or may not have experienced previous traumas in their lives. We are aware that people are encouraged to apply to adopt in Wales due to the shortage of adopters available to give homes to the many children in need across the country. Yet we are discriminated against and forgotten during our time of need.

Your letter in response to my petition would have been very welcomed if it had been accompanied with us being included in the new rule you announced on Saturday. Unfortunately, the letter

accompanied with us being excluded from the new ruling has simply highlighted further how we are so frequently forgotten and dismissed as adoptive families.

We as a community urge you to reconsider this position and to immediately amend the new ruling to include new adoptive families.

Kind regards,

### **Annex 1**

Dear Mr Drakeford,

I question why the need to specifically identify one group (new parents of children under one) that can form a support bubble when they too are surely covered by the compassionate argument? I suggest that the legislation is deliberately not specifically clear on this and that is why Welsh govt have now taken the step to be crystal clear for one specific group? We, as new adopters, have been abiding by the rule that we cannot form a support bubble based in advice given but now the implication is that we can, in fact we can seek support from wherever we choose...if that's the case then we want this spelled out clearly under the same legislation as new birth parents...we are not an add-on, we are facing the same challenges, and more....

Kind regards,

# Agenda Item 2.7

## **P-05-1126 Allow organised outdoor sport for under 18s to put Wales in line with England's tier 4**

This petition was submitted by Katharine Bradley, having collected a total of 2,461 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Children in Wales have had a really disrupted year, regularly self isolating and unable to participate in sport. Sport is incredibly important for mental and physical well being. In England, organised training is being permitted. We feel that Wales should allow this too. Physical health also being hugely important at the moment. Our best defence against this and any future pandemic is to be fit and healthy.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Newport West
- South Wales East



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1126  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/00091/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

26 January 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding a petition to allow organised sport for under 18s to be put in line with England's Tier 4 Restrictions.

The current situation is that England are in a Tier 5 National Lockdown and restrictions there include the closure of sports and leisure facilities. The Welsh Government is unable to comment on any [regulations](#) made by the UK government.

As highlighted by the First Minister on [19 December](#), as of 20 December, Wales has moved to alert level four in our published Control Plan, the highest level of restrictions. Unfortunately, while we fully acknowledge the importance of exercise for our physical and mental well-being, our alert level 4 regulations state that we must all 'stay at home' unless for essential reasons. This means all indoor and outdoor attractions and facilities must close. Doing activities outdoors, while safer, is not risk free and still requires people to leave their homes when it is not essential. As it becomes colder, darker and wetter, the conditions for the virus improve. The Welsh approach during 'stay at home' restrictions, based on expert behavioural advice, requires that people should be travelling as little as possible. Every exception to these rules, or concession in one area, weakens that message and could lead to misunderstandings amongst the population that place lives at risk.

As you'll be aware, schools in Wales are now closed and pupils are learning from home (apart those from key-worker households), in order to stop the transmission of the virus amongst our young people. Allowing organised youth sporting events to continue at this time would undermine that effort and the effects of schools being closed.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Rack Page 102**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



The Welsh Government's approach to restrictions has been based the latest data and science relevant to Wales, and based on the latest advice from our own scientific and medical advisors. This is in order to limit the people we come into contact with, and reduce the speed of the transmission of the virus. Through these rules, we are trying to balance importance of people's mental and physical well-being, our economy and with the need to keep people safe and protect the NHS.

At the moment, the situation in Wales is very serious – the virus is present in all our local communities. Our NHS is under pressure. We need strong measures to bring the virus under control and to protect public health. We also need everyone to help by not just following the rules but by making small changes to their daily routines and lives and reducing the contact they have with other people. This virus thrives on human contact – whenever we spend time with or near others there is a risk we will either catch or pass on coronavirus. We will minimise this risk, and reduce the pressure on our NHS, via the cumulative impact of all the changes we have made. It is the combined impact which makes the difference, not the risk posed by any one activity.

A review of restrictions will take place every three weeks. Sporting activities, including those for the under 18s, will resume at the appropriate time, as the situation improves and we are able to move down through the alert levels set out in the Control Plan.

We fully recognise the enormous efforts and sacrifices the Welsh public and businesses have made to keep Wales safe. The Welsh Government will continue to provide regular updates via the Covid19 Press Conferences over the coming days and weeks.

I hope this clarifies the current position regarding the regulations.

Yours sincerely,



**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

# Agenda Item 2.8

## **P-05-1149 Resume team sports for children in line with England on March 29th 2021**

This petition was submitted by Dan McKenna, having collected a total of 68 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

It has been announced in England today that team sports for children are planned to resume from March 29th 2021. (Reliant on four conditions that must be met at each phase of lockdown easing). Currently though there has been no mention from Welsh Government of a return date for team sports in Wales.

### **Additional Information:**

Children have had to stay at home since December 20th with limited exercise or interaction with their friends and team mates. This has been a very challenging time with less opportunity to be outdoors during the winter months with physical and mental health being tested. Children have had a very difficult time during the Covid 19 lockdowns with their daily lives being severely disrupted. It's imperative that alongside the return of pupils to face to face learning in schools that in addition Welsh Government prioritise children getting active again as soon as possible.

This petition is requesting Welsh Government address this issue at the next 3 weekly review on March 12th 2021.

Please announce a roadmap similar to England offering clear and obvious date/s for the return of children's team sports in Wales.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1149  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/00474/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

11 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding petition P-05-1149.

Whilst the Welsh Government fully acknowledges the importance of exercise for our children's physical and mental well-being, we remain at alert level four where the strictest 'stay at home' restrictions are in place. Once these are lifted, we will move into a period of transition under which we intend to move gradually, step-by-step, to alert level three. This will be when children under 11 will be able to participate in sport and exercise activities. The Welsh Government is unable to comment on any regulations made by the UK government.

The Welsh Government's approach to restrictions continues to be based on the latest data and science relevant to Wales, and considers the latest advice from our own scientific and medical advisors. Wales has made great progress over the last few weeks, and now is not the time to rush into relaxing rules too quickly.

The next 21 day review takes place on 12 March. As part of this process Ministers will continue to take on board the concerns and views of the public, alongside the latest expert advice and data for Wales which will inform decisions on what further changes can safely be made. As highlighted on the 19 February we are already seeing some positive signs from the lockdown, with transmission rates falling and the vaccination rollout well underway. We of course want to allow children and other people to return to activities such as team sports as soon as possible, but these changes will need to be made slowly. The phased easing of rules will only happen when the science and data tells us it is safe to do so. It is important we do not rush into anything which may lead to another wave of increased infections.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We fully understand the very difficult situation that the effects of the pandemic are having on our children's physical and mental health, however for a short period longer we need to maintain this strong clear message. We must all stick together to fight this pandemic to keep ourselves, our loved ones and the wider public safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

**P-05-1149 Resume team sports for children in line with England on March 29th 2021, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 02.03.21**

Dear Petitions,

related to the petition I started in the subject of this message and in response to the letter from the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism I would like to make the following comments :

1. When will the government allow team sports to resume in Wales? England have announced outdoor organised sports will resume from March 29th - why are Wales not following suit?
2. If the government can not give a specific clear date to resume team sports for children, then please can they create a roadmap indicating what they hope to happen and when if of course certain targets are met with coronavirus cases, NHS and vaccinations roll out. Transparency from government is really important so the people of Wales can understand what is going to happen and when. People need information and are hoping as we move out of this lockdown that normal life can resume in a safe way as soon as possible.
3. Under 18s are the future sports talent of Wales and their growth and development is being severely hampered by being locked down. Sport needs to reopen outdoors in a covid safe way as soon as possible. It is simply not right that children are being stopped from developing in their chosen sports and they have missed so much development already over the last 12 months.
4. If schools are able to open securely then surely outdoor sports should open too? even if this is done gradually like Kirsty Williams is suggesting with secondary schools. Please provide evidence to prove why outdoor sports can not open at the same time as school's face to face learning.
5. Many children have to travel to play sports in Wales and are members of clubs that are more than 5 miles from their home. Again if the stay at home rule changes to stay local, please could the government try and move past the stay local rule as swiftly as possible so children can participate with their clubs should they be further than 5 miles from their home. If this isn't possible then please can you provide evidence why tourism may be potentially opening for Easter? Is this going to allow English residents to cross the border and travel into Wales / are Welsh residents able to take a 'holiday' but otherwise have to stay local? It doesn't seem to marry up I'm afraid.

Thank you very much. Those are my only comments for now.

I hope sincerely that the government will consider the mental and physical health of children and allow them to resume team sports asap.

Kind regards,

# Agenda Item 2.9

## **P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence**

This petition was submitted by Tracey Jones, having collected a total of 193 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

A survey has found that up to 33.6% of teachers have said they planned to leave the profession. Adding the proposed subjects to the syllabus will give teachers a new skill-set to support with current pressures & also enable our next generation of children to develop resilience & to better understand their emotions. Neuroscience is evolving & evidence points to a much needed change. This will firmly impact the mental health of our next generation of children & Educators.

### **Additional Information:**

A lack of education towards our own internal systems & thought processes, is causing a rise in poor mental health. As times change, we must adapt. As an Ex Teacher, I understand the pressures that the system is under. Learning the strong skills of emotional intelligence, the soft skills of 'Language Alchemy' & transformational coaching will not only equip the teachers to manage the stressors of the role, but also support building mental fortitude. They can then pass these tools on to pupils, creating a new culture of self-awareness.

They will understand:

- \* The impact of language on the body & the deep-rooted questioning techniques that will allow them to self-coach through pressures & also teach our children how to self-coach
- \* Clearing negative language loops
- \* Understanding the components of our habits
- \* Reframe their internal dialogue: to become strategic with their thought patterns & release negative emotions
- \* Coach others during pivotal moments & downward spirals: in a calm manner.

<https://senedd.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11338/cr-ld11338-e.pdf>

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Llanelli
- Mid and West Wales





Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1133  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00717/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

Dear Janet,

2 February 2021

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition P-05-1133 submitted by Tracey Jones.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) has undergone major reform in recent years. Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers <https://gov.wales/review-initial-teacher-training-2015-teaching-tomorrows-teachers> identified the need for reform of content and delivery of ITE programmes to prepare trainees to support the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales and address the six areas of learning and experience (AoLE) in order to develop future teachers to meet the needs of all learners.

The criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes have been updated to reflect the changes required and set the framework within which ITE programmes need to be developed and as such we do not prescribe or mandate the specific content required to meet these criteria. The criteria can be viewed at <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/criteria-for-the-accreditation-of-initial-teacher-education-programmes-in-wales.pdf>

The accreditation of ITE Programmes is an independent process undertaken by the Education Workforce Council through the Teacher Education Accreditation Board (TEAB) which determines whether a proposed programme addresses accreditation criteria and meets the vision for ITE in Wales.

Within the criteria there is a requirement for programmes to provide student teachers with the opportunities to develop up-to-date theoretical knowledge and understanding as well as practical insight into how children and young people develop and learn. This should, inter alia, include:

- children's and young people's cognitive, social and emotional development

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[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.


- how children and young people learn
- the factors that can promote or hinder effective learning including the impact of learners' backgrounds, identities, values and beliefs
- the need to provide for the holistic development of the learner
- the centrality of well being to effective learning.

To support this we have commissioned our partners in Universities to develop enrichment modules that ITE students and existing practitioners will be able to access. These modules will be available in the near future and will address

- Adverse childhood experiences
- Wellbeing – overview of resources
- Role of the Teaching Assistant in supporting learner well-being
- Modelling approaches to whole school and cluster level engagement with well-being
- Additional Learning Needs
- Accessing services and provision mapping
- Emotional and mental well-being
- Leadership for teacher well-being
- Behaviour
- Child development
- Neurodevelopment and pedagogy

Together, in conjunction with other training available, these measures are designed to prepare the workforce to be able to understand the development of learners and help them build resilience in meeting the challenges they will face.

Yours sincerely

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

**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

**P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 07.03.21**



- **What are your thoughts on the attached document?**

We are slowly moving in the right direction, however the document doesn't provide enough evidence of how much the key points below will be addressed within the Universities. My concern is that a 'module' might only slightly touch on these subjects.

- Wellbeing – overview of resources
- Modelling approaches to whole school and cluster level engagement with well-being
- Emotional and mental well-being
- Leadership for teacher well-being

As an ex teacher myself with over 20 years in the profession, I believe that we can often stick a band aid on topics or just lightly cover them which doesn't give us enough depth on the learning.

As most of the World has come to recognise through Covid, building a resilient society will be key in moving forward, this cannot be done within a few modules during a three-year Curriculum. There is no accountability to how much the Universities need to invest in these modules.

Moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century we need to look at what Neuroscience, Emotional Intelligence, Transpersonal and Language Alchemy Coaching can teach us. Teacher practice needs to be diverse enough to support this evolution of change within our society – never has it been more important to learn about human behaviour to reinforce the notion that:

'thoughts create our behaviour which in turn impacts productivity'

Enabling Psychologists, Neuro-scientists, Language Alchemy and Transpersonal Coaching specialists into our field to support with this key area of the ITE programme will assist us in being at the leading edge of teacher practice. Having been through the process myself can see that this is one of the main key components that's missing from our Curriculum in firstly: retaining our staff and secondly: reducing staff sickness.

We need to be working at the level of thoughts to improve the quality and consistency of ITE provision and introduce a new approach to initial teacher education.

If this is essential to the government in achieving its wider ambitions for Educational reform in Wales, focusing in depth on the Human Behaviour, Emotional Literacy, Transpersonal and Language Alchemy

coaching will be key. We could be the first Teaching Practice of its kind to invest in this area, this change will develop us as global leading-edge specialists.

To develop this I propose:

These areas to be placed into QTS status with a minimum of 20% of the full Teaching Practice to include:

- Human behaviour - learning about 'me' who am I? How can I understand my behaviours, my triggers and my personal language, learning the dynamics of my mind (Emotional Intelligence)
- Psychology and Neuroscience of the 'adult' not the child.
- Transpersonal and Language Alchemy coaching (the internal and external coach)

### **Does it adequately address the issues that you raised?**

It touches on these issues in a manner that's unclear. It mentions modules. If the module for example is 4 weeks long and only one hour a week. That's only 4 hours over 3 years. That's not adequate enough time to change people's unhealthy habits and enable them to learn how to reframe these habits and learn how to become robust teachers. It does need to include Emotional Literacy and Coaching.

In the document 'teaching-tomorrows- teachers' states:

***If Wales was to achieve the school system that it needs and wants in the future, then it seemed clear to us that the teaching profession needs to provide a lead. Wales, needs a new form of professionalism amongst its teachers. It needs teachers who:***

- *accept and respond to demands for their accountability;*
- *take personal and collective responsibility for professional development;*

Out of the 9 key points within the document only the above two lightly touch on our topics. To enable a teacher to fully embrace these two key areas they also need to have the emotional literacy to respond to various demands within the role and hold themselves accountable. Equipping our teacher students with emotional literacy will enable them to take FULL responsibility over their roles. Equipping them to be forward thinkers and practitioners that are able to focus on the solution and not the problem.

- **Do you have further questions in response?**

How will we hold Universities accountable to the depth of Emotional Literacy that needs to be taught within the teaching practice?

Can these skills be included in the QTS status?

How do we develop a mentally strong and robust group of teachers without these key components?

How will we connect adult human behaviour into our ITE programme?

- Is there anything additional that you would like the Committee to know at this stage, either in response to this document or as an update to the Committee?

My thoughts are that we are slowly moving in the right direction, however I don't believe that our petition has been fully addressed. Since September 2020 to March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021 I have personally coached over 130 Head Teachers and trained over 600 Senior Leaders and staff on resilience competency skills, Alchemy Coaching and our Advanced Leadership Programme here in Wales. The aim: supporting them to understand their behaviours, values, thought process and triggers. With many stating that they wished they had learned this within teaching practice.

Many of our heads have stated without this training they would have left the profession. We recently held a brief questionnaire with the below questions with 162 people.

|  | yes | no | Possibly |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| 1.If we were to include 'Emotional Intelligence', 'Human Behavior' (Psychology), Transpersonal and Language Alchemy Coaching(TM) within our teaching practice do you believe we would create a more resilient and robust practitioner that could better cope with the pressures of the role? | 148 | 2  | 12       |
| 2. Do you believe that these skills are needed within the profession?  | 151 | 2  | 9        |
| 3.Would you like to see these skills being added to the teacher practice curriculum?   | 149 | 2  | 11       |

In the document 'Teaching tomorrow Teachers' it states:

***If Wales was to achieve the school system that it needs and wants in the future, then it seemed clear to us that the teaching profession needs to provide a lead. Wales, needs a new form of professionalism amongst its teachers.***

To achieve this we need highly self aware individuals coming though the profession individuals who are robust to the system and can manage through pressured times. Teachers need to fully understand who they are to manage these situations well. Its their health and wellbeing at stake, if we had a robust teaching system we would, as previously stated:

- Reduce Staff sickness
- Retain teachers within the profession

The document also states:

***Without effective leadership there will be little chance of the sector responding to the many challenges posed by the recommendations of the Donaldson Review. And without effective leadership there is little opportunity for the sector benchmark its current work nationally and internationally and to become a self-improving system. Given the current lack of leadership of the sector it is perhaps not surprising that the quality of the programmes is not as strong as it should be.***

Global corporate companies are shifting into emotionally intelligence led leadership, we are moving into a very different era of Leadership- the employee is the centre of the business, you want strategic

visioning?you need Emotionally literate staff members on board. Your top CEO's and Entrepreneurs work at this level, it accounts for 90/95% of leadership.

***Option 15.2 – A single university centre At the other end of the scale, it would be possible for Wales to develop a single national centre for teacher education.***

This can be seen as one of the top national centres in Europe – combined with it being a 4 year course – you could have the best ITE provision. This could become a leadership training hub and centre for excellence, moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century we need to better equip our teachers and future generation of children with the appropriate tools enabling them to be better prepared for our future.

Teacher practice needs to be diverse enough to support this evolution of change within our society.

Creating a national centre could potentially attract:

- Neuro science specialists into our field, enabling us to be on the leading edge of teacher practice.
- Professors within Psychology to take an interest within our culture

Having the 3 centres instead of 5 can also have a similar impact

Thank you for taking the time in reading and listening to my points.

# Agenda Item 2.10

**P-05-1134 Cap all Welsh county council tax at 3%. A referendum of the public must take place to exceed 3%**

This petition was submitted by Gerald Newton Jones, having collected a total of 524 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

Living in Conwy county most of my life, born in Rhyl of Welsh parents and now retired we like everyone else had to suffer a 14.5% council tax increase the last 2 years. It's getting to the point where people living in Wales will either have to downsize their homes or move to England where the capping of such tax is still in force. This along with the Welsh Government soon to have control of 50% of our income tax will drive people and businesses out of Wales.

**Additional Information:**

The council tax for 2 pensioners living together in a standard property they built themselves now removes over 1/6 of their total pensions income. Then currently £1000 of their total pension income is further taxed at 20%.

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd West
- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1134  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00296/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair of the Petitions Committee.

2 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 21 January to Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, regarding the Petitions Committee's consideration of a petition calling for a cap on council tax increases and for the opportunity to set out the Welsh Government's views. I am replying given my responsibility for local government finance matters.

As you will be aware, while the Welsh Government does have some powers here, the responsibility for setting each council's budget, and as part of that, decisions on council tax, lies with its elected members. During its existence to date the Welsh Government has taken the position that the setting of budgets and council tax is an essential aspect of local democracy. Since 2010-11, the policy has been an important part of the autonomy and flexibility given to local authorities in Wales to assist them in managing the challenges presented by the UK-wide constraints on public expenditure. This contrasts with England where the Localism Act 2011 introduced requirements for local referenda for council tax increases in excess of thresholds set by the UK Government.

Under the legislation (the *Local Government Finance Act 1988*) Welsh Ministers have powers to limit (cap) the Budget Requirement of local authorities in Wales. The powers relate specifically to the Budget Requirement which an authority (unitary authority or police and crime commissioner) sets, rather than its council tax level. The Budget Requirement is the part of an authority's budget funded through the Revenue Support Grant, non-domestic rates and council tax (plus minor discretionary rates reliefs, and Police Grant in the case of PCCs). It excludes the part of the authority's budget funded through income from specific grants, local fees and charges, and financial reserves. For this reason, while responsibility for council tax policy sits with the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd, the responsibility for capping decisions sits within my portfolio alongside responsibilities for the annual local government settlements.

The Welsh Government considers that capping an authority's budget requirement would be a serious imposition on the responsibilities of locally elected members; it could not be done arbitrarily or without careful consideration. The legislation requires that if capping is imposed it must be done so against set criteria.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Back Page 118**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



The criteria – based on principles of excessiveness – would need to be set out in advance of authorities setting their budgets. For that reason, capping could not be imposed now on the budget requirements which authorities across Wales have determined and agreed, following local consultation and engagement.

Any such principles would need to be capable of being applied consistently across authorities, though different criteria can be set out for unitary authorities and for the police precept. The principles may include a number of criteria, for example, percentage and / or monetary increases in the overall amount of council tax income, and / or in the level of Band D tax. Even where the principles are exceeded, any Minister's decision as to whether to cap could take account of local factors and circumstances, for example, if an authority has to deal with a particular financial challenge.

The Welsh Government has provided increases in funding for all authorities in Wales - an average of 4.3% in 2020-2021 and provisionally 3.8% in 2021-22. All local authorities are now making decisions regarding the provision of the services on which we all rely. Council tax is a significant source of funding for those local services and it is important that local authorities have the freedom to set their own spending priorities and council tax levels; they are independent statutory authorities responsible for managing their own financial affairs.

When setting their budgets and council tax levels, authorities have a duty to consider carefully the balance between maintaining key services for communities and limiting the financial burden they place on them. Local authorities are required to consult and engage with their communities each year on proposals for spending and council tax and for the provision of services. This provides local communities with an opportunity to express their views on the decisions their council makes about council tax and local services.

I understand that circumstances are very challenging for many people and households across Wales; more so during the unprecedented challenge of coronavirus and following years of austerity which has placed local services under a great deal of pressure. A wide range of services have been significantly impacted by the pandemic and in response to this, the Welsh Government has provided significant additional funding to local authorities over and above the settlement to ensure the continued delivery of all public services in Wales.

It is important to recognise that the Welsh Government has a number of schemes available to help people who are finding it difficult to pay their council tax bills, as well as a range of exemptions and discounts. We provide £244 million a year to support local authorities in delivering the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This scheme provides direct support to households by reducing council tax bills for low-income households. This is a mandatory scheme which every local authority must provide and it is helping almost 280,000 households in Wales. We are also exploring future reforms to council tax and whether it could be more progressive. We will shortly be publishing a summary of all our work during this Senedd term to inform the debate ahead of the next term.

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

**P-05-1134 Cap all Welsh county council tax at 3%. A referendum of the public must take place to exceed 3%, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 08.03.21**

I would just like to reiterate what I have stated in the petition. Being under Lockdown since this time last year due to age and medical conditions most of us have had to stay at home ( we have not been out apart from the Garden) thus incurring around 2-3 times the energy costs used for home heating and hot water and of course as we are unable to visit the supermarkets for essential foodstuffs have been hit with a weekly on line shop delivery of £7 per week.

The expense of council tax regardless of income is a further Burdon that we (retired) have to endure regardless of the situation above or the pandemic.

People on low pay, retired people (regardless of income) and young people are struggling yet the Council tax still increases every year for less and less services. 14.1% in Conwy the last 2 years has hit our pensions and incomes hard. Despite the current climate we are expecting increase around Wales of between 3 and 9 % yet again.

The general income pay rises as you well know is around 1% yet County councillors and your organisation is expecting pay rises of around 3-5% due to the ability of quoting and voting for their own pay rises. We taxpayers who pay the public sector do not have that luxury and those of us who have paid full income tax for over 50 years (and no pay increases during 8 years of the 80's) are finding the costs of living in our homeland is becoming too much.

People who are hard working and worked hard to provide free public services for all are being driven to despair. Despite this hard work to enable them not to be a burden on the state and the fact many have their own homes, we are seen as a money pot by the Government and have to consider downsizing the homes we have lived in for decades. N Wales is not a healthy area to live due to the lack of industry/technology investment and it's blatantly clear many businesses are leaving the area and our young people following. However the population is being replaced with more and more well to do retirees from outside of Wales (nothing wrong with that) buying and paying over the "normal local" costs for housing pushing prices upwards and these new investors will (could) soon be a further burden on our public sector expenditure hence more c tax rises. The economy is collapsing and these rises are forcing us Welsh people out.

The cap on c tax is only one part of the measures needed to instil confidence in the government but effectively c tax is the big issue for ALL residents of Wales. Two people should be able to enjoy retirement after a total of 90 years working (as in our case paying tax) without the thought of leaving their home due to ever increasing c tax rises which forces many to downsize and sell off to richer people from??

One final point:- Here in Conwy CC the public services have degraded to virtual non existent despite the 14.1% C tax rise. We pay 59 councillors over £2m per annum plus expenses yet they are allowed to agree their own pay rise of 4% and increase c Tax by 3%.-- This has nothing to do with the Covid-19 pandemic--it's just ???

Regards

# Agenda Item 2.11

## **P-05-1138 COVID-19 Weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical health needs**

This petition was submitted by Leanne Collis, having collected a total of 50 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Our daughter Olivia is 17yrs old, has complex medical health needs and requires 24hr care. She is being put at risk on a daily basis of catching this deadly virus with no testing in place!!

Please, please sign!!!! The community staff mentioned are frontline workers looking after the vulnerable, they do all personal care and most tasks in the home that is required in the hospital environment.

### **Additional Information:**

NHS sites have weekly testing

Care homes have weekly testing

Special school residential homes have weekly testing

I have contacted PHW, they have referred to our local health board but they have REFUSED to protect Olivia and test her staff!!

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central

Julie Morgan AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1138  
Ein cyf/Our ref JM/00221/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

10 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 25 January to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding weekly testing of staff caring for people with complex medical needs. This has been passed to me for a response as the issues you raise fall within my area of responsibility.

Protecting our NHS and our most vulnerable citizens in Wales remains at the heart of our Covid-19 response, and one of the priorities of our testing strategy is to enable health and social care workers to continue providing care to people in hospitals and primary care and community care settings.

On 4 December, the Minister for Health and Social Services made an announcement regarding testing for those frontline health and social care staff not currently part of a regular testing programme. The programme as a whole was initially subject to a 'pathfinder' pilot to help enable us to develop solutions for some of the barriers to its implementation, but roll-out of regular testing of all patient/public facing health and social care staff has now commenced. I have provided a link to the announcement below for ease of reference.

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-covid-19-testing-health-and-social-care-workers-and-hospice-staff>

Health and social care staff will be tested twice weekly – every three to four days – using Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs). These tests detect the presence of the Covid-19 viral antigen from a swab sample and can produce results within 30 minutes allowing for positive individuals to be identified and isolated much more quickly than through the PCR testing process which involves sending the swab sample to a laboratory.

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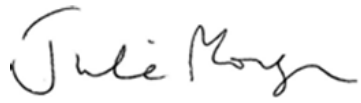
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I very much hope that the programme will help to reduce infection rates in our communities, protect people at higher risk of infection and find people who are infectious but who don't have symptoms.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Julie Morgan AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

**P-05-1138 COVID-19 Weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical health needs, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 10.03.21**

RE: MY RESPONSE

It states in the response from the welsh government that lateral flow testing has been rolled out in January to social care workers, we have not been included, the only question I have in response is when this will happen with our private package??

# Agenda Item 2.12

## **P-05-1140 Revise the guidance for Free School Meals, removing the option for delivery of food parcels**

This petition was submitted by Sarah Rees, having collected a total of 205 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Awful images of English food parcels have been circulated, resulting in Westminster committing to provide vouchers for all. In Wales there are still 3 Councils handing out food parcels. Families have shared images of parcels where there is little choice, not meeting dietary requirements and reports of mouldy fresh produce. Some parents are missing deliveries due to work, leaving children hungry.

I know the stigma of FSM, it's time to empower families to choose what their children eat.

### **Additional Information:**

The guidance that best supports families is to commit to BACS payments as default, with the provision of vouchers where requested.

The Bevan Foundation recommends all local authorities should provide cash payments to avoid problems with the quality and quantity of food in food parcels as well as stigma.

The Child Poverty Action Group outline why cash first:

- \* Cash gives people dignity by removing the stigma that often comes with using in-kind support or vouchers
- \* Cash payments provide choice and control by enabling families to use support in a way that works best for them, enabling them to meet the multiple needs that they have.
- \* Cash is the preferred option for most low-income families.
- \* Cash removes the complex or expensive arrangements with suppliers of in-kind support.
- \* Cash payments allow families better value for money
- \* Boost to the local economy as more likely spent with local, independent retailers, rather than supermarkets.



## **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1140  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00938/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Senedd Petitions Committee.  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

11 February 2021

Dear Janet

**Petition P-05-1140 Revise the guidance for Free School Meals, removing the option for delivery of food parcels**

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition P-05-1140. I have set out below a number of points for consideration by the Petitions Committee.

The Welsh Government has given local authorities the flexibility to choose which method of free school meal provision best meets the needs of the population they serve whilst eligible pupils have not been able to attend school as a result of Covid-19.

We have encouraged local authorities to operate a number of systems in parallel because we are very conscious that one single method may not meet the needs of the families of all eligible pupils within a local authority area, particularly those of more vulnerable families. Anecdotally we have been made aware of families who do not have bank accounts (and therefore unable to receive BACs payments) and also of local authority concerns in a small number of cases of some vulnerable children where there is a very real danger that they might not benefit if a cash payment is made to their parents. We have also been told that delivering a parcel of food has provided local authorities with an invaluable opportunity to check on the welfare of a vulnerable child. Similarly, in some areas where large supermarkets have a limited presence and transport or delivery slots are unavailable for whatever reason, vouchers are of little use. Being able to operate a number of parallel systems enables a local authority to meet the many and varied needs of their resident eligible population.

I understand that currently the majority of local authorities in Wales are making free school meal provision using either cash payments or vouchers. Local authorities have considered

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the means of free school meal provision they have adopted very seriously and I know of at least one where this issue has been considered and the decision made at Council level. My officials are unaware of any concerns being raised by those families provided with vouchers and I can see no merit in not allowing local authorities to issue them routinely. I am aware of two local authorities routinely providing food parcels (Caerphilly and Bridgend) with Swansea allowing eligible families the choice of a payment or a food parcel.

You may also be interested to see the menu choices offered in Caerphilly (<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Services/Schools-and-learning/School-dinners-and-breakfast-clubs/COVID-19-Free-school-meals-delivery-service>). I understand that both Caerphilly and Bridgend are able to make provision for those with special dietary requirements.

It is important to recognise that the petitioner refers to “images of English food parcels” which caused a recent media storm. The same media storm gave rise to very positive comments from families living in two local authority areas in Wales which currently routinely make free school meal provision in the form of food vouchers. I attach links to two media articles which illustrate this point


(<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/free-school-meals-food-wales-19607778>  
<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/stark-contrast-between-free-school-23306723>).

Where my officials have been made aware of individual concerns regarding the contents of food parcels, these have been resolved by reference to the local authority concerned.

Local authority staff all over Wales have worked extremely hard to ensure that eligible pupils who rely on free school meals have not had to go without because they are not able to attend school because of Covid-19. I also think it is important to recognise that in Caerphilly, additional effort has been made to make use of local suppliers who have been especially hard hit by fallout from the pandemic. On the other hand, I know of little evidence that would indicate that parents would be more likely to spend with local, independent retailers, rather than supermarkets (as cited by the petitioner).

I hope the information I have provided is helpful for the Petitions Committee and, in the event that further details are required, please let me know.

Yours sincerely



**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

## **P-05-1140 Revise the guidance for Free School Meals, removing the option for delivery of food parcels, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 08.03.21**

Response to Minister for Education & petitions Committee

Free School Meals – use of food parcels

Below are my thoughts in response to points raised by the Minister

- 1. We have encouraged local authorities to operate a number of systems in parallel because we are very conscious that one single method may not meet the needs of the families of all eligible pupils within a local authority area, particularly those of more vulnerable families.**

Whilst the Minister has continued to make the point that she has encouraged local authorities to operate a number of systems in parallel, what evidence can she provide for doing so? I have continually challenged Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC), since they implemented this system in April 2020 and at no point have they said they will look at offering a blended option. They have stated that there are insufficient resources within the council to operate a range of options. (see attached letter to Bethan Sayed MS)

What support are the Welsh Government offering to enable local authorities to provide parallel options?

- 2. also, of local authority concerns in a small number of cases of some vulnerable children where there is a very real danger that they might not benefit if a cash payment is made to their parents. We have also been told that delivering a parcel of food has provided local authorities with an invaluable opportunity to check on the welfare of a vulnerable child.**

Safety of children is of course a priority; however local authorities are hiding behind this reason as an excuse for continuing to use a blanket approach in providing food parcels. Some of the reasons BCBC offer for continuing to use parcels are the risk of food shortages, when there have not been any food shortages since the early point of the lockdowns almost 12 months ago, and that their staff were undertaking the deliveries to ensure safeguarding and wellbeing. It must be noted that they ended these deliveries in April 2020 when they contracted The Real Wrap Co to take over the contract. I quote "Therefore, since April 2020, the local authority has contracted the Real Wrap Company to pack and deliver the food parcels

directly to homes." Therefore, giving the reason that the continued use of food parcels is to safeguard children is false.

- 3. Being able to operate a number of parallel systems enables a local authority to meet the many and varied needs of their resident eligible population.**

As aforementioned, neither Bridgend or Caerphilly are offering parallel systems. This is why I ask that the Welsh Government change their guidance to ensure that all local authorities operation more than one option, removing the blanket use of food parcels which is not suitable for all families.

- 4. You may also be interested to see the menu choices offered in Caerphilly**

Whenever challenged, the Welsh Government hold Caerphilly up as a positive example of food parcels. At no stage have they acknowledged that the food parcels being proffered in Bridgend are sub-standard and well below the weekly allowance of £19.50. Families regularly send me images of

their parcels (see attached), and we undertake regular supermarket cost comparisons. The average supermarket cost of the Bridgend parcels is £10-11.

**5. Where my officials have been made aware of individual concerns regarding the contents of food parcels, these have been resolved by reference to the local authority concerned.**

Having raised this issue at various stages with the Minister I would like to know where the mouldy and sub-standard food has been addressed with BCBC?

**6. I also think it is important to recognise that in Caerphilly, additional effort has been made to make use of local suppliers who have been especially hard hit by fallout from the pandemic.**

Again, the focus is on the food parcel best practice in Caerphilly. I would like to ask her opinion on why Bridgend have contracted a Bristol based private company, The Real Wrap Co, who drive weekly trucks to Bridgend for deliveries. Some families have missed their delivery due to having to go out to work, others have simply been missed. BCBC themselves cite that they opted to use Real Wrap because they "The Real Wrap company was chosen to supply the food parcel, as they were already on a National Procurement Strategy (NPS) Framework for Wales, as they supply sandwiches to all hospitals in Wales, including Bridgend's Princess of Wales Hospital."

I do not feel that this is a sufficient reason to procure 5,000 weekly food parcels to families across BCBC. If you refer to the images in their letter, you will also see heavy use of individually plastic wrapped items. I would like to know how these parcels fit BCBC's responsibilities under the Future Generations Act? Surely a single glass jar of jam would suffice rather than individual plastic wrapped portions?

**7. On the other hand, I know of little evidence that would indicate that parents would be more likely to spend with local, independent retailers, rather than supermarkets (as cited by the petitioner).**

Please see link to research from the Bevan Foundation, it clearly states that a benefit of offering cash payments is that families will spend this money in their local economy, as has clearly been seen across Wales during the lockdown periods.

<https://www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/State-of-Wales-FSM.pdf>

- Does it adequately address the issues that you raised?

The Ministers response does not adequately address why just two local authorities have continued to opt for a voucher only system. The Welsh Government focus on Caerphilly and do not address the concerns within Bridgend, of which she is well aware.

This policy of giving families in poverty no choice other than food parcels is based on negative assumptions, which can clearly be seen in tweets made by BCBC \_\_\_\_\_. Parents living in the area contacted me having seen this exchange stating that the words used by the Councillor led them to become very upset and avoid social media due to the mental health impact of the comments made.

I have these clear questions:

- What support is being offered to local authorities to enable them to meet Welsh Government guidance and offer multiple options in parallel?
- Will the Welsh Government change their guidance to ensure that all families are catered for and confirm that more than one option must be in operation?
- Will families be reimbursed for the £10 per week they have missed in essential food times where these costs have been absorbed into the running costs of the food parcel system?
- Will they investigate the procurement choices of BCBC in using The Real Wrap Co. because they deliver sandwiches to the NHS?
- Have the Welsh Government any information to show that they have questioned the quality of the parcels in BCBC?

I would like to thank the committee for taking the time to review these comments. As a child, I was in receipt of free school meals and still live with the long-term stigma that comes with being reliant on state benefits. It is for this reason that I have campaigned on this issue, as I am acutely aware of what value children place on themselves when those in authority believe that they are only worth couple of mouldy oranges and some loosely termed 'recipes'.

# Agenda Item 2.13

## **P-05-1142 Workout To Help Out Scheme**

This petition was submitted by Jamie Price, having collected a total of 261 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

After the first lockdown the UK Government spent £500m on the eat out to help out scheme!

This time the focus must be on health!

With activity levels falling to an all-time low in this third lockdown & mental health figures rocketing to an all-time high we need to prioritise health post lockdown!

A workout to help out scheme would be for anyone looking to attend a gym, swimming pool and leisure facilities for a day pass, class or an outdoor fitness-related activity. It could provide 50% off someone's bill, capped at ten pounds per person.

This would be an opportunity to prioritise & improve the health of the nation post pandemic whilst relieving some of the future pressures from the NHS!

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1142  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/00218/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

17 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding petition P-05-1142.

The coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on indoor activities such as swimming and fitness classes. That is why, throughout the lockdown, going outdoors for exercise is one of the limited reasons we have permitted people to leave their homes.

Since the start of the pandemic the Welsh Government has continued to work closely with the sport sector, and across public services to support different approaches to engaging and encouraging physical activity as a preventative health and wellbeing measure. We have operated a number of funds and schemes through Sport Wales, our provider for sport in Wales.

In 2020 the Welsh Government announced a £14m sport and leisure recovery fund for 2020-21 to help the sector meet the ongoing challenges resulting from the coronavirus pandemic and to help provide longer-term sustainability. The sport and leisure recovery fund is designed to help provide essential support to sports clubs and organisations, independent providers and sporting events which have suffered a significant loss of revenue over recent months. The fund also makes available funding for innovation in local authority leisure centres and leisure trusts which complements funding available for increased costs and loss of income from the local government hardship fund.

The Welsh Government have recently announced the 'private providers' fund which is focused on ensuring support for commercial providers for physical activity in Wales. more information on this please visit <https://www.sport.wales/sport-sector-private-providers-fund/>.

We previously operated the sport freelancer fund and also have the Be Active Wales Fund open for not-for-profit community clubs and organisations <https://www.sport.wales/beactivewalesfund/>. These range of financial support mechanisms all support providers to be viable through the pandemic.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



Increasing opportunities to be physically active is central to ensuring that people across Wales are able to stay healthy and well. That is why, as part of Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales, we invested £500k for Sport Wales to develop a 60 Plus Active Leisure Scheme offer. This will enable Sport Wales to continue to deliver targeted provision of physical activity opportunities, to contribute to a reduction in health inequalities amongst the 60 plus population.

I thank you for your feedback and it has been taken on board. We fully recognise the enormous efforts and sacrifices the Welsh public and businesses have made to keep Wales safe and to save lives. The Welsh Government will continue to provide regular updates via the Covid19 press conferences and our social media channels over the coming weeks.

I hope this information is helpful and illustrates some of the support that is being provided.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

# Agenda Item 2.14

## **P-05-1143 Fully re-open all schools immediately after February half-term**

This petition was submitted by Charlotte Young, having collected a total of 625 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Our children's education has already been hugely disrupted.

Children's mental health is suffering.

Children have a right to an education – they are never going to get this time back.

Remote learning does not work for primary school children and their families.

Parents are under huge and unsustainable pressures to home school in addition to their work.

Vaccinating school staff recognises their important role and will reduce the risk of further school closures.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1143  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/01042/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Senedd Cymru Petitions committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

18 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee, seeking views on the issues raised in Petition P-05-1143 calling for schools to fully re-open after the February half term break, before your formal consideration.

Since the Petition was submitted, things have moved on at pace. Although the situation in Wales and across the UK remains very serious and Level 4 restrictions currently apply in Wales, Phase 1 of the vaccination programme is progressing well. On 05 February, I [wrote](#) to all head teachers to outline the plan for a cautious return for our youngest learners. Schools should now prepare for a phased, flexible and progressive return of primary school age learners after 22 February, if the rates of coronavirus continue to fall. Further details, and plans for the return of secondary school aged learners, will follow.

However, we all know that the pandemic is a fast changing situation, which often makes it difficult to plan for, and, on occasion, has necessitated changes to our advice at very short notice. This is because we keep the situation under constant review, and decisions are based on the very latest medical and scientific advice. This is also why we are planning a cautious and flexible approach to re-opening schools for face-to-face learning.

As a Government we understand the challenges facing all learners, teachers and leaders as a result of the pandemic, and recognise that this has been a difficult year for everyone. I fully understand the lasting impact of school closures on the education and the emotional and mental health and well-being of learners in Wales, and appreciate how disappointing it is to have face-to-face learning further disrupted in recent weeks. We have all had to adapt in these challenging times and consider different ways of learning. We know that blended learning is not a substitute for face-to-face teaching, and I applaud the efforts made by education staff and children for their resilience and their determination to continue to teach and to learn. I continue to hold discussions with schools, local authorities, unions and other

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stakeholders in relation to measures that can be taken to make up for an education that has been missed during the pandemic, and a safer return to in-school learning.

In the meantime, I have put in place a range of measures to support remote learning including extensive professional learning, significant investment in devices and the enhanced £29 million Accelerating Learning Programme to [recruit, recover and raise standards](#) in Welsh schools. Building on guidance to support blended learning, further guidance has been published to help schools effectively support learners during their [exam years](#), to support [vulnerable and disadvantaged learners](#), guidance and additional funding is available for learners with [ALN](#), and changes to [qualifications](#) for 2021 has been announced. The Design and Delivery Advisory Group, officials and Qualifications Wales have worked closely on the approach and guidelines for the 2021 qualifications assessment process, I attach a link to the [Qualifications Wales website](#) which enables practitioners, learners and parents to keep up to date with any changes to assessment that may occur going forward, due to these exceptional circumstances.

The emotional and mental well-being of learners is also a key priority for the Welsh Government. I am aware that time away from friends, family and the classroom can have a lasting impact on the wellbeing of learners. I convened a Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group on a Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing to advise on the work needed to support the wellbeing of learners, and together with the Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and the Welsh Language, we have made additional funding of [£9.4m](#) available to support the well-being and mental health of pupils and school staff. The Welsh Government also supports C.A.L.L. (the Community Advice and Listening Line), a helpline for Wales which is open 24 hours each day. Anyone who is concerned about their own wellbeing, or that of a family member or friend, can contact C.A.L.L. using the free-phone number 0800 132 737 or by texting HELP to 81066 for confidential advice and support.

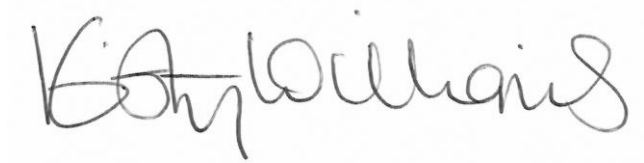
Regarding the vaccination programme, I understand the anxieties of teachers and others who may be exposed to the virus in the workplace. As you will know, we are working to the priority schedule determined by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). The JCVI determined that the first priorities of the vaccination programme roll out should be the prevention of Covid-related deaths and the protection of health and social care staff and systems. This means we vaccinate people in order of clinical risk, and school staff and other key workers will be immunised depending on their age and risk. In Wales the COVID 19 vaccine roll-out began on 8 December, education workforce members who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have been shielding, and those over 50 years are included in Phase 1, school staff who provide intimate personal care for children with complex medical needs are also included in the priority list along with social care workers. We await the information regarding the Phase 2 priority schedule.

Following recent discussions regarding the need for additional mitigating measures in schools, such as PPE, we will however introduce a number of measures to provide school staff with an added level of assurance for their safe return to face-to-face teaching. This includes the introduction of twice [weekly testing](#) for staff members and increased financial support for new high quality face coverings. We will also be providing an additional £5 million to support schools, colleges and local authorities to invest further in items they need to keep their premises safe.

Thank you again for contacting us, and for allowing me the opportunity to share this information. I recognise that parents, pupils and the wider community wish to see a full return to in-school education as quickly as possible. I assure you that this remains our ambition,

but we must be guided by medical and scientific advice and the evidence available to us. Please be assured that the Welsh Government's priorities during this pandemic continue to be the safety and welfare of students, school staff and the wider community, and the continuing education of learners.

Yours sincerely

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

**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

# Agenda Item 2.15

## **P-05-1144 Re-open garden centres in Wales as soon as it is possible**

This petition was submitted by Nicola Pugh, having collected a total of 11,217 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Re-open garden centres in Wales as soon as it is possible:

- Gardening keeps people at home
- Gardening brings significant mental and physical benefits
- Garden centres are large, airy spaces with excellent safety measures in place
- The plant supply chain cannot be switched off and on. In many cases plants go to waste if they cannot reach garden centres
- Online, click and collect and home deliveries are not the answer. They are particularly difficult for independent garden centres.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1144  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00803/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

26 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 2 February regarding Petition P-05-1144 about the closure of garden centres in Wales under Alert level 4 restrictions.

The Welsh Government recognises the incredibly difficult and uncertain circumstances currently being experienced by businesses, including garden centres. We are absolutely committed to providing the support and assurance needed.

The Welsh Government introduced Alert Level 4 restrictions for Wales to reduce the spread of the virus. Coronavirus cases have been falling thanks to the efforts of everyone in Wales, and every vaccine delivered is a small victory against the virus. However, rates are still too high and our NHS remains under significant pressure. We need to keep going to bring the virus under control. We are clear that the ability to relax the current restrictions remains limited by the presence of the new variant, which is more transmissible than before.

We recognise the enormous efforts businesses have made to become safe places. This requirement to close in Alert Level 4 is not a reflection on those efforts and we appreciate that some business environments make only a low or moderate contribution to the risk of transmitting the virus. Unlike in earlier lockdowns, at Alert Level 4 all shops and other types of businesses required to close can offer click and collect, online and delivery services to people's homes.

Last Friday, the First Minister confirmed the next three-week review of the regulations will consider the restrictions around non-essential retail.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We know this remains an incredibly difficult time for businesses and we continue to do all we can to support them. In total the Welsh Government has ensured more than £1.75bn has reached the bank accounts of businesses since the beginning of the pandemic to help the deal with the pressures we are all facing. The Welsh Government's financial assistance for businesses is in addition to UK Government schemes, making the support package in Wales the most generous anywhere in the UK.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

**Ken Skates AS/MS**

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales





## **Re-open garden centres in Wales as soon as it is possible**

The Welsh garden retail sector has a total impact on GDP of £177 million annually (directly & indirectly) and supports 3,700 jobs directly. The Welsh ornamental horticulture sector as a whole supports 18,000 jobs directly and contributes £503 million annually directly to GDP. Welsh consumer spending on ornamental horticultural goods totals £430 million per annum.

1. **The mental health and physical health benefits** of gardening and plants are well documented. Springtime is now here and the public needs to be allowed access to plants and garden goods to enable them to garden at home and maintain good mental health & physical wellbeing.
2. **First class social distancing.** Garden centres offer light, airy, open spaces and plant sales mainly take place in outdoor spaces. Our trade body, the HTA, has developed an enhanced Safe Trading Protocol for garden retailers to enable them to implement the most stringent protocols at their premises. Sales data shows that shopping trends in garden centres have become focussed on plants and garden products while consumers are planning their purchases and making less journeys for shopping meaning less browsing time while in store.
3. **Keeps people at home.** Giving people something to do at home keeps them at home and gardening is not just for those with gardens, but for those with balconies, allotments, or window boxes. 3 million new gardeners across the UK have taken up the hobby since lockdown. In allowing people to visit a garden centre they have something to do at home.
4. **Welsh growers are essential to our sector.** This is a key time of year. Growers already have the crops growing on their nurseries, so need confidence there will be an outlet for their plants, and they will not have to be disposed of and the confidence to plant follow on crops. Similarly, without a date for reopening Welsh garden centres are experiencing severe difficulties in purchasing stock from growers. Welsh growers traditionally supply Welsh outlets, 60% of which are retailers, with a Welsh plant production industry worth £23 million. Supply of bedding plants to garden centres and DIY stores account for 70% of the value of bedding plants supplied by growers – of which 70% happens between March–June and 58% of hardy nursery stock sales are in March-June.
5. **Garden centres are part of the ‘green economic growth’ agenda.** They underwrite a production sector that is essential in fulfilling the Welsh Government’s environmental plan and the wider ambitions around climate change.
6. **Click & collect & home deliveries,** while welcome is not sustainable, particularly during the main season (March to June). They will not be able to fulfil the public’s demand for plants. The investment required for home deliveries (IT, staffing & vans required) prohibits meaningful income. Online typically accounts for 10% to 15% of industry sales.
7. **Garden centres are local stores.** In many rural areas garden centres operate as local community stores. Many offer a range of products including food halls, pet and aquatic supplies, bird care – which fall into the essential category.

# Agenda Item 2.16

## **P-05-1145 Allow parents of young children to drive to use local parks and playgrounds during tier 4 lockdown**

This petition was submitted by Alexander Edwards, having collected a total of 58 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Not all parents with young children can safely walk from the house to use parks and playgrounds e.g. when having to walk along dangerous roads or in rural areas. The benefits of exercise and play for young children are well established. Consider allowing parents of young children to drive to parks and playgrounds so that they can play and exercise within their bubble and with respect to COVID-19 guidelines.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Wrexham
- North Wales



Your ref P-05-1145  
Our ref JM/00273/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Petitions Committee Chair  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
[Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales](mailto:Seneddpetitions@senedd.wales)

1 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 9 February regarding a petition to allow parents of young children to drive to use local parks and playgrounds while alert level four restrictions are in place.

Travel is not permitted without a reasonable excuse in alert level four. A person has a reasonable excuse if they are travelling for a purpose that is reasonably necessary and there is no reasonable practicable alternative. Examples of these purposes are provided in Schedule 4, Part 3 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) No.5 (Wales) Regulations 2020.

Parks and playgrounds are allowed to remain open for outdoor exercise. People can visit parks and playgrounds with other people for exercise purposes as long as they follow the rules on who they can exercise with.

Exercise, including exercise at parks and playgrounds, must be undertaken locally and from home. No journeys or any significant distance should be taken which includes travel to beauty spots, parks and playgrounds.

I know these restrictions can be challenging, it is important people do not travel at this time while the risk of infection is high and as we prioritise getting children back into schools. Staying at home and exercising locally is important in helping prevent the spread of the virus and keeping Wales safe. Travel for exercise can lead to congregation of people at beauty spots and makes it difficult for the police to enforce the stay at home provisions.

This is particularly important at the moment, as the dominant form of the virus in the community is the highly transmissible variant first identified in Kent.

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[Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

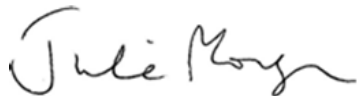
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We do not want to see a resurgence of the virus again just at the point where we are beginning to see cases coming under control and vaccination rates rising every day.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) No.5 (Wales) Regulations 2020 require a review of restrictions to be undertaken every 21 days to ensure they are proportionate, effective and necessary. The reviews consider the latest evidence on the public health situation as well as wider socio-economic and well-being implications.

Cases of coronavirus continue to fall across Wales and the pressure on our NHS is easing. However, the number of people testing positive still remains high and there are still too many people seriously ill and in hospital. We must not let the virus re-establish itself by relaxing restrictions too soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Morgan'.

**Julie Morgan AS/MS**

Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

# Agenda Item 2.17

## **P-05-1146 Provide a road map for how weddings can progress in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Sara Robinson, having collected a total of 1,273 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

The Prime Minister stated that weddings should begin getting back to normal after Easter, however no guidance has been given in Wales.

It is important for the economy that weddings are allowed to begin again and to include receptions. However, as weddings take months to plan couples and business involved in the wedding sector require clear guidance on how to expect weddings to take place over the coming months.

### **Additional Information:**

In 2017 approximately 13,197 weddings took place (office of national statistics).

95% of couples have postponed their weddings with many of these scheduled for this year on top of those who planned to marry this year. (UK wedding task force)

It is therefore important to provide clear guidance at the soonest opportunity to help boost the economy through allowing weddings to include receptions.

This should include numbers being dictated by capacity of the venue taking into consideration social distancing and allowing for mass testing of all guests before attending the wedding /event.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales

Julie James AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1146  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00555/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
petitions@senedd.wales

5 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 9 February requesting views on petition P-05-1146 Provide a road map for how weddings can progress in Wales.

I understand the impact that these restrictions have had on couples who want to marry. In particular I understand the uncertainty that is created by not being able to predict the state of the virus and the effect that has on plans.

Under the current Alert Level 4 restrictions wedding ceremonies are allowed in places of worship and Registry Offices, and from 1 March they will be allowed in all 'approved' premises which are licenced to hold wedding and civil partnership ceremonies which includes hotels and visitor attractions. The decision whether or not to open will be at the discretion of those responsible for the building. The number who can be invited to attend will be determined by the risk assessment undertaken by the person responsible for the building.

Wedding receptions or parties can be held in Alert Levels 1 to 3 subject to any restrictions on the hospitality sector. The numbers who can attend are prescribed in the Regulations and vary dependent on the alert level in force at the time and whether the reception is held indoors or outdoors. These numbers do not include children 11 years and under. The numbers who can attend a social gathering have been limited as the virus thrives when there is sustained close contact between people particularly in social gatherings. This is explained in the recent advice by [the Technical Advisory Group: Current Evidence Relating to Weddings](#).

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales](mailto:Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

As well as setting out the restrictions for each alert level, including the numbers who can attend a wedding reception, the [Coronavirus Control Plan: Alert Levels in Wales](#) sets out the criteria for moving from one alert level to another. It does not include dates as it is not possible to predict when the criteria for moving from one alert level to another will be reached. Whilst the roll-out of the vaccine programme offers encouragement there are still many uncertainties about when the state of the pandemic, and its dreadful effects, will allow us to move further than the control plan itself.

Since the start of the pandemic the Welsh Government has made more than £2bn available to support business with more than £1.7bn already in accounts. For the latest range of restrictions £650m has been made available which sees every small business in a rateable property receive between £6k and £10k. In addition Welsh Government has delivered a £180m ERF Sector Specific fund for the Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure sectors and supply chain which would see for example a wedding venue employing ten staff receive up to an additional £15k. Other sources of funding includes the Freelance Fund and the Discretionary Funds managed by Local Authorities across Wales. All detail relating to any funds is available on <https://businesswales.gov.wales>.

Welsh Government will of course continue to evaluate the support required as the situation develops including understanding the needs of particular sectors aligned to the alert levels in Wales.

Officials and Ministers also meet on a regular basis with the Wales Weddings Stakeholder Group which has been established by the sector to discuss the challenges facing the sector during this pandemic including the financial support schemes, criteria for re-opening when it is safe to do so etc. These discussions also look at the impact on the wider supply chain and the couples impacted and affected by the pandemic.

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

# Agenda Item 2.18

**P-05-1147 Require all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school**

This petition was submitted by Catherine Evans, having collected a total of 308 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

There are still schools claiming there are insurmountable barriers to providing lessons, five weeks into the term and for seven weeks of this academic year. This is no longer acceptable. Our children must all be given equal access to education. Solutions to those barriers must be found and all pupils must be taught.

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales





Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-1147  
Ein cyf/Our ref: KW/01328/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

5 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to P-05-1147, which refers to the requirement for all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school.

I appreciate that there is no direct substitute for face-to-face learning, and that we have all had to adapt in these challenging times and consider different ways of learning. We have put in place a range of measures to support remote learning including extensive professional learning, significant investment in devices and the enhanced £29 million Accelerating Learning Programme to [recruit, recover and raise standards](#) in Welsh schools.

Although the responsibility for the delivery of learning remains with local authorities and schools, they are encouraged to engage with the most appropriate models of delivery based on their individual requirements and their learners' needs. Following feedback from schools and local authorities, Welsh Government updated its guidance on 07 January to remove the number of practitioners required for live streaming to allow for local flexibility and decision-making (more information is available on the link below).

[Live-streaming and video-conferencing: safeguarding principles and practice](#)

When developing their approach to live-streaming, schools must undertake a risk assessment and review their safeguarding processes and procedures to ensure the safety and security of their learners and staff. Schools should also continue to have due regard to the updated guidance to ensure effective safeguarding, which remains an integral principle of digital learning.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Wales is very well placed to support schools, practitioners and learners during this period as we have [Hwb](#), our national digital platform for learning and teaching. Hwb provides its users with access to a range of free bilingual, digital tools and resources. Our [distance learning support on Hwb](#) includes resources to support distance learning activities as well as links to advice on health and well-being. The Welsh Government's Hwb platform is also accessible to learners via Xbox and PlayStation:

[https://twitter.com/WG\\_Education/status/1323691431626760192?s=20](https://twitter.com/WG_Education/status/1323691431626760192?s=20)

I recognise the ongoing challenges facing all learners and their families as a result of the pandemic. We have recently established a Blended Learning Working Group, consisting of officers from Welsh Government, local authorities and the regional consortia, tasked with addressing issues of equity of access to learning in future periods of disruption and will seek to engage parent and learner voice. We welcome feedback to improve future distanced support for learners via YouTube, and will share any thoughts that we receive with this group. In addition, you may be aware that some TV channels are already offering additional support for learners during home learning including [BBC](#) and [S4C](#).

Please let me assure you that I understand that the past few months have been stressful and challenging for many learners and I recognise the impact that the pandemic has had, and continues to have, on our learners. It is clear that many learners have not progressed their learning as much as they would have, and we know the impacts have not been uniform, as the disruption has disproportionately affected some learners.

We are exploring what additional measures we can take to address lost learning time and we are working closely with our education partners to develop these measures, and will in due course publish a Learning Recovery Plan to set these out in detail. All options are currently under consideration including a phased return, implementing rotas and adjusting term dates. Many of the options being considered are to ensure that schools are also able to adhere to school operations.

The Learning Recovery Plan will set out both our long-term plans to support all learners to recover from the pandemic, and will consider how we can support those specific groups, such as those in exam years, that have been most affected by the disruption. As part of this plan, we will consider actions and support for learner and teacher well-being, as we recognise that these are key enablers of learning and are fundamental to recovery.

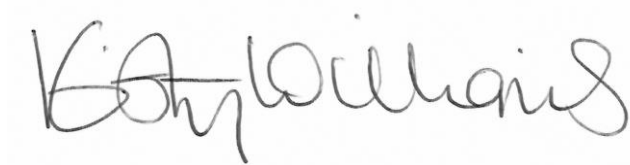
You will be aware of the recent announcements we have made in relation to a cautious, staggered return to in-school learning, starting with our youngest learners from 22 February with the aim for all primary school children to return to face-to-face learning together with some older learners, such as years 11 and 13 in schools and those doing qualifications in colleges, who will return on a blended learning basis from 15 March, there would also be flexibility for some learners in year 10 and 12 to return.

In addition, I announced on 03 March [plans for more pupils](#) in Wales to have the opportunity to return to the classroom ahead of the Easter break. She confirmed that schools will be given the opportunity to welcome back learners in years 7, 8 and 9. The aim is to give learners the opportunity to check in with teachers, with a focus on support for wellbeing and readiness for a full return to school after the Easter holidays. Schools will have some flexibility in terms of how they choose to implement this and it may take a few days before they are in position to communicate their plans to parents and learners.

These decision are, as always, based on the latest medical and scientific advice available, which in this instance includes updates from both Technical Advisory Group, which published a [paper](#) on 05 February in which they advised that the improvement in the public health situation allows us to consider a “partial and phased return to face-to-face learning in schools” and [advice](#) provided to the First Minister by Dr Frank Atherton, our Chief Medical Officer.

The Welsh Government’s priority during this pandemic continues to be the safety and welfare of students, school staff and the wider community, as well as the continuing education of our learners. In the meantime, therefore, my officials and I will continue to works with all of our delivery partners to ensure that learners are receiving the best possible learning provision within what continue to be extremely difficult circumstances.

Yours sincerely

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

**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

**P-05-1147 Require all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 06.03.21**

**Require all schools to provide daily live / recorded teaching to all pupils not returning to school: further comments.**

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on the lack of online teaching during the lockdown period.

Primary schools in Powys will have been closed for eleven weeks since September, by the time they reopen on March 15<sup>th</sup>. In that time, pupils attending my children's school and, I believe, several other English-medium schools in the area have not been offered a single taught live or recorded lesson. Those attending Welsh-medium and bilingual schools have benefitted from between two and four hours' live learning a day. Nationally, I am aware of primary schools offering full days of live teaching. The disparity amounts to discrimination in my opinion.

In defence of the decision not to teach online, I was told by my children's headteacher that it was planned with developing independent learners in mind, in line with the new Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum which is not yet in place; and a disingenuous way of justifying what has become nearly three months without teaching. It is astonishing that children who missed a term of teaching in 2019-2020 would be expected to continue to learn independently from resources of variable quality for a further prolonged period.

Evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation shows that there is no need for all children to be taught live all day, but that daily live and recorded teaching is part of the blended model; a finding supported in Welsh Government's own definition of blended learning. I'm aware that live teaching all day, every day would be difficult for many families to facilitate, but there is no justification for offering none at all. Children's learning should not take second place to adults' lifestyles and it is reasonable to expect parents to facilitate some daily participation in online teaching. Of course, there is the simple solution of recording lessons so that they are available at families' convenience, but apart from face-to-face teaching, nothing can replace live lessons for enabling children to interact with their peers.

Kirsty Williams mentions that safeguarding may be consideration for some schools. In our experience, all work has been set via Teams (it doesn't correspond with the materials on Hwb). If safeguarding is a concern preventing live teaching, I fail to see how this is not also the case for any online remote learning, given that all discussion boards and private messaging facilities are visible to any member of a household with access to the device being used anyway.

I am concerned that the learning deficit due to Covid has been exacerbated for those attending schools refusing to teach online, compared with their peers both regionally and nationally who have benefited from regular live teaching. The majority of children who haven't been taught will not be in groups identified for intervention under the Learning Recovery Plan. Kirsty Williams touches on deprivation in her somewhat generic response but doesn't acknowledge that school were able to make face-to-face provision for pupils without access to devices or internet as vulnerable learners. All pupils could and should have been taught online.

This has been a disappointing missed opportunity for schools to operate more safely in the interests of all stakeholders. Secondary school pupils will soon return to school on a rota basis but I'm afraid I no longer have faith in Welsh Government to guarantee them quality blended learning while they are at home. We are repeatedly warned that the pandemic is not over, and I am not confident that this will be the last closure.

The Minister must improve blended learning provision by requiring schools, by law, to deliver high quality daily online teaching in the event of further primary school closures, and immediately in the case of secondary pupils returning to school part time. This should not be at the discretion of headteachers and would bring Welsh schools into line with what has been on offer to pupils in England since October.

# Agenda Item 2.19

## **P-05-1103 Stop applying the same Covid 19 restrictions across the whole of Wales**

This petition was submitted by Mark James Simpson having collected a total of 7,995 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Covid 19 infection rates vary widely across Wales. Some areas have amongst the highest rates in the UK, some have amongst the lowest. The areas with the highest and lowest rates are often many miles apart. Covid 19 restrictions are causing immense economic harm, rising unemployment and widespread business closures. When rates are very high, tough restrictions may be the only way to control spread of infection, but when rates are low the economic and health damage is disproportionately high.

### **Additional Information:**

Most businesses in the rural areas of Wales where infection rates tend to be low are very fragile and any further restrictions affecting their ability to trade will force many more to close permanently. This will have a devastating impact on areas where unemployment is already high and wages lower than the national average, forcing many people of working age to leave rural areas often for good. The adverse effects on people's health of the restrictions are recognised as a major contributor to the large number of excess deaths happening during the pandemic not resulting from coronavirus infection.

The only way to minimise the economic and health damage caused by Covid 19 restrictions while controlling infection rates in areas with high rates is to use a tiered approach as has been done consistently and successfully in Scotland and England.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ynys Môn
- North Wales

# Agenda Item 2.20

## **P-05-1141 Make the Senedd election fair – allow political leafleting during lockdown**

This petition was submitted by Cadan ap Tomos, having collected a total of 93 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

We call on the Welsh Government to make sure the next Senedd election is free and fair, by letting political campaigners hand-deliver leaflets safely during lockdown.

Every voter must have a fair chance to hear from their candidates and come to an informed decision about how to vote. Delivering leaflets is the most accessible way for candidates to let people know where they stand. Banning political leafleting would hand an unfair advantage to the biggest parties with more money and influence.

### **Additional Information:**

Chloe Smith, the UK Government Constitution Minister, has announced that political leafleting by volunteers is not allowed under England's lockdown rules. This is despite no restrictions being placed on the Royal Mail, other delivery companies, and commercial leafleting by businesses.

The Census is also due to go ahead in March, despite this requiring thousands of workers to deliver leaflets and knock on doors across the country, reminding people to complete and return their Census form.

We are already in a period where political party spending is regulated by law ahead of the scheduled Senedd elections. This regulation is in place in the expectation that parties would now be campaigning.

During a pandemic, safety is paramount. But if the election is to go ahead in May, the Welsh Government must not stop political activists from campaigning, provided they take safety precautions as they do so. Banning political leafleting would throw the fairness of any election into question.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

# Agenda Item 2.21

**P-05-1148 Fully open schools for all ages in Wales as the next step from 15th March**

This petition was submitted by Edina Potts-Klement, having collected a total of 2,094 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

Children have had a disrupted education for nearly a year. They haven't been to school since before Christmas. Strain on their mental health is culminating.

They were promised to be a priority yet now when covid cases are falling we see the opening of nonessential shops being considered before all children returning to school.

Some are now at breaking point and cannot face another 6 weeks home learning without hope/date for returning.

Don't let the Welsh children down! Open all school years.

**Additional Information:**

Many children are suffering not only educationally but emotionally as well. Yet it looks like this is being disregarded and the detrimental effects that school closures have on children are being ignored.

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Caerphilly
- South Wales East



## **Comments for petition “Fully open schools for all ages in Wales as the next step from 15th March”**

### **Key points:**

Fully open schools because:

- of the detrimental effects of lockdowns on children’s mental and physical health:
  1. “For some children education is their only way out of poverty; for others school offers a safe haven away from a dangerous or chaotic home life. Learning loss, reduced social interaction, isolation, reduced physical activity, increased mental health problems, and potential for increased abuse, exploitation, and neglect have all been associated with school closures. Reduced future income and life expectancy are associated with less education. Children with special educational needs or who are already disadvantaged are at increased risk of harm. The 2019 report of the children’s commissioner for England estimated that 2.3 million children in England were living in unsafe home environments with domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, or severe mental problems among parents. These long term harms are likely to be magnified by further school closures.” ([Closing schools is not evidence based and harms children | The BMJ](#))
  2. “The UK children’s commissioners have all pointed out the harms of closing schools to the wellbeing of children and young people. Many pupils may never be able to catch up on lost time in school, and vulnerable teenagers are falling through gaps in the school and social care systems. There is no substitute for face-to-face learning. In the absence of strong evidence for benefits of school closures, the precautionary principle would be to keep schools open to prevent catastrophic harms to children.” ([Closing schools is not evidence based and harms children | The BMJ](#))
  3. “Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Professor Sally Holland, released the findings of her second survey into how young people are faring during the crisis, she warned that the pandemic was having a "crushing impact" on under 18s.

In the survey, named Coronavirus and Me, children shared their views and experiences of the pandemic. Though responses varied, a "worrying" number of youngsters described the devastating impact the last 12 months had had on their lives.

The report found that as well as loneliness, not being able to see friends is having the biggest impact on children’s lives, followed by not being able to see other family members and school and college closures.

A worrying 15% of seven to 11 year-olds reported feeling lonely “most of the time”.

On learning remotely more than half of 12 to 18 year-olds said they enjoyed learning at their own pace from home, but many worried about falling behind with learning.

Levels of confidence and motivation with education decreased with age. A large majority of 15 to 18 year-olds are concerned about falling behind, their qualifications and 69% report low motivation to do school work.

Problems are worse for those who are disadvantaged. Disabled children and teenagers were more likely to worry about coronavirus and feel sad and unsafe.

Those from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority groups were more likely to feel lonely and less likely to say they feel safe than their peers.”

(<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/education/lonely-frustrated-angry-children-teenagers-19820279>)

- there is insufficient evidence of the role of school closures in minimising covid-19 transmission.
  1. Although school closures reduce the number of contacts children have, and may decrease transmission, a study of 12 million adults in the UK found no difference in the risk of death from covid-19 in households with or without children. Only 3% of people aged over 65 live with children.

The overall risk to children and young people from covid-19 is very small, and hyperinflammatory syndrome is extremely rare.

In-person learning increases teachers' exposure and might be expected to increase their risk of becoming infected, but accumulating evidence shows that teachers and school staff are not at higher risk of hospital admission or death from covid-19 compared with other workers. Teacher absence because of confirmed covid-19 in England was similar in primary and secondary schools in the autumn term, despite secondary schoolchildren having much higher rates of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Moreover teacher absence decreased in tier 3 regions during the November lockdown despite schools remaining open.

The role of children in community transmission is not clear. Recent infection surveys using PCR tests, show that around 0.5-1% of children have a positive result, and school closures mean it has not been possible to obtain evidence regarding the spread of the new variant in schools. However, earlier studies, including from Australia, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, in which all individuals were tested regardless of symptoms found transmission rates to be low, particularly among primary schoolchildren. Ecological studies and descriptive studies of viral prevalence within schools show that it reflects community prevalence but is not higher.

International modelling studies which estimate that school closures have a meaningful effect on reducing transmission rates are all confounded by the near simultaneous introduction of multiple interventions (including lockdowns, curfews, closures of bars and restaurants). Moreover, they do not account for indirect effects of school closures which prevent parents from working outside the home. A systematic review of observational studies showed that in those studies with lowest risk of bias, school closures had no discernible effect on SARS-CoV-2 transmission. ([Closing schools is not evidence based and harms children | The BMJ](#))

- It was promised back in March 2020 (UK wide) that schools would always be the last to close and the first to open.
  - Non-retail and tourism shouldn't be back ahead of education.
- They have fully opened in England on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. (The scientific evidence for England and Wales should be the same.)
  - In 2020, after the October half term firebreak in Wales, years 7 & 8, were able to return to school. They were categorised the same as primary school children who posed little threat of transmission.

Testimonials of parents whose families have been struggling:

*"I have a child in year 10 that has not physically been to school since 3rd December due to the year group needing to self isolate and the extended lockdown. He has an IEP but as he doesn't need extensive support and is not under social services, he is not considered vulnerable even though he struggles with learning at home. He told me that he hates home schooling. I have another child in year 4 that has completely disengaged with learning at home. Myself and my husband both work full time and we despair at how far our children have fallen behind. We are a 1st world country with a second rate standard of education and little regard for our children's well-being and social skills. It's not acceptable." Sue Price*

*"I have 3 children 14,11 and 9 and have worked full time throughout. I have since last week decided to reduce my working days to 2 per week (which financially is entirely untenable) but have had to do so as am so concerned about the mental health of my two eldest. Both were positive, enthusiastic, happy, hopeful teens pre Christmas and now they are entirely despondent and have no hope. It's heart breaking to see how this welsh government have torn them apart. I myself lobbied hard from last March for their fair right to an education but now I too am finished for. Nothing left in the tank and racked with worry for my kids." Nikki Guyer*

*"I used to have a very sporty confident 15 year old son who enjoyed every day of his life, he was a member of a football team both in school and out of school, he was working towards his black belt in karate, his school grades and attitude of life was so positive. I don't recognise my son now, every day is spent in his bedroom staring at a screen, this is not school!! when online lessons are cancelled he goes back to bed. I try to encourage him I really do but i've given up now because how can I give him hope when I don't see any. Only the other day he said to me "mum this is it isn't it, there's no school for me any more.". This broke me and I had to walk out of the room and cry. i can't do this any more, I just want my son to have a happy life." Ruth Hilmi*

It is clear that children have the least to gain and the most to lose from school closures. It is also evident that the school closures are causing damage in yet unknown proportions when the evidence for the benefit of them is insufficient. The Welsh government must protect the rights of children and fully open the schools.

# Agenda Item 2.22

## **P-05-1150 Provide business rates holiday to holiday home sites in wales, the same as England**

This petition was submitted by Denise Evans, having collected a total of 640 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

In March 2020 the UK Government announced a rates holiday for hospitality and leisure industry. alongside Scotland, the welsh government then set up rates relief for businesses under the rateable value of 500k. Quite a few holiday sites were excluded from the rates holiday, due to their rateable value over 500k. The majority of these sites split the rates bill between its caravan owners, which we would not be able to benefit from the relief at this troubling time and are desperately in need of it. we all respect the Welsh government choice to close borders and restrict the amount of transmission. But in return we would like to request the help of the welsh government by applying the no cap rate limit to the rates, to assist holiday home owners, due to not being able to access it. so we get the same rules that England have applied.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

# Agenda Item 2.23

## **P-05-1151 Provide a date for the return of Organised Children's Activities for Babies & Toddlers**

This petition was submitted by Kate Worgan, Tots Play Cardiff North, having collected a total of 1,756 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Between September and December 2020, we were able to bring face to face classes back to indoor settings, fully following Welsh Government Legislation.

We had no outbreaks at classes and were extremely diligent and proactive about providing a safe environment for classes, whilst also providing all the benefits that classes can bring to Parents & Carers and their young children.

We are still running online classes but we need a date to be able to bring face to face classes back.

### **Additional Information:**

Young children have often been overlooked in this pandemic, as have their parents.

We have been massively concerned about Parents being isolated and the effect on their mental health during the last year.

With families living further apart, a vital part of building their support network is to be able to meet other parents with young children, in a safe and welcoming environment.

There has been a chance to do this at online Baby classes, but trying to connect with people you haven't met yet can be hard.

Young children who don't attend private nursery have missed out on the opportunity and all the benefits of socialising with babies and children, a massive part of their development.

They have also missed out on the chance to explore and to benefit from developmental activities, plus activities which boost bonding between parent and child.

Parents really need us to be able to bring back safely our classes.

We also, as a sector, need this for our businesses to remain viable.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central

**P-05-1151 Provide a date for the return of Organised Children's Activities for Babies & Toddlers, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 06.03.21**

Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to submit our further comments on our petition for your consideration.

I set up this petition on behalf of all Baby & Toddler classes in Wales, as well as on behalf of all the Parents, Carers and young children who access our Services. I have run Tots Play Cardiff North Baby & Toddler Play classes in Cardiff for nearly 7 years, as well as being a Mum to two young children myself.

In Wales, we are so lucky to have such a diverse range of classes on offer for Baby & Toddlers, from Baby & Toddler Sign Language to Sensory Play, from Baby Massage to Swimming classes. These developmental activities are so important to young children's early development, as is the socialisation and learning through play that they benefit from from classes. Babies and Toddlers learn using their whole bodies and all of their senses, so classes provide a range of activities to help develop these. They also learn so much through play.

Not all Babies and Toddlers have a chance outside of classes to socialise, in normal times let alone these times. Not all young children attend private nursery. Classes like ours provide them with a safe, nurturing space where they can explore and play with other young children and enjoy and benefit from all the activities we all offer.

Some lockdown Babies have never seen another Baby in real life, which is just so heart breaking. All children have missed out on so much over the last year, but with Wales now starting to unlock again, we really need to make sure the Babies and Toddler in Wales are not forgotten about.

Its not just the young children who benefit though. Its mainly Mums that come along to classes, although Dads, Grandparents and Carers come along too.

Baby & Toddler classes are so important to Mums in particular for meeting other Mums with children of a similar age, who they can then develop friendships with week on week at classes. This is vital for them to help to build up their social support networks. With so many families living further and further away now, new Mums really need to be able to develop these friendships and support networks so that they have that crucial support in the early days and beyond. This is vital to their well being and mental health.

Being a new Mum can be an extremely isolating time if you dont have the opportunity to get out and build these friendships.

We help support Mums who are finding making friends hard and also Mums who are suffering with PostNatal Depression through various different means. A very big part of what we do is with our Mums at heart.

Many of the services that new Mums would normally be able to access regularly have ceased or been greatly reduced during these times. For example, many of our Parents have never seen their Health Visitor, when this would normally have been a service they could have accessed weekly at Clinics.

We are often thought of as 'playgroups', but we are really very different to these. We are structured, planned and prepared classes delivered in warm and welcoming environments.



Many Classes in Wales have been able to still operate via Online classes, but not all have been able to do this and many have lost their income totally. Our sector is mainly made up of self employed people. Not everyone in our sector has been able to access Grants. Some classes have had to close for good.

Online classes have been a lifeline, to us and to Parents, but they just aren't the same as being in the same room together.

We use a wide range of equipment at face to face classes and most Parents don't have access to this in their homes. We have had to limit the activities we are doing Online to ones they can join in with with items they have to hand at home.

Social interaction Online for both Parents and the young children is also totally different, although as a sector we have tried so very hard to provide opportunities for parents and the children play and chat 'together' online, this is just not the same as at face to face classes.

Support for online classes is dropping massively and we aren't sure how much longer we can survive as a sector online.

Most of us operate in line with School term times and with the Spring/Summer Term now approaching fast most of us are now having to rebook our class spaces. With Parents unsure of what format our classes will be in and with many of them no longer wanting to attend Online classes, bookings are massively down for next term as we don't have a date to be able to return to face to face classes.

Safety wise, as a sector we went above and beyond to make sure our classes were safe last term (we were able to operate indoor classes between September and December 2020).

We operated in freshly cleaned rooms, cleaned and sanitised all kit and contact areas in between uses and we sat Parents at measured 2 meter distances.

Parents queued outside at a Social Distance wearing masks and they didn't take their masks off until they were seated at their spots. If they needed to move around the room, for example to use the baby changing facilities, they put their masks back on. Parents were asked to not chat in the car parks before and after class in groups of more than 4, to stay at a social distance and to keep their masks on, as per the last Guidance for our Sector in December 2020.

Hand sanitiser was used by everyone on entry and exit to the building.

We made safety announcements at the start and end of classes, to remind Parents what we all needed to do to keep each other safe.

Class Leaders wore masks to greet and wave off everyone plus when we moved around the room, for example with a bubble machine.

We sanitised toilets and light switches in between classes and windows were kept open to allow for ventilation.

We used microphones so we didn't project our voices and we stopped singing to prevent droplets.

The Guidance was ever changing, but we adapted and kept pushing to ensure the safety of our parents and children, as well as for our own families at home.

I can't explain to you how much extra work this was and how exhausted our Class Leaders were, but we will continue to do all this and more to ensure our classes are safe.

England have a date of 12th April to be able to reopen Baby & Toddler classes, but we have so far been overlooked as a sector for being able to reopen by Welsh Government.

There is so much confusion within our sector over when we are able to return to face to face classes. Now we have been named in Legislation as Organised Children's activities (which happened only very recently in November/December 2020), it states that we are unable to operate face to face classes in Tier 4. In Tier 3 we are able to return back to our classrooms.

Unless we are named as a sector which can reopen before then, we are very concerned that it will be a long time before we are able to return to face to face classes. We really need a clear indication of when we can expect to be able to resume our classes.

So much planning and preparation goes into every single class, we also really need to be given notice in advance of when we can go back, like other sectors are being given.

I asked my Mums last week why they feel they & their children need to go back to face to face classes and I was overwhelmed by the number of responses as well as the content of that they said. This was what prompted me to set up this petition and to then spend a massive amount of time (as well as home schooling and working) to try and get word out more widely in Wales.

I'd like to share a few of their comments with you please...

"Having a baby is fun & exciting but also scary, daunting & a complete minefield, even if you have done it before! Having a baby in the middle of a pandemic is a whole different level of scary, with new worries & anxieties thrown in. Having barely seen anyone for months, starting face to face Tots Play classes was amazing. Not only did my baby actually get to see other real life babies, it also gave me some adult conversation, support & encouragement from other parents, going through similar things.

The end of the face to face classes has been really sad. Kate has done such a good job at keeping us busy & entertained with online classes & they are so appreciated, but nothing can compare to watching your baby interact with & smile at other babies & get excited when you enter the class because she knows she is going to have fun! We always felt really safe at class & there were lots of measures in place to keep us protected & remind us to be careful. I'm back in work in a few months but really hope we can attend some face to face classes before this time as the experience is invaluable to both myself & my daughter."

"Face to face classes have always been an essential part of mine and my daughter's routines. We went into lockdown when she was 1 and for the past year she has missed out on key opportunities to socially engage and interact with her fellow peers. Tots Play has done an amazing job transferring classes online but obviously does not provide the same interaction you would get when other children are present and able to engage together. I feel so sad she has missed out on this and very much look forward to when face to face classes can resume once more. During the easing of lockdown when face to face could resume for a period, I felt very safe entering into the space with my daughter. All covid procedure's were strictly adhered to and felt relaxed for my daughter and I to come and participate in the classes. I feel this sector has been massively overlooked and should be considered highly as a key part of a preschool child's development. I very much hope that with spaces as safe and secure as they have always been, that face to face classes can resume very shortly and once again our little people can flourish together."

"Where to begin with how important these classes are?!?! Not just for the social interaction for babies (which for most will be their first) but for the support as new mums too!! If you could see all the little faces just light up seeing other babies, discovering new sensory toys, music, singing... you would see how priceless this is. Zoom classes are better than nothing but babies just don't respond to a screen like the real thing! I feel so sad that soon I will be back working full time and have barely had any opportunity to give my baby these invaluable experiences...

For us new Mums, the support from Health Visitors has been significantly reduced due to the pandemic, so just having the opportunity to talk to other mums who are going through it as

well makes you feel like you are not alone, and we actually learn a lot from each others experiences!

The few classes we went to before this lockdown were very well managed in terms of social distancing so there is no reason why they can't start up again asap in my opinion. I would have zero concerns about the safety of myself or my baby."

Having a date to be able to return to face to face classes would mean that our sector is able to continue to provide these much needed services in the future and to ensure that our Parents, babies and toddlers in Wales are no longer missing out on our important Services.

Thank you very much for reading

Kate Worgan  
Class Leader and Franchisee Tots Play Cardiff North

# Agenda Item 2.24

**P-05-1152 Close the schools! Keep our children safe. Due to the rise in covid. Save our future**

This petition was submitted by Amy Hughes, having collected a total of 1,585 signatures.

**Text of Petition:**

Since schools and other non-essential buildings have opened back up as Covid has started to rise again.

By closing the schools and home-schooling or even video call lessons we are helping keep Covid at bay we are helping save our NHS, our family members and our future!

There are many ways to teach children without putting them and other at risk.

Close the school. Make online video classrooms to make it safe.

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Swansea East
- South Wales West

# Agenda Item 2.25

## **P-05-1153 To open outside gyms and sport in Wales the same as England March 29th**

This petition was submitted by Keri Mckibbin, having collected a total of 272 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

We run a gym In Burry Port, we have 8000 square feet outside, and have had enormously positive feedback from these socially distanced outside sessions, lockdown has taken it's toll on many members, raising anxiety, stress, fear and depression. They all say that our outside sessions kept these conditions at bay and actually helped them enormously through a very difficult time. Their impact on mental and physical health cannot be overstated, and would be a massive boost for Welsh community life.

### **Additional Information:**

SAGE Scientists, who advise the UK government say outside exercise is safe and recommend everyone exercise once a day. We practice this with full temperature testing, sanitisation of all equipment used in between sessions, and everyone handles their own equipment. Surely it is far better to exercise in a controlled professional environment boosting a community's health. Local sports teams also observed these strict conditions throughout the times they were allowed to play, and a positive welsh government response will have a very powerful impact on children and adults in Wales. School sport in England for example starts march 8th, again on scientist advice, Let's get Wales going again and not fall behind England again.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Llanelli
- Mid and West Wales

**P-05-1153 To open outside gyms and sport in Wales the same as England  
March 29th, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.21**

Thanks for your kind help and a lot of people want to get back exercising at least outside, and lots of kids want to get back playing sport too. The effect on their mental health has been very damaging and sport and exercise will begin to build back their confidence and self-esteem after a long lockdown again.

It's disheartening for a lot of our members, and parents of kids who could be playing sport, to see long lines outside of people queueing for fast food outside in many fast food establishments, in burry port alone last weekend, there were thousands of people there throughout the day not always distancing, and then we aren't allowed to play sport or exercise in sanitised and strictly socially distanced conditions.

The UK government were given evidence 17th February that gyms has only 1.7 cases per 100,000 visits and they couldn't prove that started in gyms either, this is far lower than shops for example. With obesity a big factor in covid hospitalisations and deaths the government clearly says, we should be only strengthening our people's immune systems through exercise and eating well, instead fast food places have been deemed "essential" throughout. Gyms in Wales have been already closed 39 out of 49 weeks since the first lockdown.

The welsh government is currently listening to jan 8th TAG scientists "evidence" saying that gyms are "unsafe" , they didn't take into account the facts that we santitise equipment after every use in between exercise, and everything is spotlessly clean, far safer than supermarkets.

We have a 8000 square feet purpose built for exercise that we have already demonstrated perfect for socially distanced exercise. I have messages every day of our members struggling with mental health, and the SAGE scientists have already deemed it safe in England for the outside sports facilities to safely re open march 29th, surely this will only be a very positive event for our exercise and sports starved communities?

Yours in health,

**P-05-1153 To open outside gyms and sport in Wales the same as England  
March 29th, Correspondence – Interested Party to Committee, 06.03.21**

Hello,

I'm writing in to provide comments on the sports/fitness industry reopening.

I am a qualified fitness professional of 8 years, as well as being a competitive athlete. In that time I've witnessed the importance health and fitness has, not only physically but Also mentally.

I have suffered from depression, as well as a lot of people I've trained, the rate of suicide In England alone increased by Almost 10% in 2020 compared to the previous year, resulting in a rise of almost 5 thousand deaths or serious self inflicted injuries, with the majority attributed to men. Even in the bodybuilding community we have lost notable figures, elite athletes like like sandoe who took his own life last year, a man who on the face of it appeared to have a successful career and life, lost a battle to the internal struggle that so many of us face on a day to day basis.

Claims of gyms being a priority were told to us by the government at the beginning of February, yet no date has even been announced of when gyms can reopen. It is critical that gyms receive a date within the coming weeks or we'll risk death by suicide becoming a higher killer in wales than even covid, The only facts presented to us have been that gyms have shown one of the lowest Transmission rates and a much greater impact to health and mental benefits. I believe it is no longer an excuse to keep gyms and fitness closed when we are seeing higher infection areas like schools and shops receive priority. With the rate of unemployment, disabilities or weather conditions, "training at home out outdoors" is not viable for everybody and the majority have suffered already. I believe it's time to stop that suffering.

Thank you.

# Agenda Item 2.26

## P-05-1154 Re-open the Welsh hospitality sector by 12 April 2021

This petition was submitted by Lyndsey Groundwell, having collected a total of 157 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

With proposed easing for Welsh holidays and the UK government's exit strategy, we believe it is now time for the permanent re-opening of this economically and socially invaluable sector.

- NHS alert level has been dropped due to lesser threat
- Wales has administered highest percentage of vaccine first doses
- Lowest cases per 100,000 among UK nations at 75.4 per 100,000 – comparable to rates seen in September – plus other currently satisfied criteria means Wales now falls into alert level 2.

### **Additional Information:**

Many Welsh pubs are the hub of the community providing a place where people can drop in and talk to other members of their local community which helps them feel less isolated. This benefit to people is specifically found in “the local” and often overlooked

Hospitality includes pubs, restaurants and cafes which attract members from every section of society and provides an invaluable source of income to its wider supply chain. Giving a date of 12 April will allow time for these vital companies to procure and manufacture the supplies that will be needed for the re-opening of venues

Last year, Wales re-opened after England which saw Welsh revenue go over the border

So far, hospitality will have been closed for two Easters, 2 Bank Holidays, Halloween, Bonfire Night, Christmas and New Year, St Dwynwen's, Valentine's, 6 Nations and also St Patrick's and St David's Day.

Many businesses will not survive unless the re-opening of hospitality is expedited



## **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales

# Agenda Item 2.27

## **P-05-1155 Allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns**

This petition was submitted by Tavi Murray, having collected a total of 1,447 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Outdoor activities and exercise are hugely beneficial to people's mental and physical health. Blue space: canals, rivers, lakes, and coast are precious and safe sources of well-being, currently denied to us in Wales. As a result many of us are suffering from real mental health challenges.

We call on the Welsh Government to remove the phrase that suggests all water sports are banned during lockdown and allow access to local blue space provided travel restrictions are followed.

### **Additional Information:**

We all agree that in lockdown we should "avoid activities that involve a significant degree of risk" whatever the environment where these are undertaken, in order to protect the emergency services. However we ask the Welsh Government remove the phrase that suggests all water sports fall into this category. Water-based activities such as kayaking, canoeing, surfing, SUP and outdoor swimming can provide excellent and safe exercise along with huge mental health benefits.

We call on the Welsh Government to reword this FAQ to read simply: "As one of the purposes of the restrictions is to reduce pressure on the Welsh NHS you should avoid activities that involve a significant degree of risk."

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Gower
- South Wales West

## **P-05-1155 Allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 11.03.21**

### **Additional information to support Senedd petition 244739: “Allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns”**

This petition was started by kayakers and has been signed by many other watersports participants including wild swimmers, dinghy sailors, surfers etc, both recreational and competitive. Wales is home to a large, thriving community of people whose passion for outdoor recreation is central to their identity and quality of life. This community is composed of individuals from all walks of life, including those born and bred in Wales and those coming to live in the country from other parts of the UK.

Many water sports participants report that engagement in these activities is a central part of their lives, their ‘recreation’ offering physical, emotional and spiritual nourishment. Within this community are many people drawn to the coastline, rivers and lakes of Wales. These rich natural resources provide sources of physical and mental wellbeing, essential adventure, and a sense of location and identity.

Successive lockdowns in Wales have required “swimming or other exercise at sea, or in lakes, rivers or other waterways” to be avoided. We understand the Welsh Government position is that water sports are to be avoided to reduce the pressure on rescue services and NHS. We disagree with this position for the following reasons:

1) The likelihood of accidents or rescues is extremely low, given the available data from the RNLI / Wales’ Drowning Prevention Strategy 2020-26.

**Significant factors:** Seasonal considerations combined with activity type and intention show that committed water sports participants, accessing local water resources, are highly unlikely to encounter difficulties in their chosen activities.

Welsh Government has stated that ‘one rescue at this time would be one too many’, presumably in terms of pressure on rescue services and health care. We believe that this is a false premise, given the enhanced risk of hospitalisation / health issue / death that water sports enthusiasts are exposed to as a result of the prohibition of their chosen activity. These risks include increased likelihood of injury or death as result of engaging in walking, running and cycling on Wales’ highways. Tragically, there have been numerous examples of such accidents during each lockdown in Wales (see stories below).

2) Mental health issues will be increased among sectors of the population denied life-affirming activities central to their sense of physical and mental wellbeing. Negative behavioural responses are rising in Wales (diet, exercise, alcohol, drugs, social media, sedentary lifestyles), which represent an enormous future challenge to the health of the nation.

We would argue that ‘one life ruined by lockdown is one life too many’ in response to the Welsh Government’s current prohibition of water sports during Alert Level 4.

**Who is affected?** The Watersports participation survey shows canoeing is the most popular boating activity with around 3% of the population taking part. Canoe Wales has a membership of 3,800 members across all age groups. This number does not include many more paddle sport enthusiasts in Wales who are not members, estimated at over 50,000 regular participants. Surfing tends not to organise into formal clubs and associations; so estimated numbers are less clear. However, research by the surfing industry estimates 25,000 Welsh residents participate in surfing. This total (close to 1% of the population) seems a conservative estimate, given the excellence of the Welsh coastline for surfing, and the proximity of many residents to the coast. The UK Outdoor Swimming Society has 100,000 members - on a pro rata basis, it is likely that at least 5 000 members are Wales residents. Again, open water swimmers tend to organise informally, and it is highly likely that a significantly greater number of people in Wales regularly engage in open water swimming. Other popular watersports include sailing and rowing.

In summary, it is clear that watersports have significant participation levels in Wales. These people are currently denied access to the activities that are vital for their wellbeing.

**Personal stories** This petition was created in response to personal stories from individual watersports participants in Wales who are facing significant well-being challenges during lockdown. We were overwhelmed by the response, and it has been very challenging to cut this document down to the required 4 pages as there was more than double the content that would fit, thus very few of the stories can be fully reported. Please note some people felt unable to reveal their significant disabilities because this document will become public and they did not want to be identifiable. One noted: “it is common for cold water swimming groups to include many people with both visible and invisible disabilities it is inclusive and can be safely open to many”. These participants include:

- **A disabled watersports athlete** who cannot participate in walking or running, currently unable to participate in her usual exercise on flat water and now left as her only choice exercise on a recumbent

trike. She wrote: "I'm really struggling having my safest outdoor sports option removed from me as someone who has more limited options to exercise... I'm very exposed on the roads ... and with autumn leaves, low sun, slippery roads and gusty winds I lose traction on my drive wheel with hills".

- **Female, 59, self-employed** "I took up sea kayaking about 18 months ago. I have bad arthritis in feet, knees and hands and so it is imperative that I keep moving. I've had to give up walking any distance because of the pain in my feet so kayaking has been a brilliant way to keep my body moving, supple and cardio fit. I'm currently feeling very out of condition and I find it hard to stay motivated too. I run my own business and frankly this recent lockdown has been very tough."

- **Young members of GB teams & Welsh squads** unable to train, who are having to deal mentally with watching their counterparts elsewhere improve, while their own hard-won abilities slip away.

- **Female, Canoe Slalom Athlete, 14, Welsh Talent Squad** "Having not had the same rules in England, Scotland and Wales has meant that the paddlers I compete against have different conditions to train under... All of this has seriously affected me because my dream is to represent my country but with each session that I miss, I fall further behind my peers who are able to take advantage of their home nation opening up facilities. My frustration sometimes causes me to start arguments with those closest to me. I'm aware of it at the time but I just need to release it so I don't internalise it... I have dreams of getting to the Olympics. I have spent 4 years getting to this point. I have given up going out with friends and going on holidays because I am dedicated to my sport and in return, I feel my sacrifices of a normal childhood and teenage years has all been for nothing."

- **Male, 16, GB Freestyle team** I have found going from training 3 or 4 times per week to not even being able to get in a kayak incredibly hard. It is worse seeing the social media posts of all my friends around the rest of the UK and the world out paddling – I just want to be there with them. Kayaking has been the focus of my life for the last 7 years and gives me the energy and motivation for life. I have wanted to be a World Champion since I was 9 and it has been so tough not being able to train for over 6 months of the last year when my competitors are still out on the water, when the planned Worlds this summer is my last chance as a Junior. I have so much extra training to make up for. **Parent:** Outdoor activity is so important and without it my teenage son just becomes an online gaming zombie. I can't wait until he can get back on the water and back to normal. There are so many benefits of kayaking, fitness, fresh air, mental problem solving and many friendships. Kayaking is the perfect socially distanced activity as the boat and paddle naturally makes everyone keep a distance.

- **Male, Intensive Care Consultant, Wales** "Kayaking has always been time-out from working life: to be out on the open sea, engrossed in the elements of wind and wave. Sometimes using every part of my body and brain to control my boat in challenging sea conditions. Other times, a meditation of watching the horizon as I place one more stroke into the water, then another and another until many thousand strokes later I have reached that distant point.

There has been none of that for too long. I work in Intensive Care where I am a Consultant - it has been the hardest and longest year of my medical career. I have been at work in the hospital night and day. I have been at work at home constantly reading, looking for better ways to treat this new disease. I try to think about the patients who survived Covid. I remember those who didn't: I remember reassuring them that they would probably be ok; I remember putting them on a ventilator; I remember phoning their partners when they died. I want time, space and peace to let those memories subside."

- **Female, open-water swimmer, Anglesey** "As an open water Coldwater swimmer and part of a very supportive group of women who swim regularly together in small groups in the sea it seems one of the least risky activities through lockdown. People change on the beach in the fresh air with good distance between each other and are in the water with good distance from each other at least 2 m. It is very good for mental health and well-being, provide some social contact but not close, is outdoors in the fresh air and promotes exercise as well as the scientifically documented benefits of cold-water swimming preventing dementia, high blood pressure and anxiety closed."

- **Female, Nurse, N Wales** "Kayaking is part of my identity; it is what I have lived for on my rare days off for years and I am well able to make safe decisions for myself within this sport. I have never required medical attention or rescue services in 15 years. I miss it dearly and it would have been of great benefit to me to relax and unwind on the sea after work-days spent nursing patients in challenging conditions during this pandemic. Kayaking, particularly on the sea can be achieved with absolute covid-19 appropriate social distancing requirements, paddling within ones own abilities, no car sharing required."

- **Female, Ceredigion, University researcher** "Dwi'n mwy lwcus i byw yng Nghymru, mewn ardal pert iawn. Llynedd, ledled pan oedd na cyfyngiadiau am aros yn lleol, oedd hi'n bosib i nofio yn yr afon ac yn y mor, a chaicio yn r ardal lleol, heb risg a heb gormod o bobl. Dydy hi ddim yn glir i fi os mae na tystiolaeth i cefnogi yr reholau am peidwch i nofio neu gwneud chwaraeon dwr. Mae na cysylltiad crif

rhwng iechydd meddwl ac treulio amser yn y byd natur, ac y polisi erbyn chwaraeon dwr a hyn o bryd yn creu problem i lot o honom ni.”

- **Male, 49, Window cleaner, S Wales** “I’ve been kayaking for about 9 years. I started when we had some really serious family problems. Just an hour on the water kept me sane. Helped me through another week. I find just an hour once a week sea kayaking or surfing helps to lift my spirits. I feel so happy and alive. My wife said the money spent on the kayak was money well spent she could see the positive effect it has on me.”
- **Female, 54, Planning section leader** “I have worked throughout the pandemic in manufacturing, my job is extremely stressful and my escape to reduce my stress is kayaking, as I am not allowed to go on the sea my stress levels have increased, thus increasing my migraine frequency as a result for the duration of lockdown I have had to have extra medication from my doctor to control the migraine, I feel depressed and am unable to understand how if I lived in England during lockdown I would still be allowed to access the sea? Kayaking is a socially distance sport, and it is a sport which helps immensely with mental fatigue. As a result of not kayaking my fitness levels required for kayaking have seriously dropped, mental health has declined, motivation has disappeared, and I feel in a rut.”
- **Male, 54, director of sea kayaking company** “I started my company in 2007 to share my love of sea kayaking with others. Winter is a time for me to up skill, to keep above the game, to relax and enjoy the area I love, which is Anglesey. To have this taken away, a blue space of freedom, has been very challenging to my mental health and something I never could have believed would happen. I’ve always loved water and it pains me as I cycle past looking out to sea, knowing I’m not allowed to access and engage, despite my knowledge, skills, qualification and experience. I wonder why England and Scotland are allowed, yet those of us that live in Wales are not.”
- **Male, 44, Quality control** “I’ve been working from home since March 2020. As a result, my work life balance has suffered, which has affected my mental and physical wellbeing to very significant and negative extent. In the past I would go sea kayaking to relieve stress and reset, but the terms of the most recent Welsh lockdown have prohibited that. I’ve felt the loss greatly, particularly as it is my belief there is no better way to exercise at a safe social distance from the rest of society.”
- **Female, Valleys, 50s** “I’ve become quite reliant on outdoor swimming in recent years to deal with depression and anxiety and maintaining my physical well-being. It benefits me in two ways: firstly, the cold water itself (the benefits of which are widely recorded) and secondly, the action of swimming outdoors in a lake. I get a feeling of freedom that I get nowhere else. In fact, I have recently been prescribed diazepam for severe anxiety as an alternative to outdoor swimming which seems to me to be an odd public health policy. Physically, I have a lot of muscular and joint pain these days which can make walking unpleasant, but all my aches and pains disappear in water which means that I can exercise without pain. I can only do this in water”
- **Male, 65 years, retired customs officer** “I consider the paddling restrictions to be detrimental to my health and well-being and overall, not to be well justified. I suffer from levels of depression. Outdoor exercise is the way I successfully help myself deal with this condition. Not being able to conduct this important physical and mental outdoor activity has sunk me at times and made feel less positive about myself and events. I consider kayaking to be a generally safe outdoor activity and far safer than e.g. cycling which is allowed under Covid restrictions in place. I am an experienced cyclist. However earlier this year carefully cycling I was hit full on by an 88 yr old driver who completely at fault who drove across my path to turn right at speed. Immediate impact sent me over her car. The police and two ambulances attended the scene. My serious injuries now, 9 weeks later, leave me in difficulty and pain walking. I cannot agree or accept that kayaking is more dangerous than the cycling. It’s very obvious I think that the reverse is the case and the restrictions on kayaking should be lifted.”
- **Male, 57 years, Upholsterer** “The lockdown has affected my well being quite a bit...apart from the usual stresses and anxiety that most people have endured this year. Not being able to go out and paddle has reduced my confidence, ability to deal with normally easy occurrences, that happen throughout the day... I have a Work life, a Home life (sort of) but the gel that keeps it all together, which is paddling.. is not there..”
- **Male, 54, Conwy, Information Analyst** “The no paddlesport has affected my mental health during lockdown, it has been made worse by the fact that the other nations have been able to paddle. Kayaking is my passion and my release from day to day stress. We have spent years training to make Paddlesports a low risk sport and it should be recognised as a key exercise like walking and cycling”
- **Male, 53, Architectural technologist** “As a 12 y.o. kid, surfing was my escape from family life which wasn’t the best. Despite living 14 miles from the coast, I would strap my surfboard to my home-

made trailer on my bike and ride to the beach. I used to think of it as “my place to be” not realising the benefits it was bringing me. For the past year I have worked from home, visiting sites to carry out surveys to make them a safer working environment during Covid. These have included buildings with high proportion of persons that have tested positive. This, together with excessive working hours, demanding deadlines to ensure the safety of others in their workplace is extremely stressful, which is affecting my mental health. There are days where I just do not want to speak to people, my work phone will ring or ping with an email notification and I feel my stress levels going through the roof... being on or in the sea or rivers is my release from stress, reorders my mental state of mind, just as it did when I was 12. I feel that the benefits of kayaking and the sea have been completely overlooked.”

- **Male, 55, Self Employed** “It is with full understanding the impact that the Pandemic has had and the need to restrict people’s socialisation. However, I fail to see why experienced Kayakers are prohibited from paddling when the risk factor of injury and/or physical contact, compared to other permitted activities is low! ... I feel strongly that the recent restrictions have had an immeasurable impact on the wellbeing of myself and many people in the paddle sport industry.”

- **Male, 52, Self Employed, Carmarthenshire** “As we all know access to the outdoors brings great benefits to mental and physical wellbeing, keeping people fit and emotionally balanced during an extremely difficult time. I have been working throughout the restrictions and I have witnessed people mountain biking, surfing, horse riding, walking etc which adds to the frustration that watersports are currently banned. The activity of sea kayaking was my release after working all week, a time to recharge and relax that is well suited to social distancing. Everyone involved takes this activity very seriously and spends a great deal of time, money and effort on training to understand this environment, its risks and how to stay safe. I urge you to allow us to enjoy the many benefits to be gained from it.”

- **Male, 67, Semi-retired construction manager** “I started kayaking when I was 14 and still at school. ‘Just add water’ sums up my life. Any spare time has been spent on or in water be that sea, river or lake. I used to enjoy lots of forms of exercise including running and cycling. However, age is now taking its toll and I struggle to cope with these but I can still paddle.

Due to personal circumstances I do not see or speak to anyone in the mornings unless I go to work. Even then I rarely come into contact with likeminded people. Virtually all of my friends are kayakers but I never get to see them. My children have left home and I have not seen my Mother or one of my daughters for over a year. Being completely locked down is certainly taking its toll mentally. I find conversation is drying up and I have become more inward looking. There is nothing to talk about and no one to talk to anyway. I really need to get out, see some friends and have something to look forward to. I can safely do this in a kayak... If Covid does not get me depression will.”

- **Female, Gwynedd** “It’s now close to a year of various restrictions relating to kayaking. I find it difficult to understand why I am able to cycle from home along busy roads ... yet I cannot paddle my sea kayak on the virtually empty sea. I live alone and am desperately suffering from lack of social interaction on top of physical fitness and mental well-being. How often are we being told of the benefits of taking part in activities in the outdoors? I consider kayaking to be one of the best activities to do this while socially distancing in a non-contact sport.”

- **Female, 36, coach & GB Freestyle Team. Llangollen** “As paddlers returned to paddlesports after the first lockdown, I saw the curative effects of being in and on water in action. I felt first-hand and observed the same feeling of knots of anxiety melting away as soon as we launched our boats into the water. Those who’d suffered great mental anguish were almost immediately happier, calmer and more able to deal with life’s challenges. This lockdown has been extremely hard on almost everyone’s mental health. For paddlers, not having access to water has taken away a very effective coping mechanism... I have been in some very low and dark places mentally since December. There is going to be a nationwide mental health crisis to deal with as we come out of this. You should be looking to encourage all free, COVID-safe avenues for people to be able to protect and improve their mental health.”

- **Male, gas engineer** “Well personally, kayaking has always been about escapism, I go to work, which can be quite stressful in the line of work that I do...fixing gas escapes in the highway, getting out away from the masses and traffic is how I deal with this, not being able to so as along with other issues contributed to my high stress levels and bouts of depression...”

**We call on the Welsh government to remove the statement that states “for example swimming or other exercise at sea, or in lakes, rivers or other waterways” as activities to be avoided and allow safe, socially-distanced watersports during coronavirus lockdowns.**

# Agenda Item 2.28

## **P-05-1156 Match the funding for small businesses during lockdown with England – including the restart grant**

This petition was submitted by Sally Gillard, having collected a total of 2,458 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

In Wales, small businesses have received the smallest level of funding of all UK nations during the third national lockdown – despite being locked down for longer.

As of today, Rishi Sunak also announced a restart grant for small businesses to help with re-opening of businesses.

I urge the welsh government to support our smallest businesses properly, and match the grants provided to small business owners in other uk nations.

### **Additional Information:**

Rishi Sunak – budget March 2021

Comparison of funding of all UK nations for lockdown 3 is available by checking each nations funding on government websites.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

**P-05-1156 Match the funding for small businesses during lockdown with England - including the restart grant, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 10.03.21**

Firstly, I would like to thank you for discussing our petition.

We would like to ask the Welsh Government to re-evaluate their funding for the smallest businesses in Wales, and to match it with that of Englands for this lockdown.

The Welsh Government has made continuous claims that our funding package in Wales has been the most generous. I would like a public response from the Government on how they came to the calculations which enables them to freely make this claim in the media?

For most small businesses in Wales, we have received the smallest package of support for this lockdown of all UK nations. At the beginning of the pandemic, a £10,000 or £25,000 grant was distributed to all businesses with an RV under £51,000 for a period of closure from the end of March through to June/July. This was uniform across the UK. For this current lockdown, which in Wales began on December 20th, most businesses have received the sum of £6,000 or £10,000 for almost the same time frame - with businesses also being forced to close for their busiest period of the year. Many hospitality businesses will have already placed orders for food and alcohol prior to the lockdown announcement, resulting in huge wastage and losses for these businesses.

Comparably, in England an identical business would have received a one off payment of £4000, with a further £2001 paid every 42 days - they were also able to trade during Christmas week. In Northern Ireland, a business is receiving £800 per week of closure, and in Scotland where they actually have the most generous package, they are receiving - a one off payment of £6000 with a further £2000 per month. I have attached a document comparing all UK nations. This is based on the NDR Grants.

I understand that the counter argument from the Welsh Government will be that they have announced a unique fund - Economic Resilience Fund - however, only for the firebreak lockdown could this even be considered to be a generous offer. Most businesses failed to meet the criteria for these funds. The stipulations often excluded businesses below the VAT threshold, or who's business falls in the non-essential retail category (most businesses) and those able to claim SEISS. Round 3 of the ERF was also project based and closed within 72 hours. Furthermore, the most recent fund excludes non-essential retail again in addition to businesses with less than 10 full time employees. I would also like to question why the number of employees is relevant when the cost of employees are covered mostly by the furlough scheme? The overheads of a business in the same size premises and the same rateable value will not differ substantially, whether they have 4 or 14



employees - with the exception of NI contributions. I would understand those who employ more receiving a slightly larger sum to offset this, but to exclude all businesses on the basis of employee number seems unjustified, as the number of businesses in Wales who won't meet this criteria is in the vast majority.

Additionally, many of these businesses are categorised under non-essential retail, but are however service based industries, such as hair salons, beauty salons, barbershops, and like ourselves, a photographic studio. These businesses are unable to operate any take-away or click and collect services, resulting in a zero turnover for the period of closure.

Most of our smallest businesses in Wales employ less than 10 full time employees, and are run by sole traders or partnerships. This means that they will have received a total of £6000-£10000 for their premises costs (which is insufficient for most, as it barely covered their rent) , but have also had no income in this time due to the SEISS last being paid in November/December with no further grant until the end of April. This is resulting in many business owners running up to thousands of pounds in debt.

For direct comparison;

A hair salon in Wales, with a RV of £10000 and 4 employees will have received a total of £6000 to cover December 20th-March 31st.

A hair salon in England, with a RV of £10000 and 4 employees will have received a total of £8097 to cover January 5th-March 31st.

How is it fair that a business in the River Wye, which meets the exact same criteria as a business in Monmouthshire, but there is a disparity of over £2000 in their funding, yet the business in Monmouthshire also had to shut for Christmas week. For businesses with a larger RV, this disparity is even larger.

Additionally, in England they have announced re-start grants to help businesses regain their footing. Non-essential retail will be receiving grants of upto £6000, while hospitality, leisure and close contact services will be receiving upto £18000. No such support has been announced as of yet in Wales. A sum of £740 million has been provided to Wales for additional business support, so I would like to ask how this will be allocated?

I would also quickly like to mention that this petition was started just days ago, and received a total of 2455 signatures. I agreed for the petition to be cut short for it to be discussed by yourselves before the election, however I am more than confident that had the petition run for the full month that we would have exceeded 10,000 signatures - so we do have a huge support for our cause.

Thank you for taking the time to discuss our petition, and I look forward to your response.

Kind Regards,

FUNDING DISCREPANCIES COVID-19 LOCKDOWN UK

| RATEABLE VALUES  | Under £12000 (£15k in England/N.I)              | Over £12000 (£15001-£51000)             | £51000+                                 |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Wales</b>     | 2 payments of £3000                             | 2 payments of £5000                     |   |
| <b>England</b>   | £4000 plus £2001 per 42 days of closure         | £6000 plus £3000 per 42 days of closure | £9000 plus £4500 per 28 days of closure |
| <b>Scotland</b>  | £6000 plus £2000 per 4 weeks of closure         |   | £9000 plus £3000 per 4 weeks of closure |
| <b>N.Ireland</b> | £800 per week                                   | £1200 per week                          | £1600 per week                          |
|                  | <b>Totals based on 12 weeks of restrictions</b> |   |   |
| <b>Wales</b>     | £6000.00  | £10000.00                               |   |
| <b>England</b>   | £8002.00  | £12000.00                               | £18000.00                               |
| <b>Scotland</b>  | £12000.00                                       |   | £18000.00                               |
| <b>N.Ireland</b> | £9600.00  | £14400.00                               | £19200.00                               |

# Agenda Item 3.1

## **P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales (Lucy's Law)**

This petition was submitted by C.A.R.I.A.D., having collected 11,195 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to implement a ban on the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial third-party dealers.

A ban on third-party sale of puppies for profit has been named 'Lucy's Law' and its implementation in England was recently announced. Lucy's Law has huge public, media and cross-party support and we call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to deliver Lucy's Law for Wales as a matter of urgency.

Removing puppies for sale from their mum often creates sick, traumatised, dysfunctional dogs. Puppies should be seen with their mum in the place they were born. Transporting them to a different place for sale harms their welfare. Regulating commercial third-party puppy selling is ineffective in preventing harm and a ban is therefore necessary for the welfare of puppies.

Breeding dogs kept in puppy farms are hidden from public view and often suffer from years of physical and psychological trauma. Regulating commercial third-party puppy selling is ineffective in preventing harm to breeding dogs and a third-party ban on puppy selling is therefore necessary for the welfare of breeding dogs.

A ban on the third-party sale of puppies will have a positive impact on breeding dogs, ensuring their visibility and enabling the public to act on best practice advice to view the puppy with the mum where the puppy was born.

In addition, illegal, unlicensed puppy farmers and puppy smugglers currently use licensed third-parties to sell their puppies, making it possible for them to operate under the radar and without the health and welfare of breeding dogs and puppies able to be monitored by local authorities. Regulating commercial third-party puppy selling is ineffective in preventing illegal puppy farming and puppy smuggling and a third-party ban on puppy selling

is therefore necessary for the protection of dogs, puppies and the public as well as in the prevention of criminal activity.

There are no welfare advantages in selling puppies through commercial dealers. This practice only ensures breeding dogs are kept hidden from the public. As well as welfare concerns for animals, third-party sales create additional risks for public health and safety.

Puppy sales direct from reputable breeder or reputable rescue centre protects all parties through greater transparency and accountability. A ban on dealing in puppies for profit can only raise health and welfare standards for breeding dogs and puppies as well as providing greatly needed public protection.

The implementation of Lucy's Law in Wales is also vital if we are to address the damage that has been done to the reputation of Wales, which continues to be acknowledged as the puppy farming hub of the United Kingdom.

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

# Agenda Item 3.2

## **P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Laura Clays having collected a total of 112 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

Following on from the disturbing footage of puppy farms in Wales we need to see greater enforcement of the licensing of puppy farms carried out by local councils in Wales.

### **Recommendations:**

Closing puppy farms that do not meet the required criteria

Prosecuting puppy farms that put animal welfare in danger

Greater transparency on regulated visits – there should be public records like those published by the Food Standards Agency on the hygiene ratings of restaurants. The public should be able to review the inspection records.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Alyn and Deeside
- North Wales

## Agenda Item 3.3

**P-05-939 Immediate embargo on new dog breeding licences, licence renewals and planning applications until regulations are fit for purpose and enforceable**

This petition was submitted by C.A.R.I.A.D. having collected a total of 1,738 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

Following the BBC One Wales documentary on Monday 30th September 2019 highlighting the appalling state of the licensed, legal, regulated puppy farming trade in Wales, the failures of the inspection process, the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of Council licensing inspection reports and the often disturbing guidance provided to licensing inspectors (who are not animal welfare experts) by vets on the fitness of dogs to be bred from, we are calling on the Minister to intervene with immediate effect and instruct all Welsh Councils to embargo any further licensing, licensing renewal and planning applications relating to dog breeding until such time as there has been a full inquiry into these failures: Failures that we have been providing evidence on for years to both the Welsh Government and councils and which has summarily been ignored or dismissed. There is absolutely no point in the further issuing of dog breeding licences under the circumstances we have cited. To do otherwise would be to condone a broken licensing system, endanger the welfare of breeding dogs and puppies in these establishments and provide the public with a false sense of security believing that licensing as it stands means an establishment is satisfactory to purchase a canine companion from. It is clear that there is little for the public to discern between a licensed and unlicensed puppy farm and as the Minister has herself made a commitment to run puppy farming out of Wales it stands to reason that she will be of a mind to take the most urgent and appropriate action to see that this happens now. Whilst we welcome the promised urgent review of the current licensing system, this does not go far enough. Until such time as new, robust, fit for purpose regulations are laid by the Welsh Government, no further licensing, licence renewals or planning applications for new dog breeding establishments or extensions to existing breeding establishments should be approved.

## **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central





Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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**TITLE**            **The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021**

**DATE**            **27 January 2021**

**BY**                **Lesley Griffiths MS, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs**

I am pleased to announce I have today laid the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021 alongside the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum and a Plenary debate on them will be held on 2 March 2021.

As I advised in my Written Statement of 5 October 2020 my commitment is to introduce a ban on the commercial third party sales of puppies and kittens in Wales before the end of this Senedd.

These Regulations will change the licensing arrangements for the sale of animals as pets in Wales, which includes a ban on the commercial third party sale of puppies and kittens. Optimising welfare standards across Wales is a priority and the intention of the new Regulations is to promote responsible breeding and ensure puppies and kittens are bred in suitable conditions.

I have always maintained a ban on its own cannot tackle all the problems associated with puppy trading. The proposed ban is *one part* of the work associated with improvements in welfare standards at dog breeding establishments which include tackling barriers to enforcement.

I am also pleased to advise, working closely with Local Authorities, work is also underway in relation to tackling barriers to enforcement of the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014. A three year Welsh Government funded project, which includes enhancement of training and better guidance for inspectors and improved use of resources within Local Authorities and across Wales, has been established and is being led by Local Authorities in Wales.

We will continue to work with key stakeholders, including Local Authorities and the other Administrations to ensure we introduce changes which will have a lasting impact on the welfare standards of dogs and cats bred in Wales.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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**WRITTEN STATEMENT  
BY  
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE** Re-laying of draft Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021

**DATE** 03 February 2021

**BY** Lesley Griffiths MS, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

In order to address a small, but important, error in the original version laid on 27 January, with regret, I have to advise I will shortly be laying a new version of the draft Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021.

The overall intention of the policy behind these Regulations, which will replace section 1(1) of the Pet Animals Act 1951, is to reflect best practice in the sale of puppies and kittens. Allowing commercial third parties to sell puppies and kittens means, in most cases, purchasers will not see the puppy or kitten interacting with the bitch/ queen or the siblings.

Officials are working at pace to resolve the matter and a new debate date has been set for 23 March 2021. This delay is not anticipated to affect the coming into force date of these regulations which is the 10th September 2021.

# Agenda Item 3.4

## **P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals**

This petition was submitted by Linda Joyce Jones having collected a total of 95 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge Welsh Government to regulate commercial bus operators and give powers and funding to Local Authorities to run services that best meet the needs of local people. As well as providing access to employment and education, public transport is a social, health and wellbeing issue which is growing as bus services are being rapidly reduced, affecting the mental and physical health and well being of many residents who will become socially isolated and unable to get to basic services.

### **Additional Information**

Bus operators are cutting many core services which were previously operating with little or no subsidy. Operators are not tendering for new contracts and some are requesting 6 figure sums as a subsidy to continue which is unaffordable for Local Authorities who are facing budget pressures. Local Authorities cannot run services in competition with operators. Passenger journey times for those accessing employment take too long as direct services are being cut if still exist at all and some are overcrowded. The majority of residents attending the many public meetings we have held are older people who are concerned about accessing services, attending health appointments and becoming isolated. Loneliness is a huge issue in our society. It is our aim to enable older people to live in their own homes longer. It is our aim for them to stay mentally and physically fit and active. Public bus transport is now a huge urgent issue that needs addressing quickly.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Arfon
- North Wales

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig**  
**Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-895  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00266/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair of the Petitions Committee

4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 09 February regarding Petition P-05-895, Rosa's Legacy.

As outlined in my previous letter, we are continuing to work closely with the Animal Welfare Network for (AWNW) and other stakeholders, including the BVA, you will appreciate the continuing impact of the Covid-19 outbreak has meant priorities have changed while we deal with areas such as work to deliver services that protect public health, safeguard animals from statutory diseases and to ensure animal welfare is not jeopardised. Pressures on veterinary services have been immense and they have had to make decisions about where and how to focus their attention during these difficult times.

At present I regret I cannot give a precise timeline for this scoping work to be picked up again however I will update you when this is possible.

Regards,

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig**  
**Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs**

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

# Agenda Item 3.5

## **P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters**

This petition was submitted by Cian Ciaran having collected a total of 10,692 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

We, the undersigned, call on the Welsh Government to invoke the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 in respect of uncertainties, and to ensure that a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is carried out before any further sediment from Hinkley Point nuclear power station can be dumped at Cardiff Grounds.

Don't allow the Welsh government to break their own law!

### **Additional Information**

The EIA must provide

- Detailed baseline data on the behaviour and fate of material dumped at Cardiff Grounds;
- Full radiological analysis including detection of alpha-emitting particles;
- A detailed and up-to-date assessment of potential radiological impacts on the population of south Wales;
- Containing nuclear pollutants on land rather than dispersing them at sea;
- Respecting international agreements on marine dumping;
- Protecting the Severn Estuary.
- We also call on the Senedd to ensure that any EIA is NOT scoped by pro-nuclear interests.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

## **P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters, Correspondence – NRW to Chair, 23.12.20**

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Thank you for your letter of 21 December regarding Petition 'P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters'. This has been passed to me for response by Clare Pillman.

### **Update on the marine licencing process for this application**

Since we last wrote to you on 3 August 2020 in connection to this petition, we have made further progress with our pre-application processes associated with this proposed disposal activity, namely:

- On 15 September 2020, we notified EDF Energy that we had approved its sampling plan. NRW is therefore satisfied that the sediment sampling and analysis plan is sufficient for the characterisation of the sediment to be dredged and to support a marine licence application for disposal of the dredged material at sea
- On 2 October 2020, EDF Energy announced its intention to carry out an EIA as part of its future marine disposal licence application and formally withdrew its request for an EIA screening opinion from NRW
- On 12 October 2020, in accordance with Regulation 5 of Marine Works (EIA) Regulations (2017), NRW confirmed with EDF that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required for the dredge disposal marine licence application

All these steps have been publicly communicated and are available from our web-site; <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-events/statements/marine-licence-to-dispose-dredged-material-off-the-coast-of-south-wales/?lang=en>

At a recent meeting with representatives of EDF Energy we were informed that the submission of their marine licence application is now expected in January 2021.

### **Response to the further comments made by the petitioners in their recent correspondence**

We note that the petitioner has requested you to forward their scoping proposals to NRW for consideration.

As detailed above, the scope of the EIA is restricted to the requirements of the Marine Works (EIA) Regulations (2017) and EDF have committed to undertaking the associated EIA as part of its licence application. EDF have withdrawn their EIA screening request and do not intend to request a Scoping Opinion from NRW.

Consequently, we now need to await the formal submission of the marine licence application and its supporting documentation. Given its profile, our determination of the application will include an 8-week public consultation, and this would be the appropriate time for the Petitioner and any other interested party to comment on any element of the application. I would reiterate that our determination process will ensure that we only issue licences for material that is safe for disposal following a thorough assessment of the evidence that supports the application.

Kind regards,

**P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters, Correspondence – Prof. Barnham advice to NRW, 09.03.21**

**Report to:** Natural Resources Wales

**From:** Keith Barnham, Emeritus Professor of Physics, Imperial College London

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Misleading information from the Environment Agency concerning evidence for Plutonium Microparticles in the Hinkley Point sediment**

The National Resources Wales (NRW) report *Response to report NRPB-M173* has been brought to my attention. It is undated and has no identifier, but hopefully can be located from the title.

The NRW report contains a number of misleading statements that I assume originated with the nuclear regulator the Environment Agency (EA). I would appreciate this report being forwarded to the EA with a request that they give immediate attention to the questions and requests raised. I would be grateful to be copied into the email correspondence as it will be clear from Refs. 1 and 2 (attached) that I have relevant expertise. NRW's contacts may wish to question me directly.

**1) It is a matter of public record (Hansard, 19582) that the Hinkley Point A reactors 'could' be used to produce Plutonium for the weapons programme but the regulator (EA) has no evidence that they were ever used to produce Plutonium for the weapons programme. Moreover, were Plutonium produced in the Hinkley Point A reactors, this could not have been extracted from the fuel as this could only take place during the fuel repossessing at NRPs such as Sellafield.**

As Ref.1 describes, in 2000 the Ministry of Defence reported that it had found 0.37 tonnes of weapons grade plutonium, the origins of which they could not identify. The calculations which we published in 1985 [2] show that the UK Magnox reactors produced 0.36 tonnes of weapon's grade plutonium in their early years, the bulk of this from Hinkley Point A (HPA). This is relevant to the discussion of Plutonium Microparticles (PMPs). The requirement to extract the fuel while the plutonium was still weapons grade and to get it to Sellafield before the start of the NPT (which would forbid the practice), resulted in more than half the HPA core being extracted in 1968 with equipment designed to change 20% of the core a year. This resulted in the accidents which compromised the Magnox cladding of the spent fuel elements. Then in 1969, according to a MAFF report [3], an accidental release of sulphuric acid into the pond resulted in

*"irreparable damage.....to the particularly large amount of spent fuel that was there at the time.....not merely corrosion of the magnox which has in some cases disintegrated completely, but extends.....to extensive surface corrosion of the uranium itself."*

Whoever at the EA wrote that plutonium could only be extracted at Sellafield in appears unaware that these accidents were the origin of the plutonium in the waste discharge recorded in NRPB-M173. This prompts the first question for the EA:

**Q.1 When the original decision was taken in 2018 to dredge and dump the sediment without alpha testing, were those who took the decision aware of the extent of the accidents recorded in Ref. 3 and the plutonium record in liquid waste in NRPB-M173?**

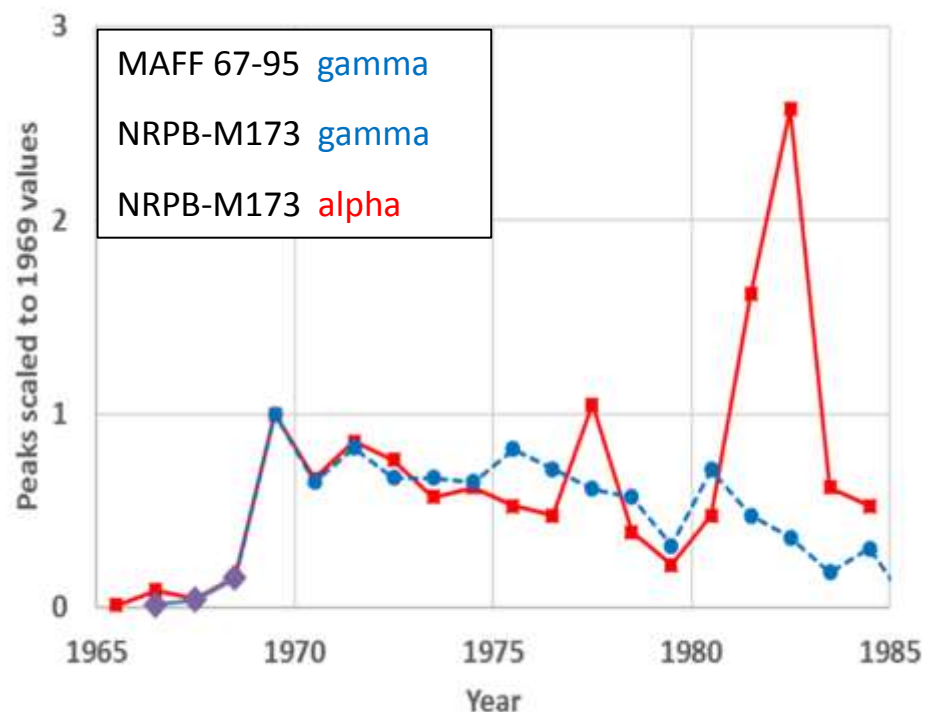
2) Over many years of annual monitoring, and to the best of our technical advisors' knowledge, hot particles have never been identified around the Hinkley area. The high levels emitted by these particles will mean that they would have been detected by gamma spectrometry in the first instance. Furthermore, no hot particles have been identified in the previous subsurface or surface sediment samples taken for the previous dredging application for Hinkley Point.

Plutonium Microparticles were identified in the liquid waste discharged from HPA by their alpha emissions recorded in NRPB-M173 (red line in Fig.1). All the plutonium signal recorded in NRPB must have come from particles of less than 5 micron diameter as this is the size of the filters at the exit of the cooling ponds. Note the MNP peak in 1982 is larger than the original peak due to the accidents in 1969. Clearly a lot more PMPs got through the filters in 1982 but there is no sign of a peak in the dotted blue line, which is the gamma signal. The PMPs in the Hinkley sediment do not emit gammas and cannot be identified by gamma spectroscopy.

**Q.2 What do the EA records indicate was the origin of the large number of PMPs emitted in 1982?**

**Q.3 Were any alpha measurements made on liquid discharges from HPA in later years than 1984. If so, please provide them. If not, why not?**

**Q.4 Have those dealing with the clean up of the HPA cooling ponds measured the plutonium content of the sludge at the bottom of the ponds?**





- 3) .....levels of Americium-241 measured by gamma spectrometry can be used to infer the presence of .....some radioisotopes of Plutonium – as they would be expected to behave similarly in the environment. Plutonium concentrations are estimated using a model that assumes their activities are proportional to the ratio in Sellafield discharges..... Alpha spectrometry has not been necessary for the samples from the Hinkley dredge area as the doses from all contributing radionuclides, including measured concentrations of Americium-241 and those estimated for Plutonium concentrations, were not exceeded.

The bulk of the plutonium in sediments in the Hinkley area probably originated in the discharges from the HPA cooling ponds. Your model can therefore be refined:

- 1) The correction for Americium-241 decays can start from 1968, the most likely date for generation.
- 2) Our calculations estimate that the isotopic ratio of Plutonium-241 in these discharges was

$$\text{Pu-241/all isotopes} = (3.05 + 0.39/-0.25)\% \text{ by weight.}$$

Finally two requests:

**Request 1. Please use your model to recalculate the plutonium concentrations from the measured Americium-241 in the dredge area referred to above, using these two corrections and compare the results with safety limits.**

**Request 2. Given that Fig. 1 clearly shows that the HPA PMPs are not detectable by gamma emission, we request that all samples be tested for PMPs by techniques such as those used in Ref. 4, whether or not they show a gamma signal.**

## References

- 1) K.W.J.Barnham et al., *Nature*, **407**, 833, (2000). (attached)
- 2) K.W.J.Barnham et al., *Nature*, **317**, 213, (1885). (attached)
- 3) MAFF “Liquid Waste Disposal Authorisation, CEGB Hinkley Point”, PDRW (69) 74
- 4) S.R.Aston. D.J.Assinder and M.Kelly, *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science* (1985),20,761-771

# Production and destination of British civil plutonium

K. W. J. Barnham, D. Hart, J. Nelson and R. A. Stevens

*The amount of plutonium produced by the Magnox reactors belonging to the CEGB and SSEB is estimated using three different methods which give similar results for total plutonium production. The difference between this total and the UK civil plutonium inventory is  $6.3 \pm 0.8$  tonne. This balance was apparently sent to the United States in exchange for fissile material for UK military requirements. The US destinations published by the UK government appear to accommodate significantly less plutonium.*

WE believe that if the international non-proliferation regime is to be strengthened, all links between civil and military nuclear programmes should be broken. If such links existed in the past the details should be clarified, effective safeguards introduced to prevent re-occurrence and information made available to allow compliance with the safeguards to be monitored. Within the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) these injunctions clearly apply to the three nuclear powers which are signatories of the treaty, Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States.

Accordingly, we have set out to determine, for the case of the United Kingdom, how much plutonium has been produced in its civil reactors. Because much of the information required for such an investigation is not available, we have used three methods to estimate the total plutonium production. We believe our calculations are an interesting demonstration of the precision with which the production of fissile material such as plutonium-239 may be inferred from published data about reactor operations.

The British situation is complicated by the arrangement sanctioned by the mutual defence agreements with the United States under the terms of which<sup>1</sup> plutonium from the British civil programme has been transferred to the United States in exchange for highly enriched uranium and tritium required for the British military programme. British government spokesmen have stated<sup>2</sup> that no plutonium from the British civil reactors operated by the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) and the South of Scotland Electricity Board (SSEB) has been used for military purposes in Britain and that none of the plutonium transferred to the United States has been so used. Our calculations, however, lead us to conclude that the civil uses for British plutonium in the United States do not fully account for the missing material. We have also encountered what we believe are serious shortcomings in the procedures for plutonium accountancy in Britain.

An earlier version of this paper was first submitted for publication in June 1984 and presented at the Sizewell Inquiry in October 1984<sup>3</sup>. The CEGB responded<sup>4</sup> with a number of criticisms, which they did not quantify on advice from the Department of Energy. We have investigated all these criticisms and incorporated some changes. These make only small differences to our numerical results.

## Yield and burn-up

The British Magnox reactors with which we are concerned are graphite-moderated reactors using natural uranium fuel. A series of these reactors were built in Britain primarily for production of military plutonium. The first of these, at Calder Hall in Cumbria, was commissioned in 1956; others followed at Chapelcross in Scotland. We are not here concerned with the production of plutonium at these reactors, but at the civil reactors designed on similar principles but operated by the electricity utilities.

Our first objective is to calculate the total quantity of all plutonium isotopes produced per tonne of original fuel as a function of the total thermal energy generated by a tonne of fuel, called the burn-up,  $B$ , in units of MW-days per tonne (MWd/te). We represent plutonium isotope production by the function  $G(B)$ , in units of kilograms per tonne (kg/te). This can be obtained by the numerical solution of the equations<sup>5</sup> giving as a function of irradiation time the concentrations of the principal isotopes of uranium (235 and 238) and of plutonium (239 to 242 inclusive). The burn-up, the energy released by fission of uranium 235 and 238 and of plutonium 239 and 241, is a by-product of these equations. We correct the energy release for radiative capture effects as in ref. 6. The cross-sections we use<sup>7</sup> depend on the mean neutron temperature which we take to be the mean moderator temperature  $T_m$ , and on the proportion of epithermal neutrons in the total neutron spectrum governed by the parameter  $r$ . Resonance absorption and fast fission are allowed for by the adjustment of the uranium-238

cross-section using parameters for each reactor given by IAEA<sup>8</sup>. A detailed description of our calculations will be published elsewhere.

There are no direct tests we can make of our  $G(B)$  on data for the CEGB and SSEB reactors. The only clear information published on plutonium production in Magnox reactors concerns the military reactors at Calder Hall. Figures by Tyror<sup>9</sup> and Griggs and Harper<sup>10</sup> illustrate plutonium production and isotopic composition as a function of burn-up for a typical point in the Calder Hall reactor core. At a moderator temperature appropriate to Calder Hall and with  $r = 0.055$ , we find our  $G(B)$  reproduces these curves very closely. Our best fit to the Tyror curves for isotopic composition is obtained with a fast fission factor of 1.02, corrected for fast radiative captures, as used by Griggs and Harper<sup>10</sup>, rather than using 1.03, as quoted by the IAEA<sup>8</sup>.

The major difference in  $G(B)$  between Calder Hall and the civil Magnox reactors arises from different moderator temperatures<sup>8,9</sup>. For each civil reactor we use the  $G(B)$  described above evaluated at the temperature appropriate to that reactor<sup>8,11</sup>. The effect of changing other parameters is considered later.

**Table 1** Comparison of isotopic ratios in spent fuel dispatched 1978–84 with predictions for discharges 1977–83

|                 | Plutonium-239<br>Sum all plutonium isotopes |                                  |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|
|                 | $G(B)$<br>predictions<br>1977–83            | CEGB<br>dispatch data<br>1978–84 |
| Bradwell        | 0.730                                       | 0.744                            |
| Berkeley        | 0.740                                       | 0.721                            |
| Hinkley Point A | 0.740                                       | 0.725                            |
| Trawsfynydd     | 0.719                                       | 0.717                            |
| Dungeness A     | 0.703                                       | 0.719                            |
| Sizewell        | 0.718                                       | 0.716                            |
| Oldbury         | 0.704                                       | 0.708                            |
| Wylfa           | 0.705                                       | 0.710                            |
| Mean            | 0.720                                       | 0.720                            |

Table 2 Uranium fuel (tonnes) discharged from CEGB and SSEB power stations 1963–72

| Fiscal year | Bradwell |                 |      | Berkeley |                   |      | Hinkley Pt       |     |                  | Trawsfynydd |                  | Dungeness |                   |      | Sizewell          |      | Oldbury |                   | Wylfa |                  | Hunterston*      |                 |
|-------------|----------|-----------------|------|----------|-------------------|------|------------------|-----|------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|---------|-------------------|-------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
|             | IME      | SUB             | BEST | IME      | SUB               | BEST | IME              | SUB | BEST             | SUB         | BEST             | IME       | SUB               | BEST | SUB               | BEST | SUB     | BEST              | SUB   | BEST             | IME              | BEST            |
| 63–64       | 44       | 40              | 44   | 45       | 49                | 45   |                  |     |                  |             |                  |           |                   |      |                   |      |         |                   |       |                  |                  |                 |
| 64–65       | 83       | 93              | 83   | 60       | 43                | 60   |                  |     |                  |             |                  |           |                   |      |                   |      |         |                   |       |                  |                  |                 |
| 65–66       | 133      | 120             | 133  | 188      | 147               | 188  | 10               | 63  | 10               | 33          | 33               | 6         | 63                | 6    |                   |      |         |                   |       |                  |                  |                 |
| 66–67       | 117      | 120             | 117  | 128      | 147               | 128  | 47               | 63  | 47               | 33          | 33               | 67        | 63                | 67   | 48                | 48   |         |                   |       |                  | 29               | 29              |
| 67–68       | 97       | 120             | 97   | 118      | 147               | 118  | 208              | 63  | 208              | 33          | 33               | 146       | 63                | 146  | 48                | 48   |         |                   |       |                  | 99               | 99              |
| 68–69       |          | 74              | 74   |          | 110               | 110  | 440 <sup>†</sup> | 408 | 408              | 73          | 73               | 178       | 178               | 212  | 212               |      | 44      | 44                |       |                  | 178 <sup>‡</sup> | 178             |
| 69–70       |          | 94              | 94   |          | 118               | 118  |                  | 174 | 174              | 170         | 170              | 173       | 173               | 149  | 149               |      | 91      | 91                |       |                  | 122 <sup>‡</sup> | 122             |
| 70–71       |          | 93              | 106  |          | 116               | 118  |                  | 100 | 105              | 155         | 142              | 169       | 182               | 142  | 167               |      | 110     | 118               |       |                  | 73 <sup>‡</sup>  | 73              |
| 71–72       | 81       | 68 <sup>§</sup> |      | 106      | 104 <sup>  </sup> |      |                  | 18  | 13 <sup>  </sup> | 52          | 65 <sup>  </sup> | 158       | 145 <sup>  </sup> | 160  | 135 <sup>  </sup> | 160  | 136     | 128 <sup>  </sup> | 16    | 14 <sup>  </sup> |                  | 42 <sup>§</sup> |

\* Calendar year basis, given by first year in first column.

† Based on rate for April–August 1968.

‡ Assuming proposed curve followed.

§ Ref. 18.

|| Ref. 15.

This  $G(B)$  refers to a point within the reactor core. The spatial variation of neutron flux in the core gives rise to a spread in the irradiation of the fuel elements in any particular channel. We have investigated typical axial variations of burn-up for a Magnox reactor<sup>12</sup> and used such a variation to obtain a channel-averaged  $G(B)$ . As  $G(B)$  is approximately linear over the appropriate range of burn-ups, averaging reduces  $G(B)$  by only 1–2 per cent. Possible radial variations in burn-up have also been investigated. Though the neutron flux falls at large radius, we find that for sensible refuelling procedures in the steady state, radial averaging compensates in part for the effect of axial averaging. A comprehensive reactor-average of  $G(B)$  is not feasible in the absence of detailed information on refuelling schemes. Henceforth we use a  $G(B)$  that is channel-averaged only, noting that this will underestimate the real situation.

We have been unable to find detailed information against which to test our  $G(B)$  for civil Magnox reactors apart from Fig. 5 of the sixth report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Protection (the "Flowers Report")<sup>13</sup>, which gives the rate of plutonium production for a "power" reactor. Our original interpretation of this unreferenced figure as typical of civil Magnox reactors has been criticized by the CEGB<sup>4</sup>, but our  $G(B)$  does reproduce this curve well at a temperature within the range appropriate to civil Magnox reactors.

As an additional test, we have compared the isotopic ratios resulting from our calculations with the data provided by the CEGB on the isotopic composition of fuel dispatched from their Magnox stations for the six fiscal years 1978–84<sup>14</sup>. We believe that the isotopic composition of the fuel dispatched should approximate to that of the fuel discharged one year earlier. Table 1 shows the good agreement between our predicted isotopic ratios, calculated at the average of the discharge burn-ups for the appropriate years (as in Method A below) and the CEGB dispatch

data, giving confidence in our extrapolation of the Calder Hall fit.

### Fuel discharges

Fuel discharges from 1971–72 onwards have been provided by the British government in response to parliamentary questions<sup>15–21</sup>, but the government has refused to give information on fuel discharges for the 1960s<sup>15</sup>. The figures in Table 2 in the column headed "SUB" are derived by subtraction of the numbers of fuel elements discharged by certain dates given in various sources<sup>21–25</sup>. For five stations, refuelling curves to mid-1968 are given in an Institute of Mechanical Engineers symposium (IME)<sup>26</sup> on the refuelling of gas-cooled reactors. Bearing in mind that the SUB data for 1965–68 are averaged over three years, the two sources are in reasonable agreement.

The refuelling policy adopted at Magnox stations in their early years was to follow an "ideal refuelling line"<sup>26</sup> with the total spent fuel discharged,  $\Sigma D_i$ , increasing linearly with "core-average" irradiation

$$B = (\Sigma E_i)/M \quad \text{MWd/te} \quad (1)$$

up to a predetermined maximum burn-up  $B_{\max}$ . Here  $\Sigma E_i$  is the total thermal energy generated (in MWd) and  $M$  is the total mass of uranium in the core. If this "ideal refuelling line" is followed, then all of the initial charge will have been discharged by the time the "core-average" burn-up reaches  $B_{\max}$ . In addition, if each  $D_i$  discharged is replaced by an equal amount of fresh fuel, then when  $B_{\max}$  is reached the core will contain fuel with all burn-ups equally represented. This is the ideal steady-state situation.

The refuelling curves available<sup>26</sup> show that the Magnox stations fell behind the ideal refuelling line in the early years, but that in the late 1960s, strenuous efforts were made to increase refuelling rates until the ideal, or a line parallel to it, was achieved. As operating experience was acquired,  $B_{\max}$  was increased, so that the

steady-state description only approximately represents the situation in the 1970s. The effects of such factors will be considered later.

Two of our models require  $E_i$ , the thermal energy generated. For CEGB stations we have obtained these by fiscal year from the CEGB<sup>27</sup> and parliamentary answers<sup>16,17</sup> and for Hunterston A by calendar year up to 1982 from the SSEB<sup>18</sup> and fiscal year subsequently<sup>19,20</sup>.

### The models

Given the fuel discharges of Table 2 and  $G(B)$ , only the burn-up at which the fuel was discharged is needed to calculate the plutonium production. The CEGB, however, have refused to provide average discharge burn-ups<sup>28</sup>. In method A, we have taken discharge burn-ups from a number of sources<sup>29</sup>. For other years we linearly interpolate between these published figures or between the earliest published figure and zero burn-up on starting up. We then calculate plutonium discharge using these discharge burn-ups, the fuel discharges of Table 2 and our channel-averaged  $G(B)$ . The totals to 31 March 1985 for each reactor are presented in Table 3.

Method B also uses the fuel discharge figures of Table 2, but attempts a more detailed calculation of burn-ups using figures on the thermal energy generated per year. We increment the core-average burn-up by  $E_i/M$  each year and determine the burn-up each batch would receive by mid-year. Discharged fuel is replaced by equal amounts of fresh fuel, the burn-up of which we increase by the core average in subsequent years. When all the initial charge is discharged, we then discharge the fuel loaded in the first year assuming a policy of "first in, first out". Using a computer program for the book keeping, we find that the burn-ups of the spent fuel discharged in the steady state are similar to but in general slightly lower than the discharge irradiations assumed in Method A. This result is expected as we calculate an average burn-up and in practice chan-

nels with higher than average burn-up will be preferentially discharged. As a result Method B probably underestimates plutonium discharged and overestimates plutonium in core. In fact the total plutonium in core at 31 March 1985 according to Method B is 9.6 te to be compared with the value of 9.5 te quoted to the nearest half-tonne in a parliamentary answer<sup>33</sup>, suggesting that this can only be a small effect. We determine plutonium discharge at each burn-up from  $G(B)$  and the size of the batches. The results obtained from Method B are presented in Table 3.

A further test of Method B is provided by the plutonium content of the fuel dispatched from CEGB stations in the years 1978-84<sup>14</sup>. Seven CEGB stations keep discharged fuel in cooling ponds where the fuel cannot remain indefinitely because the cladding would corrode. The average time between discharge and dispatch for the fuel in ref. 14 was 1.2 years. However this average probably includes Wylfa which has a dry store. We believe that, for the stations with cooling ponds, the total plutonium dispatched over a six year period should be similar to the total of the plutonium produced in a similar period starting one year earlier. We compare CEGB dispatch data with appropriate Method B production figures in Table 4. Note that the reactor-to-reactor variation given by Method B is similar to that in the CEGB data and overall our predictions are a 3.6% underestimate. The CEGB have refused to publish<sup>4</sup> totals of plutonium in the ponds at the start and the end of the six-year period which could discredit or confirm our calculations.

Method C uses the total thermal energy generated and does not use any figures for spent fuel discharged. The principle of the method is to assume that the "ideal refuelling line" was followed. If a linear rise to a certain maximum value of burn-up ( $B_{max}$ ) is assumed then the energy extracted from fuel in core on rise to steady state,

$$E_c = \int_0^{B_{max}} B dD = MB_{max}/2$$

and  $E_c$  is equal to  $E_d$ , the energy extracted from the fuel discharged in this period.

If in the steady state the amount of fuel  $D_s$  is discharged at the burn-up,  $B_{max}$  over a period of time in which thermal energy  $E_s$  is generated, then it is straightforward to show that to keep the steady state situation constant

$$D_s = E_s/B_{max} \quad (2)$$

Therefore total thermal energy generated

$$E_T = E_c + E_d + E_s = MB_{max} + D_s B_{max} \quad (3)$$

Plutonium production can similarly be divided into three parts. Plutonium in core at start (and end) of steady state

Table 3 Plutonium discharge (te) by year (Method B) and totals (Methods A, B, C)

|                          | BRADWELL | BERKELEY | HINCKLEY POINT A | TRAWSFY-NYDD | DUNGENESS A | SIZEWELL | OLDBURY | WYLFA | HUNTERSTON A (CALENDAR YEARS) |       |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|------------------|--------------|-------------|----------|---------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|
| 63-64                    | 0.02     | 0.03     |                  |              |             |          |         |       |                               |       |
| 64-65                    | 0.09     | 0.06     |                  |              |             |          |         |       |                               |       |
| 65-66                    | 0.19     | 0.28     |                  | 0.01         |             |          |         |       |                               |       |
| 66-67                    | 0.22     | 0.25     | 0.05             | 0.02         | 0.04        | 0.01     |         |       | 0.03                          |       |
| 67-68                    | 0.21     | 0.24     | 0.32             | 0.04         | 0.16        | 0.03     |         |       | 0.15                          |       |
| 68-69                    | 0.16     | 0.21     | 0.81             | 0.11         | 0.28        | 0.26     | 0.01    |       | 0.34                          |       |
| 69-70                    | 0.20     | 0.26     | 0.29             | 0.33         | 0.34        | 0.25     | 0.07    |       | 0.28                          |       |
| 70-71                    | 0.23     | 0.26     | 0.17             | 0.33         | 0.37        | 0.34     | 0.14    |       | 0.19                          |       |
| 71-72                    | 0.15     | 0.24     | 0.02             | 0.17         | 0.28        | 0.29     | 0.20    |       | 0.09                          |       |
| 72-73                    | 0.20     | 0.25     | 0.15             | 0.03         | 0.19        | 0.30     | 0.18    | 0.02  | 0.21                          |       |
| 73-74                    | 0.16     | 0.26     | 0.30             | 0.61         | 0.22        | 0.29     | 0.32    | 0.07  | 0.27                          |       |
| 74-75                    | 0.18     | 0.20     | 0.36             | 0.32         | 0.34        | 0.30     | 0.23    | 0.18  | 0.26                          |       |
| 75-76                    | 0.19     | 0.23     | 0.28             | 0.25         | 0.31        | 0.32     | 0.24    | 0.11  | 0.12                          |       |
| 76-77                    | 0.17     | 0.24     | 0.32             | 0.19         | 0.30        | 0.30     | 0.23    | 0.29  | 0.12                          |       |
| 77-78                    | 0.20     | 0.10     | 0.38             | 0.31         | 0.15        | 0.29     | 0.30    | 0.18  | 0.20                          |       |
| 78-79                    | 0.15     | 0.15     | 0.27             | 0.25         | 0.17        | 0.26     | 0.18    | 0.25  | 0.28                          |       |
| 79-80                    | 0.11     | 0.21     | 0.29             | 0.30         | 0.08        | 0.21     | 0.30    | 0.48  | 0.29                          |       |
| 80-81                    | 0.01     | 0.09     | 0.36             | 0.13         | 0.00        | 0.35     | 0.28    | 0.70  | 0.21                          |       |
| 81-82                    | 0.01     | 0.00     | 0.25             | 0.27         | 0.05        | 0.18     | 0.25    | 0.57  | 0.15                          |       |
| 82-83                    | 0.13     | 0.06     | 0.29             | 0.35         | 0.22        | 0.22     | 0.25    | 0.63  | 0.22*                         |       |
| 83-84                    | 0.15     | 0.02     | 0.28             | 0.28         | 0.25        | 0.25     | 0.28    | 0.35  | 0.18†                         |       |
| 84-85                    | 0.17     | 0.07     | 0.29             | 0.26         | 0.23        | 0.21     | 0.23    | 0.63  | 0.22†                         |       |
| Total discharge method B | 3.30     | 3.71     | 5.51             | 4.58         | 3.99        | 4.66     | 3.69    | 4.46  | 3.82*                         | 37.72 |
| Total discharge method A | 3.45     | 3.75     | 5.47             | 4.39         | 3.95        | 4.57     | 4.13    | 5.03  | 3.96*                         | 38.69 |
| Total discharge method C | 3.09     | 3.69     | 5.55             | 4.66         | 3.80        | 4.50     | 3.70    | 4.82  | 3.67*                         | 37.49 |

\* Includes 1.25 × (discharge '82) to bring Hunterston to 31-3-83

† Fiscal years for Hunterston

$$P_c = \int_0^{B_{max}} G(B) dB = \frac{M}{B_{max}} \int_0^{B_{max}} G(B) dB = P_d$$

where  $P_d$  is the plutonium discharged in the rise to the steady state. Plutonium discharged in steady state  $P_s = D_s G(B_{max})$ .

Therefore total plutonium production (including plutonium in core) after substitution from (3) is given by

$$P_T = \frac{E_T G(B_{max})}{B_{max}} + M \left\{ \frac{2}{B_{max}} \int_0^{B_{max}} G(B) dB - G(B_{max}) \right\} \quad (4)$$

Hence, if the ideal refuelling line was followed, the total plutonium production when total thermal energy  $E_T$  has been generated is determined in terms of one parameter, the steady-state burn-up  $B_{max}$ .

In Table 3 we present the total plutonium discharged for each station by 31 March 1985 using a  $B_{max}$  which is the average of the discharge burnups in Method A for each station for the 10 years prior to 31 March 1985. When  $B_{max}$  is calculated for shorter periods or from equation (2) the totals for individual reactors vary in the range ± (0-3) per cent. This suggests that the method chosen to determine  $B_{max}$  is not

Table 4 Comparison of Method B predictions for plutonium production 1977-83 with CEGB figures for dispatched fuel 1978-84

|                 | Plutonium produced during 1977-83 Method B (te) | Plutonium dispatched during 1978-84 CEGB (te) |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Bradwell        | 0.605   | 0.594   |
| Berkeley        | 0.613   | 0.637   |
| Hinkley Point A | 1.846   | 1.908   |
| Trawsfynydd     | 1.625   | 1.565   |
| Dungeness A     | 0.672   | 0.834   |
| Sizewell        | 1.510   | 1.600   |
| Oldbury         | 1.563   | 1.607   |
| Total           | 8.434   | 8.745   |

critical.

An interesting result of Method C is that from equation (4)  $P_T$  consists of two parts: a first (larger) term which is proportional to  $E_T$  and a second (smaller) term which is always positive. The method used by Hesketh<sup>34</sup> and by Simpson<sup>1</sup> to estimate  $P_T$  assumes a quoted value for plutonium production per unit of electrical energy generated which for constant thermal efficiency means they were assuming plutonium production proportional to  $E_T$ . Since the second term in (4) is always positive, such estimates must be underestimates of  $P_T$  as Hesketh claimed. Our calculations suggest that the second term is approximately 2.4 te, summed over all the Magnox reactors.

The possible end uses of plutonium depend critically on its isotopic composition. We have calculated using Method B the plutonium discharged in two plutonium 240 purity bands 0–7 per cent and 0–15 per cent and the results are shown in Table 5. The 15 per cent figure is important because we know there is currently no plutonium of Pu 240 content less than 15 per cent in the civil stockpile<sup>35</sup>. The plutonium of Pu 240 content less than 7 per cent would be particularly useful for military purposes, though plutonium of considerably worse purity could be blended with very high-purity plutonium to form acceptable weapons-grade plutonium. To put the numbers in Table 5 in perspective, Lovins states that the critical mass for weapons-grade plutonium with a reflector is less than 5 kg<sup>36</sup>.

### Plutonium balance

Plutonium must be 'lost' because reprocessing is not 100 per cent efficient. It may either be contained in solid or liquid waste, or discharged into the Irish Sea. By 1974 solid waste accumulated at Sellafield contained a little under half a tonne of plutonium<sup>13</sup>. It was anticipated that the corresponding figure for plutonium losses would not be so great over subsequent years. The Department of Energy have refused to answer parliamentary questions requesting an update of this figure<sup>37</sup> though they have admitted<sup>38</sup> that only about half of the quantity arises from CEBG and SSEB spent fuel.

From radiological data<sup>39,40</sup> on discharges

**Table 5** Production of high purity plutonium (te) for all CEBG and SSEB stations

|                         | Plutonium 240              |             |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
|                         | Sum all plutonium isotopes |             |
|                         | 0% – 15%                   | 0% – 7%     |
| Up to 31–3–69           | 2.3 ± 0.4                  | 0.2 ± 0.1   |
| From 31–3–69 to 31–3–71 | 0.8 ± 0.2                  | 0.07 ± 0.02 |
| After 31–3–71           | 1.1 ± 0.2                  | 0.09 ± 0.05 |

of plutonium isotopes into the sea we calculate that approximately 280 kg of plutonium has been lost in this way up to end 1983. According to a recent parliamentary answer approximately 70 per cent of this arises from CEBG and SSEB spent fuel<sup>40</sup>. In total we assume 0.5 ± 0.2 te of plutonium from the civil stockpile has been lost during reprocessing.

In Table 6 we show the total of plutonium in core and discharged according to Methods A, B and C at the four dates for which official information on plutonium stocks is available<sup>16,33,35,41</sup>. We note that the three methods give differences of 2 per cent or less for the plutonium total at each date. This agreement suggests that uncertainties in exact refuelling policy including discharge figures for the 1960s are not very important when considering the total of plutonium produced. This is supported by the small changes in the total of –0.5 per cent when SUB figures rather than BEST (Table 2) are used in Method B, and +1.7 per cent when a uniform discharge throughout the year is assumed rather than mid-year discharge.

The three methods also calculate discharge burn-up differently. Hence the similarity of results suggests that systematic errors due to the lack of detailed knowledge of the burn-up variation within the reactor are probably smaller than the differences between the totals of the three methods.

All three methods assume the same  $G(B)$  which for the civil reactors cannot be directly checked against published data. As a test of the sensitivity of our results to our choice of  $G(B)$  we investigate the effect of using a worst-case  $G(B)$  specified by parameters at the extent of the range which is reasonable: a fast fission factor of

1.033;  $r = 0.07$ ; higher  $T_m$  where there is ambiguity in the literature. This  $G(B)$  for a Calder Hall temperature lies well below the Tyror curve and the agreement with the isotopic ratios in Table 1 worsens, but the plutonium total according to Method B falls by only 1.5 per cent. Given that our channel-averaged  $G(B)$  underestimates the reactor averaged situation by approximately 1 per cent, we feel that the error on the missing plutonium given below accommodates such systematic effects.

According to Method B the total plutonium increase between 31 December 1981 and 31 March 1985 is 7.7 te. This agrees with the difference calculated from the parliamentary answers of 7.5 ± 0.5 te. Since an interpolation is required to produce plutonium totals at 31-12-81 it is probably safer to compare the difference between totals in 31-3-85 and 31-3-83 which is 4.9 te predicted by Method B and 5.0 ± 0.5 te in the parliamentary answers.

### Missing plutonium

We conclude from Table 6 that the amount of plutonium unaccounted for is 6.8 ± 0.8 te according to our preferred Method B. After subtraction of the 0.5 ± 0.2 te lost in reprocessing (which is not included in the subtotal of civil stocks<sup>42</sup>), the missing balance is 6.3 ± 0.8 te.

It is interesting to note that our estimate for the balance agrees with the figure of 6.667 te which was expected to be the maximum involved in the exchange<sup>1</sup> between the United Kingdom and the United States, based on costs in the US enabling act.

Previous studies of UK plutonium production have arrived at the following estimates for the balance of civil plutonium: Durie and Edwards<sup>43</sup>, 14.5 te; Hesketh<sup>34</sup>, 3.4 te; Simpson<sup>1</sup>, 3.3 te. As discussed earlier we believe that approximately 2.4 te should be added to both the Hesketh and Simpson estimates. Their estimates would then be in agreement with ours.

Simpson favoured 3–4 te for the amount consigned to the US on the basis of the amount of plutonium produced by 1969. On 1-4-69 plutonium in their spent fuel arriving at Windscale became the property of the CEBG rather than the UK Atomic Energy Authority. The CEBG has stated<sup>44,45</sup> that fuel reprocessed prior to 1

**Table 6** Total plutonium (discharged and in core) from Methods A, B, & C and comparison with Parliamentary Answers

| DATE                   | Method A                          |                                       | Method B                   |                             | Method C                   |                             |                            |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
|                        | Sub-total of civil stockpile (te) | Total including core as in COL 2 (te) | Difference from COL 2 (te) | Total discharge + core (te) | Difference From COL 2 (te) | Total discharge + core (te) | Difference from COL 2 (te) |
| 31-12-81               | 33.0                              | 40.00                                 | 7.00                       | 39.60                       | 6.60                       | 39.09                       | 6.09                       |
| 31-3-83                | 35.5                              | 43.32                                 | 7.82                       | 42.44                       | 6.94                       | 41.76                       | 6.26                       |
| 31-3-84                | 38.0                              | 45.40                                 | 7.40                       | 44.87                       | 6.87                       | 44.03                       | 6.03                       |
| 31-3-85                | 40.5                              | 48.19                                 | 7.69                       | 47.32                       | 6.82                       | 46.33                       | 5.83                       |
| <b>Mean difference</b> |                                   |                                       | <b>7.48</b>                |                             | <b>6.81</b>                |                             | <b>6.05</b>                |

\* Figures as quoted in Parliamentary Answers

April 1969 provided the plutonium sent to the United States. Our Method B gives  $3.5 \pm 0.4$  te as the total produced by mid fiscal-year 1968–69, which is consistent with Simpson's estimate. If the plutonium unaccounted for is to be reduced to the amount produced by mid-year 1968–69 our calculations would need to overestimate production by 9 per cent. However, comparison with the CEGB dispatch data suggests that our calculations are a 3.6 per cent underestimate. Furthermore our figure cannot be a 9 per cent overestimate since the adjusted Method B total of plutonium in core on 31 March 1985 would then be 8.8 te which is incompatible with the figure of 9.5 te quoted in the parliamentary answer to the nearest half-tonne.

### US plutonium use

According to the government<sup>46</sup> the bulk of the civil plutonium sent to the US is in the inventory of one fast research reactor, the zero power plutonium reactor (ZPPR), "in the core" of another, the fast flux test facility (FFTF), and "a sizeable quantity was used to make californium for medical purposes. The remaining small quantity is in use for experimental purposes elsewhere in the civil programme, for example at Argonne and Batelle."

ZPPR has an inventory of 3.8 te, of which a "portion" of the 3.4 te of fuel-grade plutonium came from the United Kingdom<sup>47</sup>. FFTF only went into operation in 1981, has a core loading of 550 kg plutonium-239<sup>48</sup> and only a "small portion" of FFTF fuel was supplied by the United Kingdom<sup>47</sup>. It has been estimated that at most a few hundred kilograms of its inventory of 2.9 te came from the United Kingdom<sup>48</sup>. The amount of plutonium used for californium production has subsequently been revealed as 200 kg<sup>2</sup>. If 200 kg is a "sizeable quantity" then the "remaining small quantity" in use at Argonne

and Batelle is insignificant.

We therefore estimate that the total UK plutonium in the destinations listed by the government is likely to be less than 4.0 te. The UK civil plutonium in these destinations could be considerably less if UK military plutonium was involved, as is possible<sup>49</sup>.

Hence on the basis of our best Method B estimate we believe that at least  $2.3 \pm 0.8$  te of UK civil plutonium is in destinations other than those given by the government.

### Conclusions

The agreement between our three methods suggests that, despite the absence of public data on fuel discharges in the 1960s, it is possible to calculate the total plutonium produced by the civil Magnox reactors to a reasonable accuracy. We conclude that  $6.3 \pm 0.8$  te of civil plutonium, approximately one-sixth of the total civil stockpile, are currently missing. We believe there is at least 2 te of UK civil plutonium in destinations other than those admitted in parliamentary answers. Until this is clarified the suspicion will exist that these destinations could be military.

Our calculations agree with the rather limited data available on plutonium production in civil Magnox reactors: parliamentary answers; isotopic ratios in CEGB dispatch data; and the "Flowers Report". Indeed they underestimate plutonium production when a comparison is made with CEGB dispatch figures.

In view of our findings we believe it is important that the UK government provides a much fuller explanation of the fate of civil plutonium produced during the 1960s, publishes more detailed information on civil plutonium production since 1971 and accepts effective safeguards on all civil nuclear facilities. This should include the currently unsafeguarded Mag-

nox reprocessing line at Sellafield which handles both civil and military plutonium and which has been the subject of continuing conflict between the government and EURATOM (the appropriate safeguards agency) since the United Kingdom joined the EEC<sup>50</sup>.

We also find it most unsatisfactory that the government refuses to publish information on plutonium production by individual civil reactors even in recent years<sup>51</sup>, that this information is not supplied to EURATOM<sup>52</sup>, and that the CEGB removes the necessary data from its computer records<sup>53</sup>.

Only by clarifying the extent of past links between civil and military nuclear programmes in the United Kingdom and by implementing procedures to prevent any such future re-occurrence can the government and the nuclear industry hope to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. Such clarification would now be timely with the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference under way in Geneva.

We are grateful to the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Union of Concerned Scientists for providing financial assistance, to Scientists Against Nuclear Arms and the European Proliferation Information Centre for their support, to the London New Technology Network for the use of computing facilities, to Rob Edwards, Dafydd Elis Thomas M.P. and Tim Williams for seeking out information and to Zoe Saunders for help with computing. Useful discussions were also held with Norman Dombey, Professor P.J. Grant, Ross Hesketh and John Simpson. □

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## Careers in science offer women an unusual bonus: immortality

Sir — I was alarmed to learn in your Opinion article<sup>1</sup> that President Clinton's National Science and Technology Council was "toothless" in its failure to address the shortage of women and minorities in science, technology and engineering, and that this situation could have "devastating" consequences by 2050 for the US economy and scientific leadership<sup>2</sup>.

An analysis of death notices and obituaries in *Nature* every 10 years from 1949 to 1999, and in *Science* every 10 years from 1949 to 1969 (after which it stopped regularly publishing these) suggests a way of increasing the number of women scientists dramatically. As I show here, women scientists rarely die. Once word of this acquired immortality gets out, women should flock to scientific careers.

Of 1,184 obituaries in a three-year period coded for year of publication, sex, age at death, cause of death (if known) and field<sup>3</sup>, women accounted for 49 of 917 (5.3%) in *Science* and 13 of 267 (4.9%) in *Nature*; of the 44 commemorated in both journals, two were women. *Science* carried 3.43 times more obituaries than *Nature*; but the proportion of women remained constant at about 5% in each journal.

The dramatic increase in the number of women entering science, technology and engineering during the past 40 years (in which the number of female doctorates has grown at more than twice the rate of that for men, averaging 7.5% per year<sup>3</sup>) coincided with acquisition of immortality in increasing numbers of these women.

Although women in the physical sciences were represented by 4.8% of the death notices in *Science* and 8.3% of the obituaries in *Nature* in 1969, by 1979 there were none — they had become immortal (see Fig. 1). Since women received only 2.2% of US doctorates in engineering by 1978, more time is needed to assess the degree, if any, to which women in this field have acquired immortality. Women in the life sciences started to become immortal in 1979, but immortality is not yet fixed in this group, since one obituary appeared in 1999 — a year after women received 45.4% of the doctorates in that field (see Fig. 1). This trend is also found in other scientific and science-related fields of endeavour.

The fact that women were featured in some obituaries between 1949 and 1969 for all fields except engineering demonstrates that noteworthy women were contributing to scientific and scholarly endeavours half a century ago. As more females received doctorates over

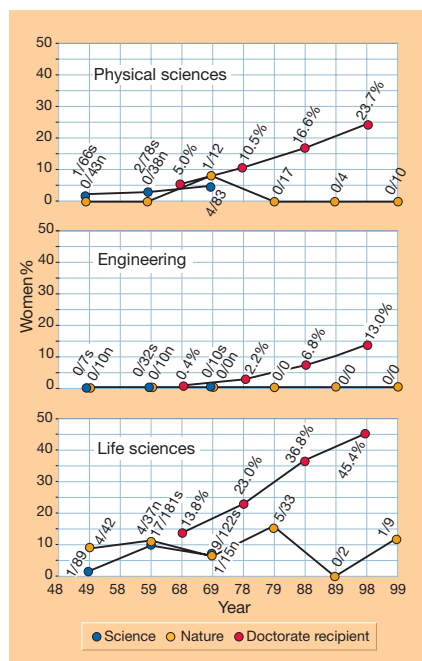


Figure 1 Percentages of women who received doctorates compared with those who received obituaries. Red circles, percentages of US doctoral degrees awarded to women during 1968, 1978, 1988 and 1998; blue circles, percentage of death notices for women in *Science* for 1949, 1959 and 1969; yellow circles, percentages of obituaries for women in *Nature* for 1949, 1959, 1969, 1979, 1989 and 1999. The numerator of fractions provides the number of obituaries for women; the denominator represents the total number of obituaries; s, *Science*; n, *Nature*.

subsequent years, however, the numbers of obituaries for women decreased to zero in the physical sciences, social sciences, education, humanities and other categories. One may therefore conclude that women in these fields no longer die.

The big question, of course, is what are the factors that led to their immortality? Is there a gene that predisposes women scientists to live for ever? If so, I propose the name *foy* (fountain of youth), and suggest that the researchers at DREADCO look into this.

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## Enigma thief stole a very special machine

Sir — Natasha Loder writes (*Nature* **407**, 278; 2000) that the particular kind of four-rotor Enigma machine used by the German Abwehr — and stolen from

Bletchley Park earlier this year — is very rare, and that the only other known example is owned by the US National Security Agency.

This is correct. But, rare though the Abwehr versions are, there are several other four-rotor Enigma machines in existence and available to collectors by legal means. I myself own one: No. 877, bought at Sotheby's in March 1994 (it was previously sold at Phillips in April 1993). At least three others were sold at Phillips and Sotheby's during the 1990s.

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## Did civil reactors supply plutonium for weapons?

Sir — We welcome the recent publication by the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) of the first official inventory of the country's military plutonium<sup>1,2</sup>. The report contains a remarkable admission<sup>2</sup>: "These figures show that the weapon cycle stockpile is in fact some 0.3 tonnes larger than the amount of plutonium the records indicate as available". Hence, the MOD was not aware of the existence of 60 bombs' worth of weapons-grade plutonium. The report does not attempt to identify the origin of this plutonium, simply quoting<sup>1</sup> "From unidentified sites, 0.37 tonnes", despite there being very few sources of weapons-grade plutonium.

We believe some calculations we published 15 years ago<sup>3</sup> can help the MOD identify the source. In their early years (1963–72) the UK's civil Magnox reactors produced significant amounts of weapons-grade plutonium. In 1984 it was admitted that it was reprocessed at Sellafield in the same line, and at the same time, as the weapons-grade plutonium from military reactors<sup>4</sup>. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, the plant operators, admitted that they called the weapons-grade plutonium "military" irrespective of origin<sup>4</sup>. It would have been consistent with these practices if all weapons-grade plutonium was shipped to the MOD's Aldermaston site. The government stated in 1983 that there was no weapons-grade plutonium in the civil stockpile<sup>5</sup>.

Today, the UK government refuses to quantify plutonium production from civil reactors for these early years. In 1985 we published an estimate of  $(0.36 \pm 0.11)$  tonnes for the total weapons-grade plutonium produced by the UK civil reactors<sup>6</sup>. This agrees remarkably well with the MOD figure of 0.37 tonnes for plutonium of unknown origin. We conclude that about 11% of the

plutonium in UK nuclear weapons originated in civil reactors.

The MOD reports do not separate the transfer data into weapons-grade and non-weapons-grade plutonium, and there are no data on production in the country's dedicated military reactors at Calder Hall and Chapel Cross.

We call on the MOD to provide this information. Similar data have been made public in the United States<sup>3</sup>. The UK government is now in an anomalous position, having published the military stockpile while refusing to publish similar figures for civil plutonium. We request that they do so, and clarify the contradictory statements that have been made to Parliament about the fate of civil plutonium.

The Magnox reactors have entered their shutdown phase and are again producing significant amounts of weapons-grade plutonium. The UK government has recently decided to restrict information on plutonium production in civil reactors<sup>7</sup>. One hopes that history will not repeat itself.

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## Achievers should stay to aid Brazilian science ...

Sir — The Opinion article “Genome sequencing for all” (*Nature* **406**, 109; 2000) exposed a patronising view of research in developing countries.

In my view, *Nature* could have used its valuable space to tackle more interesting, painful yet real issues surrounding scientists in developing countries (see the News feature “A springboard to success” in *Nature* **407**, 440–441; 2000). For example, why was the Brazilian paper celebrated in your Opinion article an exception rather than the rule?

Local antinationalism has allowed imperialism from industrialized countries to survive for centuries. So, although I understand the views of the Brazilian

scientists abroad “who frequently decide not to return, citing a lack of scientific opportunity”, they are also being used as cheap labour in rich countries. Hence they are perpetuating an unfair situation by their short-sightedness and selfishness (very often their studies have been funded by Brazilian public money).

By leaving Brazil they may well avoid having to carry out less ‘important’ or ‘glamorous’ science. But they also lose the chance to involve themselves in relevant issues such as the dismantling of Brazil’s public university system, or to claim the right to better jobs and working conditions, or to build a better future for themselves and for future generations.

Maria J. Hötzel

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## ...yet the path is strewn with needless obstacles

Sir — I am a young Brazilian scientist and I agree with Tomas Prolla’s point in Correspondence<sup>1</sup> that the rigid bureaucracy in Brazil turns scientific research into a nightmare.

Four years ago, I asked the director of the institute where I did my PhD to release funds (about US\$20) so I could send reprints to England, as one of my results was going to be cited in a textbook to be published there. The director punched his desk and said that he was not there to support my megalomania. I sent the reprints using my own money, and my result was cited in the book<sup>2</sup>. A professor from another university told me that to behave as I had done, at my level of seniority, would cause fear among my superiors.

I recently entered the selection process for a professor’s position in one of Brazil’s leading universities. One of the interviewers asked why I wanted to stay in academia instead of working in industry for better pay. I did not get the job.

The person who got the job has published about six papers in journals, and is corresponding author on none of these. My curriculum vitae lists 21 papers in good international journals. In 20 of these I am the corresponding author and in 11 I am the sole author. I have spent \$23,000 of my own money doing serious research in this country and I receive about \$200,000 as a government grant. In my laboratory I have the first atomic force microscope for biological research in the country.

This is the fourteenth selection process I have undergone in this country. Before I

received the result of my latest attempt, I was advised by another professor to go to the United States as I do not fit in the Brazilian system.

It seems that Brazil can produce good scientists for export, but this material does not bring income into the country.

Ricardo de Souza Pereira

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1. *Nature* **406**, 826 (2000).
2. Walker, G. *Yeast Physiology and Biotechnology* 16–17 (Wiley, Chichester, 1998).

## If free speech costs lives that’s a high price to pay

Sir — Stewart *et al.* are right to remind us that the 17 years following the discovery of HIV have been a long time (*Nature* **407**, 286; 2000).

Both of us lost grandparents and great-grandparents to tuberculosis. One might have thought that in the hundred or more years since Robert Koch discovered *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (without fulfilling all his postulates), we would have done a little better than the state we are in today: some 1.7 billion infected, with an annual death rate of 1.8 million. Of course we could all agree on tuberculosis being caused by another, as yet undiscovered, microbe riding on the intimate coat-tails of *M. tuberculosis*. Then perhaps the lack of progress would make sense. Paradigm lost.

In an earlier life one of us was valet to the French philosopher Voltaire. I remember cleaning his room one day, coming across a letter to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. As a Huguenot, I rejoiced at the remark, “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it”. What is not widely known is the next sentence: “My only question, Sir, is whether the columns of *Nature* are appropriate?”

We are staunch believers in the right to free speech, but is *Nature* the appropriate place to militate in favour of the pre-Copernican model of the universe or the existence of phlogiston? After all, there is Speakers’ Corner in Hyde Park, when it’s not raining. To demand the right of reply or equal time on such matters is a trick the creationists have used.

HIV causes AIDS. Problems arise when the proposed alternative costs lives.

Simon Wain-Hobson\*, Robin A. Weiss†

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**P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 10.03.21**

***To Petitions Committee secretariat***

**GeigerBay response to NRW letter to the Committee chair**

*P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters.*

**Direct comments on the letter**

1. The NRW acceptance of EDF's sampling plan had deficits – a) no transparency; b) no answer on refusal to detect nuclear microparticles via CR-39 (TASTRAK) process; c) omission of bio-toxicity tests (OSPAR/IMO procedure)
2. NRW decision (12 Oct.) that EIA is required was on the basis that the company withdrew the screening application. Our lawyers detailed that the Marine Works EIA legislation does not allow withdrawal, but does require NRW to make a reasoned decision. NRW was unable to answer why they did not follow the EIA Regs.
3. NRW write *the scope of the EIA is restricted to the requirements of the Marine Works (EIA) Regulations (2017)*. While EDF has not sought a Scoping Opinion, that does not remove the need to face issues of deciding which issues are in scope (by Schedule 2)
4. NRW do not suggest that any of the 11 issues in our 21 October briefing (Annex on Scope of the EIA) are not in-scope. We ask the Petitions Committee to ask NRW to scrutinise EDF's submission to ensure it cover these 11 issues and others, in deciding if the necessary EIA information is included. They should consult the EIA consultation bodies on this insofar as they lack in-house expertise (CEFAS to be excluded due to conflicting interest).

**The EIA Regulations specify very wide scope (Marine Works EIA 2017 Schedule 2)**

In the 2020 sampling consultation, NRW declared various issues “out of scope” when that was wrong or at least contestable. The Committee should ask for an open and transparent process for deciding arguments on scope within the EIA Regs.

The EIA requirements are very widely drawn. We find NRW interpreted them only narrowly for the *screening* application. Our lawyers found this by FoI requests; NRW's response just “noted” their criticisms of the inadequacies, saying the application was withdrawn. That was no reason for their accepting too narrow a screening application. The *screening request* had to describe the nuclear power station 'project' - it didn't – nor did it describe the particular purpose of installing a cooling water system for extracting seawater (which kills much of the marine life) and returning contaminated water to the Marine Protection Area (MPA). The EIA screening application covered only the dumping scheme itself.

The two responses to NRW from Cardiff and from the VoG Councils on the screening request raised the basic planning-law issue, that EDF's proposal is an amendment to the 2012/13 nuclear power station planning consent. They suggested this defines the 'project'

to which the EIA screening and scoping regulations apply, implying EDF's screening application was inadequate. While MLT's case officer had accepted it, NRW were unable to supply our lawyers LeighDay with a "completeness check" record. NRW replied their Marine Advisory Service provides the advice to ensure compliance on scope. The Advisory Service reply (appended Memo, [REDACTED] to MLT, 17 Sept 2020) did not mention the issue.

### **EDF's parallel application to the MMO**

As EDF submitted an EIA for dumping at the Portishead dump-site a month ago. This covers only the dumping scheme for that site, so we expect they will submit a similarly narrow-scope application for Cardiff. It talks only of the dumping 'scheme' and fails to describe the nuclear power station 'project'. The Committee should emphasise to NRW that to be acceptable for the EIA Regs, the application has to describe the nuclear power station 'project' with its cooling water system and alternatives to it that avoid the fish-kill and harm to the MPA (designated in 2018 by the Welsh and English governments), giving environmental reasons for the choice.

### **Screening assessment of NRW Marine Advisory Service** (appended 17 Sept Memo)

This document had to be obtained via FoI, after NRW refused it on the grounds that EDF's screening application was withdrawn. The Memo questions particular assertions of EDF and details several areas requiring specific information to assess possible impacts. One issue is the claim that the Cardiff site is 'dispersive', in view of the mounds of sediment visible on the seabed in April 2019, months after being dumped (Titan survey). The Marine Licensing Team (MLT) and CEFAS previously insisted the site is dispersive, with the MLT approving CEFAS's 2020 amended version of the Titan Environmental report to include a 'residual survey offset' that made the total amount remaining on the seabed appear very small. The Memo did not accept that, seeing that the mounds were quite prominent and grab samples showed some to be a different 'sediment matrix'.

The *Marine Advisory Service* report shows firmly on several grounds that EIA is needed. It implies there should have been EIA in 2017 when NRW and the Minister misled the Petitions Committee and Senedd in saying EIA was not needed.

### **Expanded number of issues in-scope**

On the above arguments, we urge the Petitions Cttee to reject NRW's implication that the EIA Regs are "restrictive" of the scope. We are able to argue that all of the 11 issues we proposed in October (see Annex) can be justified as "in scope".

We have found further evidence that expands the scope:

- a) In 2012 the EA suggested dumping outside the SAC/MPA in the *Holm Deep*. EDF need to disclose why they rejected this in favour of Cardiff.
- b) In 2010 the EA published Cooling Water Options for the New Generation of Nuclear Power Stations in the UK SC070015/SR3). This advised land-based cooling systems for nuclear

- plants where the adjacent sea is sensitive for conservation, fish hatching/breeding or at-risk species (EPS, eels, etc.). EDF need to disclose how they considered this.
- c) Most of the dumped mud does not disperse to sea, but deposits on existing mud or blows onto land; EDF must address this rather than claim standards applying to dumping at sea.
  - d) The Cdf dump-site has never been reviewed re. the Habitats and EIA legislation so the fate of the dumped mud, its dispersal around the estuary and transfer of pollutants (nuclides and chemicals) to land and foodstuffs as well as marine life has to be fully described.
  - e) Wales National Marine Plan, section on dredging and dumping, does not including capital dredging for non-port facilities; EDF must supply evidence that their dumping is covered.
  - f) Welsh waste policy (Towards Zero Waste) virtually excludes dumping waste from English projects in Wales; what exceptional reasons do EDF give?

### **Further evidence on Nuclear Discharges**

Prof Keith Barnham of Imperial College has written a memo for the Petitions Committee on suspicions that emitted nuclear fuel microparticles are buried in the sediments. The plutonium-containing microparticles (PMPs) were produced and discharged from Hinkley-A. He shows errors in NRW's dismissal of such 'hot' fuel particles. The memo points out there were accidents with unloading magnox fuel elements in 1968 and 1969, which would have released many fragments into the cooling pond; "*extensive surface corrosion of the uranium itself*" was reported due to accidental acid spill. Prof Barnham then shows data of the strong excess of alpha emissions compared with gamma-emissions in the discharges. The records he reports (graph in the memo) show an alpha excess in 1978 and a bigger one in 1982 and '83.

NRW wrote that "*would have been detected by gamma spectrometry in the first instance*"; they are wrong as the alpha-emitting isotope is dominant in Hinkley-A fuel, while the commonly dominant Pu-241 inferred from Am-241 emissions is only 3% (not the normal 90%). NRW write too that "*no hot particles have been identified in the previous... sediment samples*", yet they were tested only for gamma emission and the PMPs have very little. Also CR-39 detectors (next section) have to be used to detect concentrated micron-sized emitters, which spectrometry misses. The strong alpha excess in 1982-3 indicates that not just liquid but unusual amounts of sludge were discharged from the cooling pond at that time. PMPs are largely very dense metal which normally stays within the pond; they drop into the sediments not far from the discharge point, depending on the tidal conditions. Prof. Barnham in his memo has formulated 4 questions that we'd like NRW to address.

EDF try to confuse the public and avoid the issue of PMPs by talking of 'alpha particles'. These atomic particles are far, far smaller – 10 trillion times less massive than a plutonium micro-particle PMP. This huge factor explains why a single PMP can be detected via an exposure time of days or weeks (gamma exposures are limited to 1-3 days due to cost).

The huge factor also explains why a single PMP is dangerous to health if inside a human organ.

### **Testing for alpha emitters from 'hot' fuel particles**

*Children with Cancer UK (CwC)* pointed out NRW had been misled by CEFAS in dismissing the CR-39 tests for alpha emissions. We append their letter to NRW (CwCUK toMLT 17Jun'20)

In appendices to their letter, CwC supplied the scientific evidence that CR-39 detectors are well-used and practical - TASL (Track Analysis Systems Ltd, Bristol). Alpha radiation makes tracks a few tens of micrometres into TASTRAK (name for their propriety material). It provides a cheap method to detect microfragments of fuel containing Pu, U etc. from a multiplicity of tracks concentrated around a point focus (Picture below).

These are the big danger to humans if they get into the body via inhalation or food. Alpha spectroscopy was likely to miss them since the range of alphas in matter is under 0.01mm. NRW did not disclose in writing why they rejected the CwC information:

- a) The MLT asked CEFAS as EDF contracted agents to consider including CR-39 detection.
- b) Apparently CEFAS refused and the MLT caved in, letting them continue with their alpha spectroscopy that was likely
- c) NRW declined to retain sediment samples for further testing via CR39 etc. (saying they trusted CEFAS, notwithstanding their acting as EDF contractors)
- d) CRIIRAD are comparable professionals and criticised CEFAS's previous gamma spectroscopy; the MLT could commission them to audit the CEFAS result as NRW's advisors on this topic are CEFAS
- e) NRW must now be prepared to commission CR-39 testing. Bristol University's Prof. Denis Henshaw has informed us he could take this on. His unit uses TASTRAK for the UK's radon programme and he is a world expert in the field.

Would the Petitions Cttee therefore tell NRW that the scope of tests for alpha-radioactive particles is too narrow, that they need to include CR-39 testing, and suggest they contract with Prof Henshaw to investigate portions of the core samples extracted by EDF?

----- 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021



Figure: Microscopic round and oval pits in the surface of a plastic sheet of CR-39 (TASTRAK) burned by alpha rays from a micron-sized PMP some 10 micron above the sheet. Background counts are show by

## Geiger Bay campaign: Annex on Scope of the Hinkley EIA in briefing for the Senedd Debate 21 October 2020

EDF have conceded to pressure for an EIA, but perhaps not asked for advice on what it should cover – that is a formal “scoping opinion” [1]. Remember that Geiger Bay went to the High Court in Sept 2018 as EDF claimed to have carried out an EIA of the dumping operations. We showed they had not, and they had to concede in Court.

At this stage the ‘scope’ of the EIA is all important. Let the Senedd have a say - the Petitions Committee should collect views and evidence, including on the aspects outlined in the Petition. When the EIA results come through, Senedd can help to secure independent expert reviews of its many facets.

1. The London (anti-dumping) Convention implemented in UK law forbids sea dumping unless strict and detailed assessments have been carried out. The IMO (*international Maritime Organisation*) issues updates - the latest Dredged Material Assessment Guidelines in 2014 tightens pressure to avoid sea dumping where possible. The EIA must therefore address all the issues in that guidance and in particular detail the alternative re-use or disposal routes.

2. Welsh policy in the *Public Health Wales Act* prescribes participative *Health Impact Assessment* for major projects of high public concern. NRW says it’s ‘best practice’ in developing projects [2]. NRW should have foreseen the need for HIA from the high public concern experienced in 2018. It normally forms part of a planning EIA for addressing impacts on humans, so should be in the scope this time.

3. Baseline data on the Severn Estuary: the current Environmental Management Scheme (EMS) is very incomplete. NRW say several designated features, including the fish assemblage, are in an *unfavourable state*. This needs detailing before dumping any more Hinkley mud, as this is quite different from port dredgings. Knowledge on the fate of dumped sediments – where they land up on mudbanks and saltmarsh including in river estuaries - is essential for dumping in any Special Area of Conservation and particularly one containing European Protected Species. The EIA needs baseline data on artificial nuclide levels in the south Wales coastal environment, focussing on ones likely to be released. Tests in Somerset’s tidal river Parrett revealed nuclides far up-river, but none have been done in the Welsh Rhymney, Wye and Usk.

4. Microparticles of plutonium etc. as predicted from the Hinkley nuclear discharges: radon-type detectors (tracks in CR39 plastic) are best to detect alpha-emitters in micro-particles, which are the most dangerous when inhaled into the human body. EDF’s consultants CEFAS refused it and NRW omitted it from the testing spec. The EIA should provide information from the alternative testing methods, try them out on the samples, and compare results. EDF should share portions of their samples for independent testing; as was done by the Environment Agency with samples from the river Parrett, where the independent CRIIRAD testing proved superior to CEFAS’s tests for EDF.

5. Assessment of several alpha and beta emitting radio-nuclides ignored by EDF and NRW (Sr-90, Tc-99, S-35, C-14, H-3) was recommended by the independent CRIIRAD (report 18-32, May 2018, *Radiological analysis... close to the Hinkley Point power stations*) which found radio-toxic americium (Am-241) from nuclear discharges. These alpha and beta emitters are relevant because they and not the gamma emitters are relevant for assessing harm to wildlife and humans from ingestion. Only Am-241 and H-3 of CRIIRAD’s list are in NRW’s testing advice, while EIA’s have to be comprehensive.

6. modelling of potential impacts on the human population, to beach users, seafood eaters and others inhaling microspray and mud particles contaminated by Hinkley nuclides. A model was developed for Cumbria by AEA Harwell, which can be adapted with local data and a local habits survey for the South Wales coast population. It includes nuclide transfer to land, such as Hinkley microparticles carried ashore by winds. This model requires collecting much local baseline data.

7. Processes that bioconcentrate and magnify nuclear and chemical pollutants in the Estuary waters and the food chain need assessing under IMO dredged material guidelines (2014). Several chemical pollutants in the Hinkley mud exceed UK Action Level-1. The IMO in this case requires 'detailed assessment', where testing of the bio-mechanisms and biosensitivity takes months and gives uncertain results. An EIA has to use the best available science and describe uncertainties. The alternative of managing chemical and nuclide-contaminated wastes on land is normally preferred and must be assessed too.

8. Dredged material intended for disposal is subject to waste management law. The proximity and self-sufficiency principles in Wales's Waste Strategy (*Towards Zero Waste 2010*) say options for managing Hinkley wastes in England must be covered - dumping or reuse options (eg. in bunds on the power station site) and any reasons given against be critically assessed in the EIA (cf. 'geographical circumstances' of TZW).

9. The OSPAR treaty requires us to return nuclides in the sea to historical levels (pre-nuclear power) by the 2020s and artificial nuclides to near zero. Uranium emissions last century with plutonium discharges from Hinkley continuing till 2014 gave fall-out and drop-out over Bridgwater Bay. The potential breach of OSPAR through releasing plutonium etc. buried in the mud, needs addressing in the EIA.

10. The EIA has to describe the central purpose of the project, to construct a system for extracting cooling water from the estuary, returning it 10°C warmer, and the consequential effects. These include mass fish-kill, the discharge of dead and maimed fish into the Severn Estuary, discharged biocide chemicals used to clear Hinkley pipework, and killing or harming any individuals of European protected species (EPS) of fish, as well as the critically-endangered European eel. If any EPS would be harmed, the EIA has to show there is no practicable alternative [3].

11. The EIA has to face the possibility that the Environment Agency might cancel the 2013 licence for water abstraction, because (as the EA say re. the recently announced public inquiry[4]) it's not compatible with the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regs. Also face the possibility that NRW will reject the dumping application. The EIA should therefore describe what alternative cooling systems they could fall back on (as in countries which ban the use of seawater that's poorer in ecology than Bridgwater Bay).

----- Cardiff 16 October 2020

[1] The Minister writes (12 Oct.) that scoping discussions are underway, but this would contravene the EIA rules on the scoping process. She also wrote that scoping is *a technical and regulatory matter for NRW*, which is at best misleading as NRW has to consult quite widely.

[2] *HIA should be considered as best practice in the development of all programmes and projects.*

<https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/area-statements/natural-resources-wales-approach-to-impact-assessments-of-area-statements>

[3] The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

[4] <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/psc/ta5-1ud-nnb-generation-company-hpc-limited-2>

To: [REDACTED] – Marine Licensing Team  
From: [REDACTED] – Senior Advisor, Marine Area Management and Advice Team  
Date: 17 September 2020

## **Marine Licence consultation: REQUEST FOR SCREENING OPINION Hinkley Point C Disposal Licence**

**Reference number: SC2005**

**Applicant: Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Ltd, on behalf of NNB  
Generation Company**

**Response to email from [REDACTED] dated 21 August 2020**

### **Summary**

NRW Marine Licence Team has received a request for a screening opinion to ascertain whether the above proposal, will require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the submission of an Environmental Statement (ES), to support an application for a Marine Licence for the disposal of sediment comprising dredged arisings from capital and maintenance dredging associated with offshore marine infrastructure preparation and construction at Hinkley Point C, to Cardiff Grounds Disposal Site.

A previously granted Marine Licence (12/45/MLv1) for disposal of such material to the Disposal Site was valid from 22 March 2018 to 04 March 2019. With this licence having expired, the Applicant intends to submit a new licence application for use of the Disposal Site and extend the scope of the licence, to cover the disposal of a greater volume of dredged sediment.

### **Documents Submitted**

Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Ltd (May 2020) EIA screening report



## NRW Advisors Consultation Record

| NRW Advisor | Role/Team  | Comments                         |
|-------------|--|----------------------------------|
| ██████████  | Marine Specialist Advisor (All Wales Marine Advice Team) | Coastal Physical Processes       |
| ██████████  | Marine Specialist Advisor (All Wales Marine Advice Team) | Marine Water & Sediment Quality  |
| ██████████  | Marine Specialist Advisor (All Wales Marine Advice Team) | WFD                              |
| ██████████  | Marine Specialist Advisor (All Wales Marine Advice Team) | Benthic Ecology                  |
| ██████████  | Marine Specialist Advisor (All Wales Marine Advice Team) | Marine & Diadromous Fish Species |

## NRW Advisory Comments:

NRW Advisory have considered the information provided in the EIA screening report.

It is the view of NRW Advisory that the proposal should be subject to EIA given the sensitivity of the location and the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects. As we are still awaiting the results from the 2020 sediment surveys, we do not believe that at this stage we can agree with the proposed outcomes of “*no likely significant effect*” which is stated for all parameters considered in the EIA screening report provided by the Applicant.

It is also the view of NRW Advisory that, on the basis of the information provided, we cannot conclude that the proposal will have no likely significant effect, either alone or in combination with any other plans or projects, with respect to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. We therefore recommend that an Appropriate Assessment is undertaken.

Further reasoning and justification is provided in the comments below:

### Physical Processes

From a marine physical process perspective, we believe an EIA is required to ensure no significant environmental effects. Justification is provided in the comments below.

### 2. Site Description and Proposed Scheme

Under section 2.1.2. the Applicant states that the 10 years maximum annual input to Cardiff Grounds has been 786,826m<sup>3</sup>. The Applicant is proposing to add an additional 600,000m<sup>3</sup> of sediment, which is almost double the site’s annual deposition, therefore the extra pressure to the disposal site will need assessing.

Whilst NRW agree that the site is acting as a dispersive disposal ground, the current sediment that is disposed here constitutes recently accumulated fines from ports and harbour entrances and therefore very different to what is being proposed in section 2.3.4. which is a mix of clay, silt, sand and gravel.

In section 2.3.1., the proponent states that they previously had a licence for 300,000m<sup>3</sup>; however, NRW Advisory believe this to be misleading as the final monitoring report (Cefas Report TR492) under licence 1245MLv1, states that a smaller proportion was disposed, 57,958m<sup>3</sup>. On the returned monitoring although we agreed, as stated previously, that the site was acting as a dispersive site, in the difference bathymetric plots; 'individual disposal events can be used to clearly identify changes in bed elevation (i.e., erosion or accretion) associated with "real" events and those attributed primarily to the offset. For example, Figure 6 (2D) and Figure 7 (3D) illustrate a series of four discrete disposal events along a transect ("Transect 01"), with each disposal identified as two parallel lines of deposited material (i.e., accretion), consistent with material being released through the hopper doors of a dredging vessel.' The dredge release was therefore still very much apparent at the time of monitoring and had not dispersed. As the nature of the site overall had not changed and was still dispersing, concerns were not raised, however with the new application we would advise this is assessed within the EIA process.

In section 2.3.4. there is an indication that the sediment that will enter the disposal site will be a matrix of clay, silt, sand and gravel. Although the receiving site may be of this composition, the dispersive nature and behaviour may be changed and will unlikely be able to move large aggregated clumps of clay or the gravel fraction and therefore this could be a permanent addition. We relate to the above point in which mounds were evidently recorded through previous monitoring. No indication has been presented of the amounts of each sediment type likely to be deposited.

In section 2.3.7. it is stated likely that post-disposal bathymetric surveys and grab sample analyses of the disposal site will be conducted; further information would need to be presented here under EIA for consideration.

### 3. EIA Screening Assessment

In section 3.3.16, the Applicant suggests any benthic communities will have readily adapted to disposal material at the site, however the sediment that is being proposed to be deposited will be a different nature to that primarily disposed of in the past and therefore we disagree with the assessment of 'unlikely to be significant'.

In 3.3.17 it is proposed that an effect on the benthic fauna is 'unlikely to be significant', however no assessment of fractions of the sediment matrix is included, to understand how the sediment will behave.

Paragraph 3.3.30 embodies the two main concerns from a physical perspective, firstly the amount the Applicant wants to dispose of is almost double that which is already going into the site on an annual basis. The sediment that has proved the site to be dispersive is of a different nature to that the Applicant wishes to dispose of, and no quantitative assessment has been presented on what the sediment composition is and how it will behave. We are therefore unable to agree that any effect is 'unlikely to be significant'.

### Cumulative Effects

The cumulative section of the EIA screening currently fails to acknowledge the different nature of the sediment to be deposited and the fact that all licences could dispose concurrently, no assessment is made at present. There is also no sediment deposition plan provided. In a previous licence, we believe the Applicant agreed to 'spread out the deposits over the entire grounds'. However, in the recent bathymetric reporting, if the

artefacts that have been captured are from NNB GenCo previous deposits, this shows a large proportion of sediment deposited in the southern section.

### **Marine Water Quality**

From a marine water quality perspective, we believe an EIA is required. Justification is provided in the comments below.

The comments provided herein relate to the marine water quality specialism, where we are typically interested in suspended sediment (typically of fines for long time periods), nutrients, oxygen, bacterial concentrations, temperature and salinity, and contaminants such as heavy metals and other substances.

Under biodiversity (pg 15), we agree that likely significant effects could include contaminated sediment and suspended sediment (via change to sediment regime). However, we note that the risk of spills has not been included here although is included elsewhere in the screening report. The impact of spills on biodiversity should be considered.

With reference to the Coastal Management (pg 17) and Cumulative Effects (pg 26-27) sections, we note that volumes of sediment to be released via combined licences are over twice as much as the historic average and Hinkley C alone would produce nearly as much as the historic average. Even though the current licensed amount is > 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> (3.3.83), we do not believe that necessarily means that much has been deposited. Furthermore, the total of all combined licences for 2021 (3.3.82) would total > 1,600,000 m<sup>3</sup> and we do not believe there is evidence to say this will not have an impact on water quality. While it is temporary (3.3.84) on geological timescales, there has been no assessment of what the impacts would be over the year when all discharges will be in operation. Furthermore, we have not been provided sufficient evidence to say all discharges will not occur at the same time. Therefore, we disagree that an assessment under EIA is not needed.

While potential for spills has been included in the document, there is no assessment of its significance with either the Marine Geology and Contamination section (pg 18) or the Major Accidents and Disasters section (pg 20-21). We note that the documentation states that regulations and codes will be followed, but there is no specific mention of a management plan to be drawn up for this specific piece of work. We recommend that a contingency plan be drawn up for potential spills. While HRA does not allow mitigation to be included at screening stage, EIA does and so if the Applicant can evidence mitigation, it can be screened out of the EIA.

In terms of contaminated sediment, we are led to read reference 19, the Hinkley C ES which was completed in 2011. Contaminant concentrations have been averaged over the whole depth of the core (18.5.43 of the ES). We are concerned that we are not able to examine the depth profile of the sediment where it may be expected that surface samples will be more contaminated. Depending on how dredging is carried out, it is possible to suppose that contaminated sediment could all be discharged at one time and deeper, non-contaminated sediments at a later date. We do not, therefore, believe it appropriate to depth-average the contaminant results. Furthermore, there were PAH exceedances of CEFAS action level (AL) 1 and the Canadian TEL (Threshold Effects Level) and PEL (Probable Effects Level), plus exceedances of PCBs above CEFAS AL 2; very little

information is provided on metals. We would advise the Applicant to provide the raw data in order for us to make an assessment and compare to the CEFAS action levels. In this case, as we do not have sight of the full dataset, we would advise that we do not agree with the conclusion that there will not be significant impacts. However, as we are expecting results of a 2020 survey (3.3.18 pg 15) to be submitted a further, up-to-date assessment can be made then.

### **Water Framework Directive**

NRW Advisory believe it pertinent to take this opportunity to advise the Applicant that the disposal site they propose to use lies within the Severn Lower WFD water body and as such, the project will need to consider any potential effects on the WFD status and objectives of this and any other hydrologically connected water bodies where there is a pathway for effect.

### **Benthic Ecology**

Based on the information presented it has not been possible to rule out adverse effect on habitat features of conservation importance (SAC, Section 7 Environment Act) in relation to the current proposal. Therefore, we advise a full EIA should be undertaken.

### 2. Site Description and Proposed Scheme

Section 2.1.3 – As well as being Annex 1 SAC biogenic reef feature (EC Habitats Directive 1992), the Honeycomb worm reef (*Sabellaria alveolata* reef) is also recognised under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 as a habitat of principal importance to Wales. This habitat feature has previously been identified at the Cardiff Grounds disposal site.

### The Proposed Scheme

Section 2.3.4. - The predicted volumes of sediment disposal totalling a maximum of 600,000m<sup>3</sup> are significantly greater than those previously licenced for the site, taking the total well over previous maximum annual permitted volumes. Therefore a full assessment of all potential environment impacts on habitats of conservation importance, including biogenic reef - *Sabellaria alveolata* should be undertaken.

The significant proportion of capital dredge material – up to 380,000 m<sup>3</sup> could potentially lead to a significantly higher proportion of larger fraction material being deposited on the site which may affect the potential fate and dispersive nature of these sediments. Further assessment is needed to avoid negatively impacting (through smothering) the habitat features present. The relatively shallow nature of the disposal site also compounds active dispersal (depending on a number of factors i.e. sediment fraction, tidal flows, dredge vessel behaviour etc....) all of which need to be assessed in more detail.

Section 2.3.5 - The deposition of material described in this section may cause a detrimental effect (through smothering) of the biogenic *Sabellaria alveolata* reef feature present at this location. No information has been presented to demonstrate how impacts will be avoided.

### 3.3 EIA Screening Assessment

#### Biodiversity

Section 3.3.15 - *Deposition of material directly onto the seabed will inevitably have the effect of smothering any habitats present, as well as any species present in the area. However, it is noted that the receiving environment is a site which has already been*

*approved for the disposal of dredged material from a number of projects; therefore, any communities present will have developed a tolerance to frequent activity and changes in the seabed present. This, combined with the generally impoverished nature of seabed communities, means that effects are unlikely to be significant.* – We consider that due to the proposed increase in sediment volumes (above anything previously licenced), likelihood of increased sediment fractions and uncertainty regarding the dispersive potential of any material deposited – adverse effects on site features cannot be ruled out.

Therefore, we are unable to agree with the Applicant's assessment of '*effects are unlikely to be significant*', and request that a full EIA be undertaken to fully understand the potential impacts on benthic ecology and habitat features of conservation importance.

We also note that no assessment of the potential impacts related to the spread of marine invasive non-native species has been undertaken. This should be incorporated into the EIA.

### Cumulative Effects



Section 3.3.79 - The Applicant has failed to identify the cumulative effect of other users disposing at the Cardiff Grounds disposal site which would potentially result in total annual volumes well over previous amounts. This, as well as the variation and uncertainty over the type of sediment (sediment fractions) to be deposited, related to the predominantly 'capital' nature of dredging activities, means that any cumulative effects have been poorly assessed. Further assessment is therefore required.

### **Marine & Diadromous Fish Species**

If there will be changes to the habitats within the Severn Estuary from the disposal of the sediment, then this has the potential to result in significant effects upon designated fish species of the Severn Estuary, and upstream SACs, that use the habitats as foraging, nursery or spawning grounds.

We are also awaiting the results of the 2020 sediment testing. If there are issues with contamination of the sediment to be disposed of and this cannot be mitigated by other actions (i.e. avoiding dredging particular areas or disposing the sediment by other means), then disposal of the sediment has the potential to result in significant effects upon designated fish species of the Severn Estuary, and upstream SACs.

Both of these impact pathways will need to be assessed as part of the HRA, conducted for the activity due to its location and presence of impact pathways to features of the Severn Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar site and upstream SACs. These impact pathways could also be considered to be likely significant effects under the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007 (as amended) for which an EIA should be conducted.

  
  
Senior Marine Advisor  
Marine Area Advice and Management Team



We feel it essential to include alpha-emitters as part of your monitoring exercise. In this regard, CR-39 Track Etch plastic detectors offer specific information as follows:

- Activity, size and shape of “Hot” alpha-radioactive particles in an unconcentrated sample.
- Detectors can be exposed in air, in the ground or in water *in situ* or in samples taken to the laboratory.
- Ability to separate natural background from anthropogenic/discharge sources.
- Ability to detect very low levels/fluxes of such particles.
- Automated image analysis can allow initial scanning of large areas of the plastic detector, prior to more detailed analysis of candidate “hot” particles.
- Relatively inexpensive when seen alongside radiochemical assay.
- Ability to demonstrate the specific absence of or limits to the presence of discharge sources. This would be re-assuring to all concerned.

I will illustrate the above with reference to the following attached papers.

1. Barnham KWJ, Hart D, Nelson J, Stevens RA. 1985. Production and destination of British civil plutonium. *Nature* 317:213–217 – as described above.

2. Fews AP, Henshaw DL. 1982 High resolution alpha-particle spectroscopy using CR-39 plastic track detector. *Nuclear Instruments & Methods*, **197**:517-529. – see **limiting 20 keV resolution in fig 14**.

This paper illustrates the alpha-particle energy resolution that can be obtained.

3. Fews AP, Henshaw DL. 1982. Analysis of uranium fragments found in the human lung. In: *Solid State Nuclear Track Detectors* pages 717–720 (Eds P H Fowler and V M Clapham) Pergamon Press, (1982) – see **figs 1, 2 and 3**.

Note that these naturally occurring uranium- and thorium-bearing minerals were found at autopsy retained in the lung airways. Note from figure 3, the unique signature compared with discharge particles.

4. Henshaw DL, Allen JE, Keitch PA, Close JJ. 1997. Elevated levels of  $^{210}\text{Po}$  in human fetal tissues from mothers living near the Severn Estuary. 12th Symposium on Microdosimetry, Oxford, 29th September - 4th October 1996. In: *Microdosimetry an Interdisciplinary Approach*, (Eds D T Goodhead, P O'Neill and H G Menzel), Royal Society of Chemistry, ISBN 0-85404-737-9, (1997).

I do not have a hard copy of this paper to hand, but as part of an autopsy investigation into still-birth's, we found an association between levels of naturally-occurring Pb-210 supported Po-210 in the fetal skeleton and proximity of mother's residence to the Severn Estuary. This is indicative of natural pollution being made airborne in the turbulent estuary and being carried over Avonmouth and Bristol in the prevailing south-westerly wind.

5. Henshaw DL, Allen JE, Keitch PA, Randle PH, 1994, The spatial distribution of naturally occurring  $^{210}\text{Po}$  and  $^{226}\text{Ra}$  in children's teeth. International Journal of Radiation Biology, **66**:815-826 – see all figures, especially fig 3.

This is an example of a micro-distribution of alpha-activity in the body, in this case in the teeth of children.

6. Henshaw DL, Keitch PA, James PR. 1995. Lead-210, polonium-210 and vehicle exhaust pollution. The Lancet, **345**, 324-325 – see table.

This papers illustrates some features of retention of alpha-emitters in children's teeth in relation to air pollution sources.

7. Zorri V, Remetti R, Capogni M, Cotellessa G, Falcone R. 2017. Feasibility study on the application of solid state tracks detectors for fast surveys of residual alpha contamination in decommissioning activities. Radiation Measurements **107**:111–114. – see figs 3 & 4.

Figures 3 & 4 show specific examples of alpha-particle clusters from plutonium hot particles.

8. Bondarenko OA, Salmon PL, Henshaw DL, Ross AN. 1995. Alpha-particle spectroscopy with TASTRAK (CR-39 type) plastic, and its application to the measurement of hot particles. Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research, **A369**:582-587. – see figs 1 & 2.

Figures 1 & 2 show examples of an automated analysis procedure for hot particles in CR-39.

9. Bondarenko OA, Korneev AA, Onishchuk YN, Berezhnoy AV, Aryasov PB, Antonyuk D, Dmitrienko AV. 1999. Application of SSNTD for maintenance of radiation and nuclear safety of the Sarcophagus. Radiation Measurements **30**:709–714. – see fig 5 and sect 4.

Fig 5 is an example of size and activity hot particle determination with respect to the situation at the Chernobyl Sarcophagus.

10. Calderón-Garcidueñas et al 2008. Long-term Air Pollution Exposure Is Associated with Neuroinflammation, an Altered Innate Immune Response, Disruption of the Blood-Brain Barrier, Ultrafine Particulate Deposition, and Accumulation of Amyloid  $\beta$ -42 and  $\alpha$ -Synuclein in Children and Young Adults. Toxicologic Pathology, **36**:289-310 – see figs 4 & 5.

This paper is included in response to your comment above: “*It is the chemical form of a radioactive material that dictates how it is metabolised by the body*”. This is correct but please bear in mind that there are many examples [as in 3 above] of the retention of insoluble particles in the body,. Figs 4 & 5 in Calderón-Garcidueñas et al 2008 provide examples of ultrafine air pollution particles mapped in the brain of children and young adults at autopsy.



**2020 Hinkley Dredging Consultation  
NRW SP1914**



I am retired now, but it would be possible to train others to use this technology, possibly at Bristol University.

May I please ask you and your advisors to consider what I have said here so that we can open a dialogue of how best to proceed? Children with Cancer UK could consider a pilot study in the Severn Estuary which we could start immediately to test the feasibility of our proposals.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards

[Redacted]

Signed

[Redacted]

Professor [Redacted], B.Sc., Ph.D, Fellow Collegium Ramazzini  
CwC UK Honorary Scientific Director and Emeritus Professor of Human Radiation Effects  
University of Bristol. 17/06/2020

Countersigned for the charity:

[Redacted]

Signed

[Redacted], CwC UK Trustee 17/06/2020

Further affiliation of Professor [Redacted]:

Emeritus Professor of Human Radiation Effects  
Atmospheric Chemistry Group  
School of Chemistry  
University of Bristol  
Cantocks Close,  
Bristol, BS8 1TS

**Short CV.**

My early training and research was in Nuclear, Particle and Astrophysics, but later changed direction. I am now Emeritus Research Professor in Human Radiation Effects at Bristol University, with over 40 years' experience, 24 years with Medical Research Council (MRC) grant support. I have over 260 scientific publications, including expert evidence to the MoD, the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE), the Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation (AGNIR) and other committees in the UK and abroad. I was for 10 years Associate Editor of the International Journal of Radiation Biology, IJRB.

**Encl.**

Nine attachments accompany this letter sent by email: papers 1–3 and 5–10 [there is no attachment 4 – paper not available]

# Agenda Item 3.6

## **P-05-1010 An independent inquiry into the 2020 flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf so that lessons are learned**

This petition was submitted by Heledd Fychan having collected 274 signatures on paper and 5,743 online, a total of 6,017 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

We, the undersigned, urge the Welsh Government to initiate a full, independent, open and public inquiry into the 2020 flooding of homes and businesses across Rhondda Cynon Taf, and that appropriate steps are taken to rectify any issues so that similar damage can be prevented from reoccurring.

### **Additional Information**

People and businesses across Rhondda Cynon Taf need an inquiry into the flooding that has hit so many of our communities this year, with some affected three times since February. It is time for the voices and experiences of the people and businesses of Pontypridd, Treforest, Taff's Well, Trehafod, Cilfynydd, Rhydyfelin, Nantgarw, Hawthorn, Hirwaun, Abercwmboi, Mountain Ash, Pentre, Treorchy, Treherbert, Maerdy, Porth and others to be heard, so that lessons are learned for the future.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS  
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1010  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00150/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair of the Petitions Committee

19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 25 January, regarding an independent inquiry into the 2020 floods in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The flooding we witnessed across Wales in 2020 and more recently last month, was distressing to all those affected. We saw the wettest February on record last year. Whilst the number of properties affected and the damage and losses caused is devastating, this would have been a lot worse without the network of flood defences which operated successfully to prevent or reduce further flooding. Data from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) show that over 9,000 homes were protected from flooding on the River Taff alone last February. Across Wales, that figure rises to around 73,000 with many more benefitting from smaller defences managed by the Local Authorities.

Following the devastating flooding in February we acted swiftly to work with Risk Management Authorities (RMA) to provide emergency funding at 100% of the cost of the work to make immediate repairs to damaged flood assets. As a Government we also provided funding to flooded households to help with recovery costs.

As you heard in the recent debates around an independent inquiry in December, and again last month, I do not feel this is necessary given the ongoing work of the Local Authority to investigate the flooding alongside the review carried out by NRW. However, I do wish to respond to the questions asked by the petitioner and set out in the conclusion of the letter from the Petitions Committee.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Back Page 228**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- 1) Will the reports provide adequate answers so as to prevent flooding of this scale from occurring again?

Despite our ongoing investment, we cannot stop all flooding from occurring. Through our interventions, we can help to reduce this risk, but not remove it completely. Residents should make sure they are prepared and have adequate insurance. The Section 19 reports set out the powers and responsibilities of our RMAs (NRW, Local Authorities and water companies), to address the flooding. Under Section 13 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, RMA's must co-operate with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions. The Section 19 reports should be written collaboratively, especially where there is more than one source identified. However, no report on its own fixes flooding, and neither can a defence remove all risk. It is about managing that risk effectively and making appropriate improvements which the appropriate RMA(s) should undertake, with support from WG.

- 2) Will the reports provide adequate answers to inform a whole Wales plan and approach to flood prevention?

Whilst the Section 19 reports provide useful information to the impacted Local Authority and relevant agencies, our national approach to managing risk is set out in the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management which I published last October.

- 3) Will the reports provide an insight into the impact the floods have had on both the physical and mental health of those affected?

Section 19 reports can set out recommendations for future improvements which, where appropriate to the local area and community, could include physical and mental health support to those impacted. This is not set out as a requirement in legislation of the Section 19 reports, however we do approach this in our National Strategy. The link between flood risk and mental health is well established. Providing services that raise awareness of flood risk, providing flood warnings, and information on what to do before, during and after a flood are key to the delivery of the FCERM objective of 'preparedness and building resilience' and helps reduce anxiety associated with flooding. NRW and Local Authorities can utilise revenue funding to carry out community awareness raising work to help residents at risk of flooding to understand that risk and plan for it.

- 4) Will the reports give confidence to businesses based in the areas affected that every possible measure that could reduce the risk of future flooding has been taken by all stakeholders and agencies or will businesses relocate because of the uncertainty?

Businesses need to make their own decisions regarding relocation based on the risks they face and whether this risk can be accepted or not.

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[Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Those decisions can be informed by the information available in our flood maps and the actions of the RMA(s) managing that risk.

In December I announced an additional £95,000 revenue funding for each of our Local Authorities which can be used to complete their Section 19 reports, this comes on top of record levels of revenue funding for Local Authorities this year and 100% funding support for flood risk management assets damaged in storm events.

Yours sincerely,



**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**P-05-1010 An independent inquiry into the 2020 flooding in Rhondda Cynon Taf so that lessons are learned, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 08.03.21**

8 March 2021

Dear Chair,

Many thanks for affording me the opportunity to respond once again on the Petition calling for an Independent Inquiry into the Floods in RCT in 2020.

I am disappointed, but not surprised by the responses received, especially the Ministerial response. Having seen Pontypridd come close to flood once again last month, and witnessed the distress of those previously affected, I am more convinced than ever that an Independent Inquiry is needed. It was a matter of pure luck that flooding didn't occur again, and I find it unacceptable that not more has been done to better understand the pattern and causes of flooding all across Wales in response.

It is not cost effective for Government, nor strategic, to simply be providing funds to patch-up and fix previous defences which have proven inadequate in light of climate change. This is now urgent, and I find it irresponsible of our Government to not be more proactive and open in supporting businesses and residents who have been flooded to find the answers they deserve into what has gone wrong and why in recent years; whether anything could have been done differently to protect some of the homes and businesses and further, what is the risk to their homes and businesses in light of climate change and more frequent and extreme weather events. The Section 19 reports will not provide these.

I will comment first of all on the Ministerial response:

In response to the first question, the Minister states: *“Despite our ongoing investment, we cannot stop all flooding from occurring. Through our interventions, we can help to reduce this risk, but not remove it completely. Residents should make sure they are prepared and have adequate insurance.”* As I have stated in previous correspondence, I understand that we cannot stop all flooding from occurring. But we can do more to better understand what happened and why if our approach to flooding is to as effective as possible.

The Natural Resources Wales report into the floods clearly stated that they were significantly understaffed. We need to understand why this happened and if this, along with other decisions taken eg the felling of trees and cutting back of forestry, or lack of maintenance of drains, culverts and flood defences, were contributing factors to some homes and businesses being flooded. These are all unanswered questions, and work should have begun in seeking these answers a year ago.

An Independent Inquiry is the only way the true risk to homes and businesses can be assessed. It is disappointing too that the Minister still puts the emphasis on businesses and residents, not understanding that there is little they can do to prepare for six feet of water coming into their homes and that for many, insurance is either

now impossible to obtain or they are costed out of insurance. Many of the communities affected last year are not affluent ones, and the Government should be much more supportive of them than this.

In the answer to the second question, the Minister states: *“Whilst the Section 19 reports provide useful information to the impacted Local Authority and relevant agencies, our national approach to managing risk is set out in the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management which I published last October.”*

Yet again, the Strategy does not provide answers into what went wrong and why, and neither does it provide any assurances for homes and businesses in the future. If the strategy is delivered, they will be made more aware of the risk, but not afforded the answers into why they were flooded in 2020 and neither will this strategy help protect them in the future nor support them to cope with floods and issues with matters such as insurance. A strategy has to be based on an understanding of the situation now faced by so many communities across Wales who are at risk of flooding, and why the Government’s response over the past decade has not been effective.

In response to the answer to the third question, if she has not already read the testimonies previously submitted to this committee, I would urge the Minister to read them to understand the trauma that many people continue to suffer. They are available here:

[https://busnes.senedd.cymru/documents/s105130/21.09.20%20Gohebiaeth%20Deis%20ebydd%20at%20y%20Pwyllgor%20Saesneg%20yn%20unig.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1AtKE-NoXsPNlaE0jinz99OLSoa3S5t5lG1kFRwkjnDe2Yl\\_upHn35\\_e0](https://busnes.senedd.cymru/documents/s105130/21.09.20%20Gohebiaeth%20Deis%20ebydd%20at%20y%20Pwyllgor%20Saesneg%20yn%20unig.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1AtKE-NoXsPNlaE0jinz99OLSoa3S5t5lG1kFRwkjnDe2Yl_upHn35_e0)

A programme recently broadcast on S4C also evidenced this, and be watched here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p096bt9x>

When we came close to flooding again last month, I received phone calls with people crying and texts where they were telling me they simply could not go on with this continued risk. There are children traumatised, not able to sleep and scared in their own homes and people can’t afford to move elsewhere. All they want are answers and greater support. Yet this Government denies them both, and repeated requests from Councillors for counselling have also not been progressed. I have also been contacted by people from other parts of Wales, that have been following this petition, wanting to know how they can get the answers they deserve as well and greater support. The current approach of the Government is not working.

I am shocked by the Minister’s fourth response, and that there is no concern for the future of the Treforest Business Estate in particular – a Business Estate which has been invested in heavily by Welsh Government and where so many businesses which are important for the local and Welsh economy are based. Why is the Government not working with these businesses and being more proactive in supporting them? Many cannot now be insured because of flooding, and if they were to be flooded again, would close. This is not good enough as a Government response.

The key question for me has not been answered – why is the Welsh Government against an Independent Inquiry when it would be a crucial piece of work to better understand the funding and strategy required for the future? If the Government is serious about instigating a national conversation about flooding, then it needs to provide people affected with answers.

In relation to the response from Natural Resources Wales, I would like to make the following reflections:

- NRW does not voice an opinion here, but it is clear from the response that an Independent Inquiry would be beneficial to their work as it would provide much of the action that is needed by providing answers into what went wrong so that lessons can be learnt for the future: *“The February 2020 floods should be a pivotal moment for flood risk management in Wales, and we must use the **lessons learnt during those events to drive forward the action needed to adapt to the challenges of the future.**”*
- Further Mr Evans states: *“The Welsh Government recently launched its own Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. In it, they state that we can’t stop all flooding and one of the aims of the strategy is to spark a conversation on how we manage flood risk in the future.”* This conversation is yet to progress, and yet is seen as being key to our approach to flooding in the future. Who is leading on this, and how?
- Mr Evans also states: *“The scale of the challenge before us means that we cannot address the issues on our own, nor without significant investment and resources. We also need to deliberate on what level of service Wales wants and is willing to pay for from its flood risk authorities.”* I would like to know who is progressing this work as well. Surely an Independent Inquiry would greatly assist this work?
- Finally, Mr Evans writes *“Only by taking a holistic approach can we make the best decisions about the actions and investments needed to mitigate future risks of flooding.”* An Independent Inquiry would inform that holistic approach, by providing answers into what went wrong and why. The Welsh Government wants there to be a national conversation to determine this, but this will remain aspirational at best if we do not see a concerted effort to better understand the risks and investment required.

The questions posed above are ones that should be directed to Welsh Government, to understand why there has been underinvestment in Natural Resources Wales and how that is being addressed. I believe from my informal conversations with Natural Resources Wales that this would be welcomed.

I have also shared these responses with my fellow Plaid Cymru Councillors on Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, and Councillor Shelly Rees Owen has reiterated the need for greater support and counselling for those affected. No bespoke package of support has been provided by anyone, and it is expected that counselling requirements would be provided via normal routes.

Pentre also continues to be at risk of flooding, and despite the work that has been carried out there are still issues and blocked pipes. Residents do not feel reassured.



During the heavy rain a few weeks ago, Cllr Rees-Owen was contacted by a resident. They live near the Pentre Culvert and were told by a worker that rain brought more debris down the mountain and it blocked the new outlet to the culvert sending the water up over the top of it and into the old outlet. Workers manned the culvert all night and had to remove debris as it fell.

I am aware that the term of this Government is fast coming to an end, but the issues of flooding will not disappear. There are far too many unanswered questions, and communities across Wales deserve answers and greater support. I hope a new Welsh Government will instigate an Independent Inquiry as a matter of urgency. I hope the Petitions Committee can continue to support this fight for justice.

Kind regards,

Cllr Heledd Fychan,

Pontypridd Town Ward.

# Agenda Item 3.7

## **P-05-1079 Safeguard Kenfig Nature Reserve using compulsory purchase powers**

This petition was submitted by Steven Preddy having collected a total of 8,435 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

One of the finest nature reserves in Wales is under threat.

The internationally important sand-dune habitats at Kenfig need to be managed, otherwise they will lose their exceptional value. Bridgend council carried out this work for many years but has had to withdraw due to financial pressures.

The site's owner, a secretive and unaccountable body called the Kenfig Corporation, has not been prepared to agree any future plans. Compulsory purchase may be the only option left.

### **Additional Information:**

Kenfig's sand-dunes are recognised as a Special Area of Conservation, Europe's highest nature conservation designation.

The Kenfig Corporation has charitable status and so is required by law to take decisions in the public interest. Natural Resources Wales, the country's public nature conservation agency, has been trying to negotiate with the corporation to secure the site's future but these discussions have reached an impasse. The corporation has not been willing to agree to any of the proposed options, for reasons that are unclear. It is time for the decision to be taken out of their hands.

In exceptional cases, where there is a clear public interest, the Welsh Government has the power to undertake compulsory purchase to protect a site like Kenfig. Compulsory purchase need not be costly: the site has no commercial value and so there is no reason why the Kenfig Corporation could not sell it to the Welsh Government for a nominal sum.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Newport East
- South Wales East

**P-05-1079 Safeguard Kenfig Nature Reserve using compulsory purchase powers – Correspondence – Natural Resources Wales to Chair, 17.02.21**

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Thank you for your email of 9 February, regarding Petition P-05-1079 Safeguard Kenfig Nature Reserve using compulsory purchase powers (attached above and below for reference). Clare Pillman has asked me to respond to you in my capacity as Head of Operations for South Wales Central.

Over the last 12 months Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has been working closely with the trustees of the Kenfig Corporation Trust (KCT), providing support and advice to enable the necessary arrangements to be put in place to protect and enhance the special features of the site.

During this time, several options have been discussed about how the Nature Reserve could be managed. This discussion has considered the constitution of KCT and our wish to sign a Management Agreement with them that will safeguard the site. I can report that we are very close to agreement with KCT and expect a formal Management Agreement to be resolved soon.

NRW has also worked closely with KCT in the recruitment and appointment of a Reserve Manager. We are very pleased to say that this has resulted in an appointment being made and a Warden will be in post at the Nature Reserve from the 1st March 2021.

With both a site warden and a Management Agreement in place, requiring oversight and regular checks by NRW officers, there is no reason to believe Kenfig Nature Reserve cannot continue to provide a great resource for local people and visitors whilst protecting and enhancing its special conservation features.

Your sincerely

Mike

**Private & Confidential**

Janet Finch-Saunders  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

By email only: [petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

e-mail: [REDACTED]

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Our Ref: TA/DD/KEN20/20

Dear Chair,

**Our client: Kenfig Corporation Trust**

We have been instructed by Kenfig Corporation Trust ("The Trust") in relation to your letter of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021, the content of which has been carefully considered by the Board of Trustees.

**Background**

The Trust is a charitable institution governed by a constitution and overseen by a passionate and committed Board of Trustees from various different backgrounds. At the heart of its objects is a commitment to ensuring that the Kenfig Nature Reserve ("Reserve") is monitored and preserved for the benefit of the local Kenfig residents as well as other visitors.

For 25 years Bridgend County Borough Council ("The Council") leased the Reserve from the Trust on a full repairing and maintaining basis. In 2019 this lease came to an end and the Council handed the Reserve back to the Trust.

Prior to the lease concluding the Trust began to explore what options would be available to it. Discussions were entered into with various bodies and organisations. However, no firm agreement could be reached.

The Trust, as well as the Council before it, enjoyed a good relationship with Natural Resources Wales ("NRW"), which is the body tasked with supervising that the Reserve was being maintained in accordance with professional and scientific recommendations. As a direct consequence, it appeared pragmatic for NRW to become custodian and manager of the Reserve for the next 20-25 years.

The Committee, however, will no doubt be aware that budgets for organisations like NRW are continually under pressure. As a consequence, funding for the running of the Reserve was a key issue in the discussions that took place. The Trust was keen to procure a commitment that there would be additional investment and the ring fencing of funds generated by income bearing activities on the Reserve. Regrettably, NRW could not assure the Trust that such

revenue raised would be retained and reinvested on such terms; NRW had numerous commitments and it would need flexibility as a consequence.

Understandably the Trust was hesitant to agree terms which would not ensure a financial commitment of re-investment, which was something appreciated by NRW. As a consequence, it was agreed that the most pragmatic way forward would be for NRW to work in partnership with the Trust and provide its professional expertise and guidance.

Over the last 25 years the Reserve had generated very little revenue for the Trust as most of it was leased to Bridgend County Borough Council for a nominal rent. During the Council's tenancy, subsidies became available for landowners and/or occupiers where the land was utilised for grazing. The Reserve has a significant number of acres that would qualify for such grants. However, information on the level of revenue actually being paid to the tenants on the Reserve was not readily forthcoming.

Having sought legal advice the Trust eventually established what had been paid through a Freedom of Information Request to the Welsh Government. At this point it learned that the subsidies paid to sub-tenants on the land had been significant. There were hundreds of thousands of pounds available that could be reinvested each year as well as used to develop further commensurate activities.

Despite these funds having been available to Bridgend Council, there had been no attempt by it to seize the same and reinvest the revenue into the Reserve so as to improve facilities and/or attract more visitors. Indeed, upon handover of the lease, large parts of the Reserve and its buildings had fallen into disrepair and Bridgend Council were required to pay compensation so as to make good the dilapidations. The Trust was not prepared to allow a repeat of the same.

If the Trust were to recover control and full autonomy over the Reserve, there was no reason why it could not access these same subsidies. If it did then the money received would be re-invested directly back into the Reserve and provide critical funding for necessary upgrades as well as to develop other areas of the land so as to create further tourist attractions. The Trust has minimal running costs and, even allowing for the employment of key staff, there would remain sufficient funds so as to promote investment and development.

The Committee will no doubt already be familiar with the letter from Lesley Griffiths AM to the Committee, which confirms that NRW and the Trust will be working together so as to achieve the above outcome. There is no doubt in the mind of the Trustees that the Trust will be capable of fulfilling its obligations and working towards delivering a much-improved Reserve. This in turn will generate further revenue and hopefully attract outside interest as well as private sector investment. However, given that this a new venture it does take time for the Trust to set up the necessary legal and commercial infrastructure so that the project can move forward in accordance with the professional advice and guidance that the Board has received.

The additional revenue available from the grazing will allow the Trust to employ a full-time warden on terms similar to that established by Bridgend Council, as well as other support staff so as to ensure that, once COVID restrictions allow, investment can be made which adds tangible improvements to the Reserve. The Trust has already received significant interest from key partnerships and is excited at the opportunities which now lie ahead.

#### **Assertions made in the Petition.**

It may assist the Committee if the Trust also addresses some of the allegations levied against it as part of the Petition.

*"Bridgend Council carried out this work for many years but has had to withdraw due to financial pressures".*

The above statement is inaccurate; the Council's lease of the Reserve reached its natural end and there was no commitment for the Council to continue operating the Reserve after the expiry of its lease. There was always revenue available to Bridgend Council had they sought to review their current land use.

*"The site's owner, a secretive and unaccountable body called the Kenfig Corporation, has not been prepared to agree any future plans".*

The assertion that the Trust is secretive and unaccountable could not be further from the truth. As a charitable Trust, aside from its constitutional governance, our client is answerable to the Charity Commission and all its financial information is publicly available.

The Trust and NRW have provided regular updates to the media as well as other interested groups. Indeed, it appears from the further responses provided by the Petitioner that, contrary to what has been asserted, the progress of discussions with NRW and the Trust's intentions herein are already public knowledge. It is therefore difficult to reconcile upon what basis the Trust is being secretive. Further, the Trust has not been prepared to agree a deal which is not in the best interests of the Reserve.

## **Summary**

Given the investments that the Trustees have made to date, the petition is both a disappointing and frustrating development for the Board. The commentary associated with the Petition paints a wholly inaccurate and misleading picture of the current position.

Regrettably the Petitioner, Mr Preddy, made no approach to the Trust to determine these issues before proceeding with the petition and making public his views.

Had such steps been taken then Mr Preddy would have learned that:

- The Trust and NRW have only discounted the possibility of NRW taking over the entire Reserve and retaining any income from the same;
- NRW remain committed to providing advice and support to the Trust with its future management and investment plans;
- NRW will inevitably be involved in any future management of the Reserve. As the body responsible for monitoring and policing the area of Special Scientific Interest, NRW will need to be assured that the proposals advanced by the Trust are viable and will otherwise ensure statutory compliance. At this point in time they are fully supportive of the Trust's intentions and remain committed to the same;
- The option of the Trust having full control of the Reserve and retaining all income arising from the same will offer significant future re-investment opportunities and allow the Trust access to revenue it has previously been denied;
- The Trust will at all times have the support of not only NRW but also its panel of professional advisers. The Trust fully acknowledges that the size and complexity of the Reserve habitat will require it to seek assistance from both professional and lay volunteers alike;

- The Reserve has been underfunded for many years and the Trust could not in good conscience allow this to continue where both alternative and viable options existed;
- The Trust has otherwise had control of the Reserve since 2019; in that time the same has been managed appropriately with NRW expressing no concerns.

For the avoidance of doubt the Trustees have always sought to manage public interest as best they can by providing suitable updates and releases as and when appropriate. At all times the Trustees have communicated progress to the media, local councillors, Assembly Members and other organisations promptly. The Trustees remain alive to their duties and have done all they reasonably can in the circumstances.

The Trust acknowledges public interest and is under no illusion as to the task which is at hand, hence why it has adopted the considered and cautious approach it has to date. Whilst the land has been tenanted by the Council for the last 25 years, the Trust has still had overall responsibility for the same as the landowner. It is therefore very much aware of how the Reserve needs to be managed and what steps need to be taken so as to ensure compliance with any statutory requirements.

The Trust strives to be as open and accountable as it can be. However, at the same time it needs to handle commercially sensitive negotiations with the appropriate level of care and confidentiality required. Inevitably there will be times when its ability to provide comprehensive detail about its plans will be restricted by this duty. Further, given the level of interest it is of paramount importance to the Trustees and their partners that any proposals are fully assessed, workable and capable of being delivered.

We trust that the above addresses the issues and provides suitable comfort to the Committee.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

The logo for Hutton's, featuring the name 'Hutton's' in a blue, cursive script font.



# Agenda Item 3.8

## **P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages**

This petition was submitted by The League Against Cruel Sports having collected a total of 5,287 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Millions of pheasants and partridges are estimated to be factory farmed in Wales each year so that they can be shot for 'sport'. To breed them, tens of thousands of parent birds are confined to cages, often for much of their breeding lives. Cages are cruel and cause animals to suffer. The Welsh Government has previously indicated support for Wales to become a cage-free nation. We call for the Welsh Government to ban the use of cages to produce game birds.

### **Additional Information:**

Life in a cage can lead to distress and injury, and doesn't fully allow for birds' needs or natural behaviour. Their suffering can include painful open foot sores, stress-induced attacks and injury from repeated attempts to escape. To reduce problem behaviours linked to their captivity, such as pecking other birds, devices such as plastic bits forced into their nostrils can also be used.

Pheasants and partridges are semi-wild by nature, making the impact of cages all the greater. Yet they're not even covered by the basic regulations granted to other farmed animals or routinely inspected. Investigations have revealed breaches of guidance such as repeated use of barren cages and dead pheasants left long enough in cages to be cannibalised. Even in cages described as 'enriched', there could be as little as a single shared perch, a plastic curtain and some astroturf.

Whether confined to barren or 'enriched' cages, game birds suffer. The Welsh Government has the power to end this practice.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1097  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00265/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair of the Petitions Committee

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 9 February, regarding Petition P-05- P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages.

I am sure you will understand the unprecedented position we find ourselves in due to the ongoing pressures of the Covid situation and following transition out of the European Union. It is for these reasons that the review into the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds is currently on hold. Any future changes made to the current Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds or welfare legislation will be made with due consideration given to all stakeholder feedback along with relevant research, analysis and evidence.

The existing Welsh Government Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes was developed in consultation with stakeholders including representatives from the shooting industry and welfare organisations. The purpose of the Code is to provide practical guidance in relation to Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

My officials advise that any concerns about a specific gamebird rearing premises should be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) or relevant Local Authority. They are responsible for the delivery and enforcement of animal health and welfare provisions on behalf of the Welsh Government.

The Code recommends that barren raised cages for breeding pheasants and small barren cages for breeding partridges should not be used and that any housing system should be enriched i.e. larger than raised cages.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Whilst raised cages are permitted by law, it is important to note that the welfare of gamebirds is covered by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The Act makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal and also contains a duty of care so that those responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to ensure its welfare.

My officials will be contacting all relevant stakeholders when we are in a position to progress with this work.

Yours sincerely,



**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**P-05-1097 Ban game bird cages, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 08.03.21**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Minister's reply to correspondence from the Committee Chair following the Committee's most recent consideration of our petition.

We do of course appreciate the challenges that have been caused by Brexit and the unforeseen Covid pandemic. However, we are concerned that the review of the Code of Practice was already delayed in that it was started much later than other reviews of welfare codes applicable to other species. We are keen that much needed improvements in welfare standards, for which there is overwhelming public support, are not delayed any longer than is absolutely necessary.

Recent opinion polling conducted by YouGov in January 2021 on behalf of the League highlights clearly that the vast majority of people in Wales want higher welfare standards for 'game' birds – 72% believe that cages used for breeding 'game' birds should be banned.

We and other stakeholders met with officials earlier in 2019, to give our views on how the code should be revised. We remain unclear about the status of the draft, revised code which was circulated to stakeholders in November 2019 and whether further revisions are being considered. This draft shared with us contains no changes of substance compared with the current code and the changes are mainly to the preamble only. In advance of writing to the Committee today, we asked permission of the relevant officials to share the draft document with the Committee so that it could see how little has been changed, but this permission was refused.

There are no routine inspections of 'game' bird rearing sites carried out in Wales, whether planned or unannounced, in contrast to the regimes which govern the welfare of other species e.g. farmed animals. This, along with the fact that 'game' bird breeding sites are on private land, makes it very difficult for evidence of welfare issues to be gathered. It does not, however, mean that none exist. The Welsh Government appears to be content that the code of practice, and the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, provide sufficient protection for the welfare of 'game' birds. We have previously asked via Senedd questions for Welsh Government to provide details of the inspections of gamebird premises carried out by both APHA and local authorities in recent years to assess compliance with the code. It seems from their responses that this information is not held centrally. We argue that this makes it difficult for the government to make a proper assessment that the code is actually protecting the welfare of 'game' birds. We are in the process of sending Freedom of Information requests to the relevant bodies to collate this information ourselves. We maintain however that even if followed to the letter, the provisions of the code do not prevent 'game' birds from suffering.

The Minister's reply does not address the Committee's minuted agreement at its last meeting to seek clarification as to why the Minister is not minded to act to move further to prohibit the practice of caging birds for this purpose. We have not had sight of the letter

sent by the Committee to know if this was included but we would also like to have clarification of this from the Minister given that it is the main point of our petition. To the best of our knowledge, the code review did not include within scope the issue of whether the use of cages in 'game' bird breeding should be restricted or banned. The code itself, whether the current version or the draft revised version, does not prohibit their use nor does it contain measures which fully mitigate the cruelty and suffering that their use causes to the birds. This is why we submitted the petition initially, to highlight both the need for cages to be banned to protect the welfare of the birds, and the public support for such measures.

We hope that this letter is a useful update and explanation for the Committee and that this important issue will be given the further consideration it deserves.

With best wishes

# Agenda Item 3.9

## **P-05-960 Fund the funeral costs of all NHS staff who die from or with Covid-19**

This petition was submitted by Profs Jane Henderson & Karin Wahl-Jorgensen having collected a total of 414 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

They gave their lives to save ours. We call on the Welsh Government to fund the funeral costs of all NHS staff who die from or with Covid-19. The average simple funeral costs £4000. We ask the Welsh Government to ensure that bereaved families immediately have access to the funds to pay for funeral costs.

### **Additional Information**

Source for funeral cost

<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/help-paying-for-a-funeral>

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/02682/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

5 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 09 February on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding the funding of funeral costs for all NHS staff who died from or with Covid-19.

In my letter to you dated 03 November 2020 I set out how I considered funding the funeral costs for NHS Staff who died from or with Covid-19. Within this, I outlined to you how this was fully explored, predominantly my officials considered whether there were any schemes in existence that could be modified for this purpose such as the Child Burial Scheme. The establishment of a brand new scheme was also considered however, these options were deemed to be unworkable. Fundamentally, the three main reasons for this are:

- Identifying those who are NHS Workers would be difficult for local authorities in the administration of such a scheme. Unlike the child burial scheme, where their date of expiration and their date of birth is readily available, the person's profession would not be shown on their death certificate. Therefore there will be difficulties in administering the scheme, obtaining confirmation of eligibility and it would create additional burden on NHS Employers and local authorities at a difficult period;
- Consideration would have to be given to the eligibility of other front line key workers. It could be deemed unfair to only provide this to one group of front-line workers; and
- The timeframe to set up the scheme would take many weeks/months and consideration would need to be given to how those burial costs already met by families could be reimbursed. Retrospective reimbursement would also create additional administration requirements.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Back Page 248**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I realise you may be disappointed by this decision but hope you recognise that we have explored this scheme and the associated implications before arriving at this decision.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in "Gething".

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



**P-05-960 Fund the funeral costs of all NHS staff who die from or with Covid-19, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 09.03.21**

Dear the Petitions committee

I write once again to challenge the minister's reluctance to fund the funerals of NHS staff who die as a result of covid during the pandemic. I have addressed many of the issues in the many previous submissions and remind the committee, once more, that this issue arose following a friend dying of covid whilst working as a nurse in Cardiff and her family having to run a Crowdfunder to cover the cost of the funeral. This is not the Wales that I want to live in and that is why with my co-petitioners we brought this to the Welsh government nearly a year ago. I have addressed many of the minister's issues in the past but I will address the three from his letter of 5<sup>th</sup> March below.

1. The minister claims it would be difficult to identify NHS workers for the administration of the scheme. It seems likely that all NHS staff will have a payroll number. This is something that we have suggested could be managed through the funeral parlours who could request this information from anyone wishing to take up the scheme. They could then act as a single point of contact for confirmation. Alternatively given that the government is funding a specific life assurance payment to NHS staff (Nursing Times link below) announced by government in April 2020 it seems that the government is able to identify people who are eligible, and that process should be matched.
2. I am sure that both the petitioners and the petition committee would welcome an extension of the scheme beyond simply NHS staff to other frontline care workers. It may help to address the first point to ensure that all health and social care workers who provide publicly funded hands-on care for people who have contracted COVID-19 or work in settings where the virus is present are eligible for this money. This would bring the scheme in line with the life assurance scheme and therefore make it perfectly simple to identify the same cohort who would be made eligible by the scheme. It does not make sense to argue that no one can have anything because someone else hasn't had it, we would never make progress if society followed this rule. The government life insurance scheme has made it clear that we recognise the above and beyond the effort being made by our healthcare staff in the pandemic and whilst I would not personally mind it being extended far wider the minister's other concerns with the practicality of the scheme would suggest that matching the eligibility to the government's life assurance scheme would reduce some of his administrative concerns.

3. The minister states that the time frame for setting up the scheme is 'many weeks/months' yet this petition has been with the Welsh Government for many months so the time frame problems appeared to be entirely of the minister's own making. Retrospective reimbursement may be problematic but is not as problematic as the family of a nurse who has died of covid desperately trying to find money to pay for a funeral. It seems egregious for the minister to use the 'it'll take a long time' argument having been responsible for many iterations of this petition without resolution.

I therefore recommend the petitions committee take this to the floor of the Senedd or directly to Mark Drakeford for decision. I think it's time for leaders in the Welsh assembly to make it clear whether they think that we the taxpayers should or should not pay for the cost of funerals for health care workers who have died as a result of covid in the pandemic. To continue to run down the clock on this petition does not reflect well on those involved. If providing a few 1000 pounds it's too much to ask then say so. If it's possible to fund grant schemes for other aspects of the pandemic it's possible to do so for NHS staff. This is simply a question of priorities and the choices that our representatives are making . As the elections fast approach it seems sensible that our representatives make that decision and defend it at the ballot.

Jane Henderson

On behalf of the petitioners

<https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/coronavirus/government-will-pay-60000-to-families-of-nurses-who-die-in-service-28-04-2020/>

# Agenda Item 3.10

## **P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers**

This petition was submitted by David Adam Clarke having collected a total of 174 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

NHS wales bank workers who are vulnerable, require safeguarding or are over 28 weeks pregnant might not be given the same financial support or safeguarding as full time NHS staff by health boards. Some of these NHS wales bank HCA's, Nurses, Midwives et al. have worked for the NHS for years and this is their primary income. The vulnerable and pregnant could be facing working or receiving no pay, and that is subject to them being offered alternative work.

Please support the NHS bank workers

### **Additional Information**

The equality act 2010 protects vulnerabilities (under disability) as well as pregnancy and maternity against discrimination.

The health and safety at work act 1974 along with management of health and safety at work 1999 dictates that risk assessments must be carried out in regards to NHS bank workers in relation to the Covid-19 crisis. Where those nhs bank staff cannot work or be offered alternative work, they may be left without an income.

In these unprecedented times the Welsh Parliament, NHS wales and relevant health boards should ensure financial support and safeguarding to NHS bank workers. Currently NHS bank workers in wales might only have the choice to work or stay at home with no financial support.

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/rcn-advice/bank-workers>

<https://www.rcm.org.uk/media/3896/2020-04-21-occupational-health-advice-for-employers-and-pregnant-women.pdf>

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/nhs-southmead-hospital-furlough-coronavirus-4082655>

**Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd South
- North Wales

Vaughan Gething AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/02161/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

22 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Many thanks for your further letter of 26 January regarding petition P-05-964, asking me to consider issuing a clear communication that vulnerable and pregnant bank workers should be financially supported.

The Welsh Government's position has not changed. Whilst we understand the situation and constraints that bank workers who have been asked to shield have found themselves in, we have previously asked Health Boards and Trusts to look again at the individual circumstances where this has resulted in an adverse impact, and to consider whether any specific support can be provided. Therefore, we continue to advise individuals to contact the Health Board or Trust in which they have undertaken bank work to discuss their situation directly with them.

Yours sincerely,

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Back Page 254**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

# Agenda Item 3.11

## **P-05-1029 The Welsh Government should introduce mandatory testing of all passengers arriving at Cardiff Airport**

This petition was submitted by Lawrence Evans having collected a total of 184 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Due to Coronavirus passengers are currently required to quarantine on arrival at Cardiff Airport from a list of European and International Countries.

This has led to a decline in passenger numbers utilizing the airport both outbound and inbound, a loss of revenue for airlines supporting our National airport, a loss of revenue for Cardiff Airport Ltd and a lack of confidence in the tourism industry due to passengers being required to quarantine on their return from identified countries.

### **Additional Information:**

Cardiff airport is operated by an arms length company from Welsh Government, who have invested significantly in the airport and its facilities/staff.

If the current situation of mandatory quarantine is allowed to continue a catastrophic decline in passenger numbers will occur leading to significant financial losses for all parties concerned, the airport, the airlines & passengers who in many cases have to decide whether to forego their already paid for travel plans due to the restrictions of quarantine upon their return. Many countries throughout the World already, successfully operate two stage testing of passengers upon entry to their territory & a repeat five days later & this should be introduced to Cardiff airport to reassure the traveling public that their flight/holiday can proceed without further anxiety, concern & loss of monies paid. This will also return a degree of certainty to those airlines already invested in Cardiff airport & help retain their services for the future.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ogmere
- South Wales West



Ein cyf/Our ref: VG/03548/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

4 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 18 December regarding petition P-05-1029 on the introduction of Mandatory Testing of Passengers arriving at Cardiff Airport. Your letter has been transferred to me as the issue rests within my portfolio. Please accept my apologies that you did not receive a letter in response to your original letter of 11 September.

The Welsh Government aims for a four nations approach as far as possible on international travel regulations and works with counterparts to co-ordinate a proportionate response to manage the health risks posed by travellers arriving in Wales. The situational context has changed significantly since September last year when the travel corridors arrangements were in place and the issues presented by the new coronavirus variants of concern were yet to be understood.

From 18 January the travel corridors were suspended until further notice and all people travelling to Wales or the UK were required to provide evidence of a negative covid test taken 72 hours prior to departure. People were required to isolate at home for 10 days.

On 12 February advice received from the Joint Biosecurity Centre indicated that it was difficult to fully assess the public health risk posed by the incidence and spread of variant strains of coronavirus. Enhanced measures have been introduced to manage those risks.

These enhanced measures include a new testing system for persons aged 5 years or over arriving into Wales (subject to a limited number of exemptions), requiring them to book and undertake testing on day 2 and 8 of their isolation period. Negative results does not reduce the 10 isolation period.

More significant risks are associated with arrivals from “red list countries” and in order to further protect against the risk of community transmission of variant strains additional measures have been introduced. This includes prohibiting a person who has been in a red list country in the last 10 days from entering Wales from 4am on 15 February. Failure to comply with this restriction will be a criminal offence, liable to a fine. Such travellers must arrive at a designated port in England or Scotland and are required to complete a 10 day managed quarantine period in accordance with regulations that came into force on Monday 15 February 2021.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

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[Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The regulations are reviewed every 28 days and the restrictions may be adjusted in light of the latest assessment of health risks in terms of both importation and community transmission especially in respect of the new variants. The current testing arrangements are considered in the context of those reviews.

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail.

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services



# Agenda Item 3.12

## **P-05-1116 Prioritise people with a learning disability to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in Wales**

This petition was submitted by John Gillibrand, having collected a total of 1,913 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

With the big news that there's a COVID vaccine that's been approved and the rollout will soon begin – it's crucial we get this right. The current list of who will get inoculated first does not prioritize people with learning disabilities – even though they're SIX TIMES more likely to die of coronavirus according to Public Health England (Wales stats are yet to be published). Even worse, those with learning disabilities between 18 and 34 are 30 times more likely to die.

### **Additional Information:**

I've started this petition for learning disabled people to be included in the priority list because I'm scared for my son. He's a young adult living in full time care – if the coronavirus were to get into the care home, it could be devastating for him, and others with learning disabilities he lives with, and across the UK.

We need to make sure this group is protected and I want to see a more prioritised vaccination list – taking into account those with higher mortality rates from COVID19.

Older people should be vaccinated first, but people, like my son, who are at a high risk from the virus are only sixth on the list – surely we need a more targeted strategy as the rollout begins?

Please sign my petition so that people with learning disabilities aren't forgotten as we see a light at the end of the tunnel.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Gower
- South Wales West

# Agenda Item 3.13

## **P-05-1013 Provide financial support for self-employed individuals within the Welsh live music industry**

This petition was submitted by Peter Phillips having collected a total of 189 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

The Welsh Government have given no indication as to when live music will be allowed to commence post lockdown. Accordingly, anybody working in the live music industry in Wales is unable to earn a living. The national Self-Employment Income Scheme ends on 17 August. After that date, should the Welsh Government continue to prohibit live music, they should be compelled to provide direct financial support to self-employed individuals in Wales who make their living in that industry.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Bridgend
- South Wales West



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1013  
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/00203/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Member of the Senedd  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

12 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 27 January regarding the Freelancer Fund and self-employed individuals within the live music sector.

In developing the Freelancer Fund it became clear that there was a lack of data and evidence regarding the size, make-up and economic impact of the freelancer community in Wales. Despite this challenge, through the first three phases of the Freelancer Fund we supported 3,584 individuals with £8.9m in funding.

The Welsh Government is currently working with the Local Authorities to review the funds outputs which includes as a priority undertaking qualitative research into the wealth of data gathered through the application process of the first three phases. This will be the start of the commitment from Welsh Government in developing a stronger evidence base and narrative around the importance of the freelancer community to the economy of Wales.

On 10 February, we announced that the Welsh Government is providing further support of £8.9 million to the freelance community, comprising a new round of support funding from the Cultural Recovery Fund which will mean that each of the freelancers already supported will receive an additional £2,500 to support them through this extended period of reduced activity. Further details are available at: <https://gov.wales/further-89-million-support-creative-sector-freelancers>

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[Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

**P-05-1013 Provide financial support for self-employed individuals within the Welsh live music industry, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 05.03.21**

In his letter of 12 February, the Deputy Minister acknowledges the Welsh Government's lack of understanding in respect of the Welsh freelancer community and outlines an intention to conduct qualitative research, which in turn will be the start of a commitment to develop a stronger evidence base and narrative. However, with a nebulous objective and no firm indication of a timeline, this undertaking is meaningless and provides no direct, immediate financial help to those freelancers who have been denied any assistance to date by the woefully inadequate Freelancer Fund.

The people who have been excluded to date will continue to be denied any immediate assistance as the Welsh Government appear to be intending to use the new round of funding to provide further support to members of the freelance community who have already been supported. In my previous two responses to letters from the Deputy Minister, I made the point that the Freelancer fund is defective for a number of reasons including subjective underwriting discriminating against certain sectors of the arts, and also applications have been supported on a first-come basis with awareness of the fund poorly communicated in the first place. In short, those who were lucky enough to get through the door will be receiving more support, whilst those with their noses pushed against the outside continue to be deprived of any financial help.

Furthermore, the Deputy First Minister has not responded to the requests of the Petition Committee when they asked for urgent consideration be given to better compensate people not supported so far by the Freelancer Fund. Nor has the Deputy Minister adequately addressed the clarification further requested in respect of clarification for self-employed support within the arts sector, specifically the professionals that are the subject of this Petition.

Finally, I would ask the Petition Committee to continue their previous support for some sort of 'bounce back' fund designed to assist artists and crew working within the pub music sector, a part of the music scene that Wales has rightfully been famous for.

# Agenda Item 3.14

## **P-05-1080 Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes**

This petition was submitted by Fatima Altaiy having collected a total of 4,053 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Children need to be educated on how to be anti-racist. Although introducing POC and black history into the curriculum will be extremely beneficial, children need to have direct conversations about racism and how to be anti-racist. This will reduce bullying in schools and allow children to grow up in a multi-cultural environment, regardless of whether that have been surrounded by other cultures or not. This way, children will understand other cultures, and defeat stereotypes and discrimination.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

# Agenda Item 3.15

## **P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum**

This petition was submitted by Angharad Owen having collected a total of 34,736 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Britain –including Wales– benefited from colonialism and slavery for centuries. This needs to be represented in the curriculum.

The British Empire has often been glamorised and the global impact of Britain’s colonialism downplayed. This has been reflected in the content taught.

There needs to be real and significant change. The legacies of slavery and colonialism have very real impacts on BAME communities across Britain today, and the Welsh education system needs to recognise this.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd South
- North Wales

# SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

Welsh Parliament  
Petitions Committee  
Janet Finch-Saunders

26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## **Re: - Petition P-05-1080 Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes**

*Children need to be educated on how to be anti-racist. Although introducing POC and black history into the curriculum will be extremely beneficial, children need to have **direct conversations about racism and how to be antiracist**. This will reduce bullying in schools and allow children to grow up in a multi-cultural environment, regardless of whether that have been surrounded by other cultures or not. This way, children will understand other cultures, and defeat stereotypes and discrimination.*

### **SRtRC Response**

#### **Introduction: Who we are and what we do**

Show Racism the Red Card Wales (SRtRC) is an anti-racism education charity that was established in 1996. The Wales office was set up in 2006 and since then, we have worked with approximately 160,000 children, young people and adults. The organisation utilises the high-profile status of sport and sports stars to offer up relatable role models in a bid to help tackle racism in society. This is achieved through the delivery of education workshops in schools, workplaces and at events held at local sports clubs or stadia. We currently deliver all our workshops and training sessions online.

#### ***Workshops with children***

Our workshops with children focus on increasing understanding of racism, exploring skin colour, nationality, culture and religion through activities and discussion. The activities involve challenging stereotypes and developing critical thinking skills. Racist language and terminology are also addressed, resulting in children having a greater understanding of the meaning and history behind certain words.

#### ***Workshops with teachers and school staff***

Our teacher training sessions help teachers to recognise and respond to racist incidents as well as embed anti-racist practises into their classroom. These sessions range from one-off twilight sessions to series of workshops that participants attend over a longer period. Workshops are often tailored to the requirements of each school or educational setting.



## Racism in schools – our work in relation to the report

### ***Increase in racism in schools***

Even though we are not a reporting body, the charity records all communication relating to workshop enquiries, including those related to a racist incident. This is usually in the form of phone calls from teachers or parents who have been made aware of incidents. SRtRC's database for the academic year 2018-2019 shows a 26.2% increase in such communications of racist incidents compared to the previous year, 2017-2018, with the number of all enquiries around workshop bookings rising just 8.9% in comparison. As such, the increase appears to be disproportionately driven by racist incidents that are occurring, rather than simply proactive educators looking to undertake preventative work. Alongside this, the charity has both qualitative and quantitative evidence of negative ideas of individuals or groups of various ethnicities, religions (linking Islam to terrorism), nationalities, and cultures (particularly Gypsies / Roma / Travellers).

Some examples of racist incidents that have been disclosed are provided below:

- "A year 5/6 pupil pulling hijab off another child."
- "Comments from year 4 child "Wouldn't want to sit next to a black man on a bus"
- "Children using the 'N' word towards each other"
- "Student picked on because he is from Syria and 'must be a terrorist' and 'takes all our jobs'"
- "Year 1 pupil had been told by a fellow pupil in class he was not going to go in her group as he doesn't like brown people"
- "There has been an incident in school today where a little girl has used racist language to hurt someone's feelings (P-word)"
- "A year 9 pupil hit another pupil because they didn't like their accent. A year 8 pupil told their friend that they would rub bacon on another (Muslim) pupil's face."

Further examples can be found in the attached document 'Teacher/School Support Survey: Show Racism the Red Card Survey Results' (**CONFIDENTIAL**).

Our 2020 report *Racism in Wales? Exploring Prejudice in the Welsh Education System* further indicates that racism is widespread across the Welsh school system. Over 1000 teachers and teaching staff took part in the online survey. In addition, qualitative consultations were carried out with 428 pupils. We recognise that this is a small percentage of the school workforce and pupils in Wales and feel we should draw attention to the fact that even within this small sample, a significant number of racist incidents are disclosed. The disparities between teachers reporting racism and pupils' experiences of racism also suggest that racism is being greatly underestimated by teachers and learning support staff.

We also hold a large volume of anecdotal evidence of racism collected through experience of working in schools. There is a grave cause for concern that on some occasions, racism in schools has not been taken seriously or dealt with in an appropriate manner. We speculate that a lack of clarity in reporting procedures/Prevent duty guidelines could be contributing in part to the issue. However, we also note that occasionally, people who hold significant positions of power in school and government have demonstrated a lack of urgency and priority when supporting schools on racism. We would be happy to share some examples in a private meeting.

### ***Teaching anti-racism and teacher confidence***

The report indicates that most teachers have not received any anti-racism training and admit to lacking confidence in recognising, responding to and reporting racism. 89% of survey respondents said that they believe that anti-racism education should be embedded in the curriculum, however, the percentage of educators teaching anti-racism has fallen since our 2016 study. Lack of time and a lack of confidence were cited as the main challenges, suggesting that anti-racism is not being embedded into the curriculum. This is concerning when considering the plethora of incidents reported in the previous paragraphs.

#### ***Example of good practise - reduction of racist bullying***

- ‘Racist Incident Log’ data from a case study in a school in Wales showed that the number of racist incidents that occurred halved after the intervention. The number of pupils involved in those incidents fell by 62.5% to just 3 pupils.

Post intervention survey question: Has the work with SRtRC had an impact in your school? Please comment.

‘Yes it has. During the project we experienced less incidents of racist language. This is evidenced through our bound book.’

‘Yes. The use of racist language has reduced considerably.’

‘Yes. The number of incidents have decreased since SRtRC started working with our learners. The learners seem to have more of an understanding of the impact of the language they use.’

Shifting School Culture Away From Racism: A Case Study, Show Racism the Red Card, 2019

### **SRtRC Recommendations**

1. Maintain the focus on embedding anti-racism organically through classroom resources, the use of role models and offering exposure to a diverse range of stories and examples.
2. Provide funding to ensure that every teacher in Wales receives anti-racism training focused on recognising, responding to and reporting racism, as well as challenging unconscious bias.
3. Ensure all educators are aware of places to access anti-racism resources.
4. The teaching workforce must be more diverse to reflect the changing student population in Wales.
5. Schools should be effectively monitored to ensure that they are consistently recording and reporting racist incidents and acting upon this information. There should be a duty placed on schools to report this data to the LA or WG.
6. Welsh Government should consider producing an annual statistical bulletin providing the data SRtRC currently has to acquire via FOI requests.
7. Estyn should include a specific question around racism on inspection questionnaires to develop a more complete picture of the extent of the issue.
8. Ensure all schools have an anti-racism champion who ensures pupil voice in reporting racism, be that through buddy systems, school councils or anonymous reporting systems.
9. Offer opportunities to staff to improve their knowledge around a range of religions to support the teaching of compulsory religious education.
10. The promotion of anti-racism through all areas of learning should be covered by all educators, from developing empathy through literature to offering diverse examples in science and technology.
11. Educational institutions should have the support and time to assess their needs and develop an appropriate action plan to embed an anti-racism approach within their daily practice.

## **Conclusion**

Teaching and embedding anti-racism in the Welsh education system is both vital and long overdue. In addition to introducing anti-racist teaching materials, teachers must be trained so that they are confident and competent in dealing with and responding to racist incidents in schools. In addition, robust recording and reporting procedures should be made a requirement and adhered to by all schools. The teaching workforce must be more diverse to reflect the changing student population in Wales. Additional training and resources should be provided for schools to ensure all individuals are comfortable in developing an antiracism ethos throughout the Welsh education system. For this anti-racist work to be most effective, a strong commitment to anti-racism is required from governors, local authorities, consortia and Welsh Government.

## **P-05-1000: Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum in future**

Britain -including Wales- benefited from colonialism and slavery for centuries. This needs to be represented in the curriculum.

The British Empire has often been glamorised and the global impact of Britain's colonialism downplayed. This has been reflected in the content taught.

There needs to be real and significant change. The legacies of slavery and colonialism have very real impacts on BAME communities across Britain today, and the Welsh education system needs to recognise this.

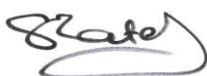
## **SRtRC Response**

SRtRC believes that anti-racism should be embedded in the school curriculum and that in order to be most impactful, anti-racism education needs to be part of a wider and holistic system of anti-racism work. Central to this work is the vision that a balanced view of history is taught in every school in Wales. The new curriculum provides an opportunity to personalise learning and embed anti-racism within all areas of learning. We believe the teaching of Black and POC UK histories will contribute to greater understanding of people who arrived in the UK from colonies and former colonies and increase children's understanding of themselves and their society today. This understanding will be an essential contribution to increasing community cohesion and the development of anti-racism work in schools.

## **References**

- Shifting School Culture Away From Racism: A Case Study, Show Racism the Red Card, 2019
- INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING CONFERENCES ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-19, Show Racism the Red Card, 2019
- Teacher/School Support Survey: Show Racism the Red Card Survey Results. (CONFIDENTIAL)
- Racism and anti-racism in the Welsh education system, Show Racism the Red Card, 2016
- Racism in Wales? Exploring Prejudice in the Welsh Education System, Show Racism the Red Card, 2020
- Manifesto for Change: Using Education to End Racial Inequality Across the Nation, Show Racism the Red Card

Yours sincerely



Sunil Patel – Senior Campaign Manager Show Racism the Red Card (Wales)

# Agenda Item 3.16

## **P-05-1083 Protect leaseholders in Wales from paying for cladding remedial works**

This petition was submitted by Carl Tubbs having collected a total of 133 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Thousands of flat leaseholders in Wales are facing huge bills to pay for cladding remedial work, after the Government ruled that all flat buildings, regardless of height, need an EWS1 form to confirm that not only is there no ACM cladding (like Grenfell) but also no 'combustible material', regardless of whether the buildings had previously passed regulations.

The costs should be covered by the Government and councils as many leaseholders can't afford to pay for these repairs.

### **Additional Information:**

Leaseholders shouldn't be the ones having to pay for these repairs, as they were up to the correct standard before the Government's new ruling in January 2020. We cannot sell our flats, or remortgage, until the work is complete, as mortgage lenders are providing a NIL value as our homes are now viewed as 'unsafe'.

In England, the Building Safety Fund is being utilised to help the repairs for buildings over 18m, the Welsh Government are using this money for COVID-19 instead. The fund should be used for its correct purpose in Wales and for all flat buildings – as the new regulations aren't just for buildings over 18m. While the Pandemic is important, leaseholders need to be safe in the homes.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-1-billion-building-safety-fund-to-remove-dangerous-cladding-from-high-rise-buildings>

<https://medium.com/never-fear/the-grenfell-fire-that-continues-to-burn-7325ca87788c>

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/politics/cardiff-bay-flats-victoria-wharf-18935612>

## **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

Julie James AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1083  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00476/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
[petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

1 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your further letter of 9 February 2021 regarding Petition P-05-1083.

In relation to your query on the value of funding consequential that Welsh Government has received as a result of spending on this issue by the UK Government, Welsh Government received a consequential amounting to £58.873m in capital and £1.177m in revenue. In accordance with devolution, consequential funding forms part of the Welsh Government Budget and is allocated by the Cabinet in response to the specific needs and circumstances in Wales. As I mentioned in my previous reply, at that time Welsh Ministers were taking very difficult decisions about how money would be spent in Wales in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

However, we remain committed to financial support to help fund remediation in a way that is fair to leaseholders and tax payers. We have committed £10.5m to remediate buildings in the social sector this year and £32m of funding to support remediation for both the private and social sector in 2021/22.

Our intention is to establish a funding offer for Wales that goes further than that proposed in England. As residents in high rise buildings know, addressing only the issues of cladding does not go far not enough. The fund we intend to offer will support holistic remediation of buildings, looking beyond cladding to include compartmentation, fire breaks and – importantly – fire alert, evacuation and suppression systems.

We want to ensure that not only are high rise residential buildings rid of **all** fire safety risks but that they are well equipped to protect life and limb in the unfortunate event that there is a fire.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales](mailto:Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**Back Page 272**  
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

This is a complex matter and it is this complexity that is dictating the pace of driving this work forward; it is not a reflection of any lack of commitment to supporting those affected. We will provide the Committee with further details on the funding offer as soon as we can.

There have also been recent developments that may have further implications for consequential funding for Wales in this area. You may be aware that on 10 February Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government, announced additional funding to address unsafe cladding in England and wider measures to improve building safety. I was disappointed that an announcement of this significance on a topic of shared interest, where there are elements of joint work and some matters are not devolved, was made without prior consultation, or engagement at a meaningful level, between the Welsh and UK Governments. I have written to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government, expressing my disappointment and requesting urgent clarification on details of key elements of this announcement.

It is not yet clear what funding Wales might receive as a result of this announcement. I have requested more detail on this. My expectation is that Wales should receive its fair share of funding as a result of spending commitments in England. This will help us to be able to deliver what we need to in Wales, in relation to building safety. We have been clear that building safety is a priority for this government and once we have clarity on how much additional funding Wales will receive, Ministers collectively will decide on how that funding is used.

I have issued a statement on the UK Government announcement and funding commitments made in Wales to support building remediation: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-building-safety-uk-government-announcement>.

I hope this information is useful to you and Committee members.

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

# Agenda Item 3.17

**P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog**

This petition was submitted by Carron Jones having collected 2,595 signatures online and 2,855 on paper, a total of 5,450 signatures.

## **Text of Petition**

We are asking the Welsh Government to take urgent action to ensure that tangible improvements are made to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog following the tragic and devastating accidents that have occurred there in the last two years.

We must make sure that a definite change is made to the road so that such disasters do not happen again.

## **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales



**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru**  
**Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-943  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00966/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

3 March 2021

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 9 February regarding Petition P-05-943 'We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog.'

We undertook improvements along this stretch of road in early 2020. This included a new 40 mph speed restriction as well as improved road marking, signing and safety barrier work. Extensive resurfacing work was also carried out which included the installation of high friction surfacing.

We are currently monitoring compliance with the new speed limit via measuring equipment and will continue to monitor this section for any further safety improvements.

Yours sincerely

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru**  
**Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales**

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

# Agenda Item 3.18

## **P-05-1061 Give financial support to Pet Boarding businesses**

This petition was submitted by Ryan Lee having collected a total of 2,144 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

The latest grants made available are for those in lockdown areas or business development. Many Pet Boarding businesses outside lockdown areas have seen customer numbers fall to zero. The Business Development Grants can not be used to pay the monthly bills. Pet Boarding Businesses need financial support now to stop them going out of business. Hundreds of jobs and homes are at risk without adequate financial support.

### **Additional Information:**

Pet Boarding businesses have struggle to keep the doors open to assist NHS staff working long hours fighting Covid, they have helped care for pets of people who have been hospitalised. In many cases having one or two pets in at a time costs them more than they earn and with increased heating and lighting bills over the winter months many will be forced to close, removing this vital service.

These are businesses that were successful before Covid and will be again as long as action is taken to protect them.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1061  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/01076/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Chair, Petitions Committee

3 March 2021

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 16 February regarding financial support for pet boarding businesses.

Unfortunately, the Welsh Government does not deem kennels and catteries eligible for the non domestic rates (NDR) system linked Restrictions Business Fund grants. However, it will be for local authorities to determine if businesses are similar in nature to those or not.

Although kennels and catteries are not eligible for non-domestic rates (NDR) system linked Restrictions Business Fund Grants, discretionary support will continue to be available through local authorities in Wales for businesses not on the NDR system who are materially impacted. Discretionary grants of up to £2,000 will be available and it will be for local authorities to determine applications. Further information is available at;

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/restrictions-business-fund-local-authorities>

In addition, alternative funding can be accessed such as the UK Government Bounce Back Loans <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-coronavirus-bounce-back-loan> and the Development Bank of Wales has loan and equity funding available immediately to Welsh businesses <https://developmentbank.wales/>

We will continue to do all we can to support Welsh businesses through these incredibly difficult times and consider options beyond the current package of support.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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[Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke above the letters.

**Ken Skates AS/MS**

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales

**P-05-1061 Give financial support to Pet Boarding businesses, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 09.03.21**

Thank you for your continued efforts in this matter.

Since the last meeting the Welsh Government have since clarified the position regarding kennels and catteries and have instructed councils to pay out the discretionary grant to those who have had a significant loss of income.

My own council originally refused to pay out, using Ken Skates letter to the petitions committee as justification to do so. They have now re assessed and payed out.

I believe this 'clarification' came about because of the pressure put on by members of our industry, BBC Wales and yourselves, which is very much appreciated.

However, while this action gives a short term lifeline to the industry, it doesn't protect us in the long term and we face the same fight again in the future. One simple action could secure our industry and jobs in the long term, we ask to be classified as a travel and tourism sector industry. Any assistance you can give to achieve this would be very welcome.

# ~~Agenda Item 4~~ Petitions Committee - Review of petitions under consideration

## Review of petitions under consideration at the end of the Fifth Senedd

Date: 11 March 2021

### Purpose

1. This paper asks the Committee to review the petitions it is currently considering and agree which should be carried over to the Sixth Senedd for further consideration and which should be closed.

### Background

2. In anticipation for the end of the current Senedd, the Committee asked the secretariat to identify which petitions could be carried over to the next Senedd for consideration by its successor committee and which petitions could be considered for closure by this Committee. A similar exercise was conducted at the end of the Fourth Assembly.
3. There are currently 127 petitions under consideration by the Committee (i.e. that have been discussed on at least one occasion and have not been closed). In determining how many petitions to carry over, the Committee should also note that there are currently 77 petitions collecting signatures which will also be referred for consideration in the Sixth Senedd if they collect sufficient signatures.
4. The secretariat have prepared two tables for the Committee's consideration. The table in Annex A provides an overview of the petitions that the Committee may wish to consider referring to the committee responsible for petitions in the Sixth Senedd. The table in Annex B contains the petitions that the Committee could consider closing. Petitions scheduled for discussion during the Committee's meeting on 16 March 2021 have not been included in these tables.

### Action

5. The Committee is invited to consider the proposals below.

## Review of petitions under consideration

### Annex A: Petitions the Committee may wish to carry over for consideration in the Sixth Senedd

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse                   | 227        | January 2019  | Seven occasions  | The Committee agreed to ask its successor committee to consider the petition once the evaluation of the Lighthouse Project pilot project in London is published in 2021.  |
| P-05-912 Supporting Families with Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults | 5,682      | November 2019 | Two occasions    | A Plenary debate for this petition which was scheduled for March 2020 was postponed in light of the coronavirus pandemic. The petitioners have requested for the petition to be passed for consideration in the Sixth Senedd. |
| P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled                                      | 121        | November 2019 | Four occasions   | Committee awaiting a response to proposals that it has made to the Welsh Government.  |
| P-05-924 Ensure that every school in Wales has Wellbeing Ambassadors                       | 297        | January 2020  | Two occasions    | The Committee has been unable to take further evidence from the petitioners (school pupils) due to the impact of the pandemic.  |
| P-05-937 STOP BOILING CRUSTACEANS ALIVE (lobsters, crabs, crayfish, prawns etc)            | 2,008      | February 2020 | Three occasions  | Committee keeping watching brief in light of independent review, commissioned by Defra and the devolved Governments, expected in spring 2021.   |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting  | Times considered | Current position  |
|--|------------|----------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-954 Petition for a public inquiry by the Welsh Government into the historic child abuse on Caldey Island          | 5,088      | July 2020      | Two occasions    | Committee agreed that there were few options open to it and to keep a watching brief. The petitioners have requested for the petition to be passed for consideration in the Sixth Senedd. |
| P-05-974 Ensure the technology of prosthetic limbs provided within the Welsh NHS is equal to the rest of the UK        | 561        | September 2020 | Two occasions    | The Committee agreed to refer the petition for consideration in the Sixth Senedd.   |
| P-05-1001 Hold an independent inquiry into the choice of site for the proposed new Velindre Cancer Centre              | 5,348      | September 2020 | Four occasions   | Plenary debate held on 3 March. Committee awaiting response to further correspondence sent to Velindre University NHS Trust.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1018)</i>              |
| P-05-1018 Support for the current proposed plans to build a new Velindre Cancer Centre, Cardiff, in any future inquiry | 11,392     | September 2020 | Five occasions   | Plenary debate held on 3 March. Committee awaiting response to further correspondence sent to Velindre University NHS Trust.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1001)</i>              |



## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| P-05-1035 Allow birthing partners to be present at scans, the start of labour, birth and after the birth        | 7,326      | November 2020 | Two occasions    | The Committee is awaiting an update from the Government following a Plenary debate held on the subject.                      |
| P-05-1040 Introduce a moratorium on the approval any new large scale waste incinerators in Wales                | 938        | November 2020 | Two occasions    | Committee wrote to seek a further response from the Welsh Government.  |
| P-05-1041 A clear policy and funding for hospitals and care homes for virtual visiting during times of lockdown | 187        | December 2020 | One occasion     | Committee wrote to seek a response from Care Forum Wales. Rules currently beginning to be relaxed in relation to care homes. |
| P-05-1045 To make shared-decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews a legal requirement        | 1,462      | December 2020 | Two occasions    | Committee wrote to seek a further response from the Welsh Government.  |
| P-05-1046 Reconsider lockdown and investigate scientific evidence   | 2,189      | December 2020 | One occasion     | The Committee is awaiting a response to the petition from the Welsh Government.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| that it does not work and causes more harm  |            |               |                  |   |
| P-05-1056 Give Local Authorities powers to control the housing market in rural and tourist areas of Wales | 5,386      | December 2020 | Two occasions    | A Plenary debate on the petition is scheduled for 17 March.   |
| P-05-1062 Abandon the rt-PCR test for covid-19 testing as its unfit for purpose                           | 96         | December 2020 | One occasion     | The Committee is awaiting a response to the petition from the Welsh Government.   |
| P-05-1068 Allow socially distanced meets in private gardens to follow science and avoid isolation         | 273        | January 2021  | Two occasions    | The Committee wrote to seek a further response from the Government.   |
| P-05-1069 Save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston   | 5,272      | December 2020 | Two occasions    | The Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief over the next steps of the planning process and ask its successor Committee to review the petition in the Sixth Senedd. |
| P-05-1071 Print the vehicle registration on all drive   | 8,341      | December 2020 | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| through fast food packaging  |            |               |                  | 'Beyond Recycling' strategy and litter prevention plan have recently been published.  |
| P-05-1073 Create and build a new branch of National Museum Wales dedicated to Welsh involvement in colonialism                       | 103        | December 2020 | One occasion     | The Committee wrote to seek a response from Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1086)</i>            |
| P-05-1078 Increase funding for mental health services and improve waiting times for people needing help in crisis. We need a change! | 5,159      | January 2021  | One occasion     | A Plenary debate on the petition took place on 10 March.<br>The Health, Social Care and Sports Committee has also undertaken work in this area. |
| P-05-1086 Create a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage                                   | 490        | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee wrote to seek a response from Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1073)</i>            |
| P-05-1092 Do not delay the May 2021 elections  | 470        | February 2021 | One occasion     | Committee awaiting a further response from the Government.  |
| P-05-1094 Stop the erosion of Pontypridd's heritage - save the White Bridge  | 304        | February 2021 | One occasion     | The Committee has sought an update from Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-1112 Help Welsh Communities Buy Community Assets: Implement Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011  | 655        | February 2021 | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to pass the petition for further consideration in the Sixth Senedd due to research being undertaken by the Welsh Government will be published in the spring. |
| P-05-1129 Apply legislative measures now to enact the Law Commission's recommendations to abolish Leasehold | 425        | March 2021    | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to ask its successor to consider the petition.   |
| P-05-1130 The Welsh Government should re-purchase and refurbish Coleg Harlech                               | 6,666      | March 2021    | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to ask its successor to consider the petition.   |
| P-05-1132 Instigate an Independent Judicial Inquiry into Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board          | 126        | March 2021    | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner.   |
| P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres,                                       | 1,181      | March 2021    | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to ask its successor to consider the petition.   |

**Review of petitions under consideration**

| <b>Petition title</b>               | <b>Signatures</b> | <b>First meeting</b> | <b>Times considered</b> | <b>Current position</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| now unable to operate for 12 months |                   |                      |                         |                         |

## Review of petitions under consideration

### Annex B: Petitions that the Committee may wish to close at the end of this Senedd

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently | 631        | October 2017  | 13 occasions     | Completion of reassessment of previous ILF recipients delayed by pandemic. Committee previously published report and petitioner was broadly content with Government decision to individually review recipients.   |
| P-05-774 Pass Wide and Slow Wales   | 1,755      | October 2017  | Three occasions  | Committee sought meeting between petitioners and Government. No further updates received.   |
| P-05-783 Ensuring Equality of Curriculum for Welsh Medium Schools e.g. GCSE Psychology                                  | 652        | November 2017 | Ten occasions    | Awaiting outcomes of work by Qualifications Wales. QW consultation on proposals for subjects until 9 April 2021, with qualifications to be designed by 2024.  |
| P-05-786 Save our Countryside, Revise TAN 1   | 706        | November 2017 | Eight occasions  | Committee has been awaiting an update from Government on action to be taken following consultation on revisions to the housing section of Planning Policy Wales. The Government has now revoked Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-881)</i> |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-798 Male domestic violence victim support services to be independently run & funded                                       | 138        | February 2018 | Nine occasions   | The Committee has raised a number of issues relating to the petition with Welsh Government, without significant progress being made. The Government has insisted that national services for men are available through Project Dyn and Live Fear Free. |
| P-05-803 Our natural world is being poisoned by single use plastics...it's time to introduce a tax!                            | 102        | March 2018    | Seven occasions  | The Welsh Government is contributing to the development of proposals for a UK-wide plastic packaging tax, and is considering the possibility of a tax or charge on single-use plastic cups. Committee awaiting further update.                        |
| P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers   | 1,425      | May 2018      | 11 occasions     | The Committee will publish its report on the petition during March 2021.  |
| P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate. | 3,040      | April 2018    | Six occasions    | Committee awaiting an update on proposals for the Government to develop a pilot project in partnership with Disability Wales and the petitioners. This work is likely to have been impacted by the pandemic.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting  | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|----------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-814 All New Builds In Wales To Have Solar Panels   | 72         | May 2018       | Two occasions    | The Committee is awaiting the outcome of the Government's review of Part L of building regulations.   |
| P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales | 159        | September 2018 | Seven occasions  | Awaiting the outcome of planned meetings between the Government, Haemophilia Wales and the Cross Party Blood Group. Government has referred to work to review the scheme benefits in Wales. |
| P-05-832 To Amend the School Admissions Code Relating to Summer-Born Children   | 241        | September 2018 | Five occasions   | Committee awaiting consultation on changes to school admissions code, which has not been published. Potentially delayed by pandemic.  |
| P-05-846 Save our Hospital at Prince Philip Llanelli  | 12,745     | November 2018  | Six occasions    | Committee agreed to keep watching brief given that changes to Prince Philip Hospital were not being proposed. No further proposals have been raised.  |
| P-05-849 All men in Wales should have access through the NHS to the best possible   | 6,345      | December 2018  | Six occasions    | Committee keeping a watching brief on the implementation of mpMRI scanning in Wales, following new advice from NICE.  |



## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| diagnostic tests for prostate cancer  |            |               |                  |  |
| P-05-853 No to any Closure of Junction 41   | 473        | January 2019  | Three occasions  | Committee keeping a watching brief on results of monitoring and further proposals from Government. Potentially delayed by pandemic.  |
| P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households | 141        | February 2019 | Four occasions   | Committee is awaiting an update about progress from the Government. The petitioner has since indicated satisfaction with the situation.  |
| P-05-869 Declare a Climate Emergency and fit all policies with zero-carbon targets                            | 6,148      | May 2019      | Five occasions   | Committee keeping a watching brief in light of work being done by the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee. Substantive action called for by petition (declaration of a climate emergency) has been achieved. |
| P-05-870 Let's Get Every Young Heart Screened (Age 10-35)   | 3,444      | April 2019    | Four occasions   | In light of the decision of the UK National Screening Committee not to recommend systematic population screening for cardiac conditions, the Committee sought views from further charities but none have been received.          |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title                                     | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| P-05-881 Fix our planning system                   | 250        | June 2019     | Three occasions  | Committee has been awaiting an update on Government action to be taken following a consultation on revisions to the housing section of Planning Policy Wales. The Government has now revoked Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-786)</i> |
| P-05-886 Stop the Red Route (A55/A494 corridor)    | 1,409      | June 2019     | Nine occasions   | The petition will be closed once the Welsh Government's response to the report it published on 2 March has been received.  |
| P-05-889 Labelling of Religiously Slaughtered Meat | 348        | July 2019     | One occasion     | Committee awaiting further developments following the UK's departure from the EU. Work on UK Internal Market is ongoing and therefore it is unclear whether Welsh Government will gain competence in this area.  |
| P-05-901 Ban the Sale of Real Fur in Wales         | 3,098      | October 2019  | Two occasions    | Committee awaiting further developments following the UK's departure from the EU. Work on UK Internal Market is ongoing and therefore it is unclear whether Welsh Government will gain competence in this area.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-904 Ban the use of animals from circuses and travelling shows in Wales | 1,649      | November 2019 | One occasion     | The Wild Animals and Circuses (Wales) Act 2020 became law in Wales on 7 September 2020 following a previous petition. No further action on this issue appears to be imminent. Petitioners offered chance to provide comments in autumn 2020.                  |
| P-05-919 Do not implement licensing for show dogs, cats and shown horses    | 4,241      | December 2019 | One occasion     | Committee awaiting the Welsh Government's decisions over animal exhibits licensing scheme after consultation, following the Minister's indication that the activity referred to be the petition would not be covered. Work possibly affected by the pandemic. |
| P-05-927 Changing Places toilet facilities                                  | 1,273      | January 2020  | Two occasions    | Committee awaiting consultation on changes to Building Regulations to make the provision of Changing Places toilet facilities expected in certain new buildings. Consultation published February 2021 until April 2021.                                       |
| P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74                   | 69         | February 2020 | Three occasions  | The current UKNSC advice does not contain population screening after 74. Government priority is to extend screening to people aged 50-59 as per UKNSC recommendation.   |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations  | 100        | March 2020    | Two occasions    | Committee awaiting data from the Government. Situation has changed due to the pandemic since the petition was submitted.  |
| P-05-944 Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales  | 953        | March 2020    | Two occasions    | Committee agreed to keep a watching brief to potentially revisit the petition if rail services return to a standard timetables during this period. Unclear when this will happen due to the pandemic. |
| P-05-965 Push the government into introducing a separate ward other than maternity ward, for families going through a miscarriage | 52         | July 2020     | Three occasions  | Committee provided a summary of the evidence gathered from health boards to the Government.   |
| P-05-975 Reconsider second home council tax uplift while illegal to travel to second homes  | 68         | July 2020     | One occasion     | Committee has been awaiting a response from Pembrokeshire County Council. Issues is the responsibility of individual local authorities.   |
| P-05-977 Re-open full general dental services in Wales as has happened in England   | 7,583      | July 2020     | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief and await a further update from the petitioner. None has been received.   |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position  |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| P-05-980 Extend grants immediately to small businesses outside of Small Business Rates Relief in Wales  | 130        | July 2020     | One occasion     | Committee sought further information on the extent of discretion available to local authorities in providing funding to businesses outside of Small Business Rates Relief. It has been confirmed that discretion exists in relation to other petitions. |
| P-05-1027 Allow Welsh domestic football clubs to play friendlies and allow supporters to attend matches | 2,045      | October 2020  | Two occasions    | Committee keeping a watching brief due to change in current rules across the UK due to resurgence of the pandemic. Circumstances changed due to move to Alert Level 4.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1101)</i>                                  |
| P-05-1028 Relax the excessive restrictions to allow motor sport rallies to take place in Wales          | 3,889      | October 2020  | Two occasions    | Committee keeping a watching brief due to change in current rules across the UK due to resurgence of the pandemic. Circumstances changed due to move to Alert Level 4.  |
| P-05-1037 Allow children to enter lockdown areas to continue to train with their existing sports clubs  | 9,867      | November 2020 | Two occasions    | Committee keeping a watching brief due to change in rules across the UK due to resurgence of the pandemic. Situation changed since petition was submitted due to Welsh Government applying national rules.  |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| P-05-1050 Require local lockdowns to be subject to a vote of the Senedd for approval before being implemented | 127        | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received  |
| P-05-1053 Keep gyms open and consider them as important as shops should another national lockdown take place  | 20,616     | December 2020 | Two occasions    | The petition was debated in Plenary as part of a debate on access to sport and physical activity during lockdowns.<br><br>Other petitions regarding reopening gyms are being considered on 16 March. |
| P-05-1054 The Hair & Beauty sector has proved itself COVID secure. Do not close us and risk Welsh jobs again  | 6,074      | December 2020 | One occasion     | Committee keeping a watching brief due to change in current rules across the UK due to resurgence of the pandemic and to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.                |
| P-05-1057 Increase the number of people allowed to attend wedding receptions                                  | 984        | December 2020 | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.<br><br>Another petition on when weddings can resume is being considered on 16 March.                            |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| P-05-1063 Open golf courses as it plays an integral part to the improvement of both physical and mental health | 6,317      | December 2020 | Two occasions    | <p>The petition was debated in Plenary as part of a debate on access to sport and physical activity during lockdowns.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.</p>        |
| P-05-1072 Investigate what powers the Welsh Parliament has in relation to banning conversion therapy           | 144        | December 2020 | Two occasions    | <p>The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.</p>  |
| P-05-1082 Allow choirs to rehearse indoors if they produce a full risk assessment to prevent C-19 infection    | 498        | January 2021  | One occasion     | <p>The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.</p>  |
| P-05-1084 Teach Welsh children about Wales' colonisation of Patagonia  | 103        | January 2021  | One occasion     | <p>The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.</p> <p>Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill has now been passed by the Senedd.</p> <p><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1098)</i></p> |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| P-05-1085 Make anti racism training compulsory for all elected Councillors and Members of the Senedd in Wales | 142        | February 2021 | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.   |
| P-05-1087 Stop the mass isolation of healthy school children!   | 1,177      | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.   |
| P-05-1091 Remove compulsory Welsh Bac for students looking to go to University                                | 63         | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.   |
| P-05-1096 Remove RSE from the mandatory element of the Curriculum Bill 2020                                   | 5,307      | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief on the issue in light of ongoing scrutiny of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill.<br><br>Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill has now been passed by the Senedd. Amendments to remove RSE from the mandatory aspects of the Curriculum were not agreed. |
| P-05-1098 Make Wales' role in British colonial  | 50         | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.   |



## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title   | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|--|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| history a compulsory school subject  |            |               |                  | Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill has now been passed by the Senedd.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1084)</i>  |
| P-05-1101 Allow fans to attend sporting events in Wales  | 105        | January 2021  | One occasion     | Committee keeping a watching brief due to change in current rules across the UK due to resurgence of the pandemic. Circumstances changed due to move to Alert Level 4.<br><br><i>(Petition grouped with P-05-1027)</i> |
| P-05-1102 Allow a minimum of one parent or guardian to watch children's organised football matches | 52         | January 2021  | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner. None have been received.   |
| P-05-1111 Put the £7 million back into the Mental Health Transformation fund                       | 255        | March 2021    | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to await comments from the petitioner, with a view to closing the petition on 16 March if none were received.   |
| P-05-1115 Stop giant Solar farm which will destroy ancient meadows near Abergavenny                | 258        | February 2021 | One occasion     | The Committee agreed to maintain a watching brief on the petition until the end of the Senedd term. The developer has until January 2022 to submit an application which will be considered                             |

## Review of petitions under consideration

| Petition title  | Signatures | First meeting | Times considered | Current position   |
|---|------------|---------------|------------------|--|
|   |            |               |                  | as a Development of National Significance. There is little a committee could do alongside this.  |
| P-05-1137 Call for fair funding for the National Library of Wales by the Welsh Government | 14,338     | February 2021 | One occasion     | Additional funding for the NLW was announced by the Government. The petitioner's further comments were provided to the Government for consideration. |



Department  
for Transport

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

## Agenda Item 5.1

From the Minister of State  
**Chris Heaton-Harris MP**

Great Minster House  
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SW1P 4DR

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E-Mail: [chris.heatonharris@dft.gov.uk](mailto:chris.heatonharris@dft.gov.uk)

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Our Ref: MC/299685

30 September 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 25 June to Grant Shapps, supporting a new railway station in St Clears. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this area. I apologise for the long delay in responding to you.

The Department for Transport has launched a £500 million Restoring Your Railway Fund. We are inviting MPs, local councils and community groups across England and Wales to propose how they could use funding to reinstate axed local services and restore stations.

There are two areas within the Restoring Your Railway Fund that may be of interest to you. The first is the Ideas Fund, which is about levelling up and improving connections to communities. It is inspired by communities affected by Beeching cuts, but not limited to Beeching line restoration.

The second area within the Restoring Your Railway Fund is the New Station Fund, which you mention in your letter. The New Station Fund will benefit some areas that may never have been served by rail. And this is just the beginning. As we assess and develop schemes, there is the ambition to expand the funding available. Ultimately our plan is to level up local economies across the country, improving access to jobs and education and boosting the wider region.

The criteria for the Ideas Fund are different to the criteria for the New Station Fund. The Ideas Fund is for early stage schemes, whereas the New Station Fund is for much further advanced schemes. It is possible that a scheme will exit from the Ideas Fund once it has progressed to the Strategic Outline Business Case stage to be proposed for further funding from the New Station Fund.

You can find additional information about both of these funds on GOV.UK<sup>1</sup> which you might find useful.

Thank you again for your email raising this matter with me. I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



**Chris Heaton-Harris MP**

**Minister of State for Transport**

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/restoring-your-railway-fund](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/restoring-your-railway-fund)

Kirsty Williams AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

Agenda Item 5.2



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1017  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/05838/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

21<sup>st</sup> October 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for sending me the additional correspondence from a petitioner that you have received in connection with *P-05-1017 Allow pupils to wear masks in all areas of the school.*

The information has been passed to policy leads for consideration as part of the ongoing review process into face coverings in schools.

Yours sincerely

**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-825  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/02579/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee

18 November 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 26 October regarding petition P-05-825 on protecting children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school.

I am grateful to you for sharing the petitioner's latest comments on the Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales and our White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales. I am pleased to read the positive comments from the petitioner on our work so far and am keen to continue working closely with them to develop and implement policies to further improve air quality in Wales. However, I note several specific concerns raised by the petitioner and hope to offer some assurances below.

### Funding at a Local Authority level

The petitioner has concerns regarding financial implications for Local Authorities delivering air quality improvements. For instance, through smoke control and tackling air pollution from domestic combustion. This was an issue identified through the consultation on our Clean Air Plan for Wales. We received feedback from Local Authorities across Wales, highlighting the need to ensure there is sufficient funding for any extra duties we place on them. We are working with Local Authorities in Wales, as we develop the Clean Air Bill for Wales, to ensure we fully understand impacts of new legislative duties on them. New responsibilities will be assessed and appropriately funded to ensure we deliver the best outcomes for public health and the environment.

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The petitioner calls for a detailed analysis of the monitoring measures undertaken in areas of known air quality issues in Local Authorities where Local Sustainable Transport Covid Response funding was granted this year. The primary purpose of this funding was to introduce temporary measures to improve the safety and conditions for sustainable and active travel modes.

Overall, I am supportive of proposals which can deliver potential air quality benefits if modal shift is achieved. But, I am aware road space reallocation can increase congestion and worsen air quality. Not all funded measures are expected to have a direct impact on air quality. However, a condition of funding was for air quality to be monitored in areas where such measures are being introduced and there are known air quality issues. Local Authorities are, otherwise, already required to monitor air quality within their areas under the Local Air Quality Management regime.

I agree we should seek to retain the improvements to air quality which have resulted from working from home. Welsh Government has publicly stated its intention to develop a hybrid workplace model, where staff can work in the office, at home, or in a hub location. The aim is this will enable 30% or more of workers to work remotely, helping reduce air pollution and congestion, and improving work-life balance for employees and employers.

### Exclusion Zones

In our Clean Air Plan for Wales, we committed to further examine the evidence base for strengthening anti-idling measures. As part of our White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales, we will seek to strengthen powers to address road vehicle idling, subject to the outcome of further examination of evidence.

My officials are currently considering the use of school exclusion zones as a measure to reduce air pollution. They hosted a webinar on Clean Air Day which explored this matter as part of our wider proposals to enhance Local Air Quality Management and anti-idling provisions through the Clean Air Bill for Wales.

### WHO Guidelines

As the petitioner notes, we have committed to new evidence-based, health-focused targets for fine particulate matter (which take account of stringent World Health Organisation guidelines values). We will consult on our pathway to new air quality targets through our consultation on a White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales.

We do not yet know whether it is possible to achieve the WHO guideline everywhere across Wales, and how and by when it could be achieved, if it is possible. Future targets for ambient levels of fine particulate matter need to be underpinned by the right evidence and metrics to achieve the most effective improvement, supporting the delivery of our well-being goals.

I have convened a Clean Air Advisory Panel to provide advice and recommendations to the Welsh Government on air quality matters in Wales, including the development of new targets for particulate matter.

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## White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales

The petitioner expressed concern at the lack of detail in the Clean Air Plan regarding the content in the White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales. When the Clean Air Plan was published in August, it was not possible to provide more detail on content of the White Paper as my officials were still in the process of developing evidence and engaging with relevant stakeholders. More specific and detailed information on new air quality legislation proposals will be included in the consultation on the White Paper on a Clean Air Bill for Wales. I look forward to receiving the petitioner's views on this White Paper, which I intend to publish before the end of this Senedd term. In relation to the request to introduce the Clean Air Plan for Wales in the Senedd, I have previously made a statement on the consultation draft. Our proposals in relation to the Clean Air Act will be introduced to the Senedd for scrutiny early next year.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours Sincerely,



**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

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Jane Hutt AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip

Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/01118/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Member of the Senedd  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
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3 December 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 November.

I acknowledge there are high numbers of older people experiencing abuse, and that the COVID pandemic has made this group of victims particularly more vulnerable. I am committed in ensuring that the issues raised in the petition are all dealt appropriately and with consideration.

Welsh Government will continue to work closely with, the Older People's Commissioner, to ensure there is adequate support and appropriate accommodation to enable older people fleeing domestic abuse. This year we have invested over £1.3 million for disbursed community accommodation for those for whom refuge might not be the right answer, including older people.

Recognising the impact COVID restrictions would have on all victims of violence and abuse, we launched a multi-media campaign in April this year. The campaign 'Home shouldn't be a place of fear' reminds victims that services are still operating, and to encourage bystanders and concerned others to access help and information.

Home shouldn't be a place of fear has been shared widely across TV, Radio, National and local news and press, online, and with support of community networks such as pharmacies, local supermarkets and police forces, reaching the most vulnerable. We developed the campaign with the support of the VAWDASV Communication group, which Dewis Choice is a member of, ensuring that the needs of older people are considered throughout our communications.

Another multimedia phase of the campaign is planned for the New Year.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I understand the Commissioner recently wrote to ONS raising her concern about data collection for older people. I will ensure that officials continue to represent Welsh Government in the Commissioners meetings.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke above the first name.

**Jane Hutt AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip

Julie James AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

Agenda Item 5.5  


Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/03201/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

[petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

7 January 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December 2020 about Petition P-05-1077 Stop the voting boundary change to Ystrad Mynach south. I note the decision reached by the Committee that no further action is to be taken and that the petition is now closed.

I am grateful to you for providing me with the petitioner's further comments on this matter and I can confirm I will consider these alongside others I have received about the Final Report of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission which proposes changes to the County Borough of Caerphilly electoral arrangements.

I issued a written statement setting out the position relating to the current Programme of Electoral Arrangements Reviews for Principal Councils. I attach a link to the statement for ease of reference.

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-programme-electoral-arrangements-reviews-principal-councils-current-position>

The statement makes reference to a small number of reviews which have attracted a significant amount of representations. These include the final recommendations for the future electoral arrangements in the County Borough of Caerphilly. The statement confirms during the coming months I will be considering carefully the points raised during the representation period which will inform future decisions

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

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**Janet Finch-Saunders MS**

Chair  
Petitions Committee

12 February 2021

Dear Janet

**Petition P-05-812 Implement the NICE guidelines for Borderline Personality Disorder**

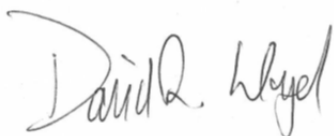
Thank you for your letter dated 10 February regarding the above petition, and seeking information about whether the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has undertaken any scrutiny of the implementation of NICE guidelines in Wales.

In response to the question in your letter, the HSCS Committee takes account of NICE guidelines where relevant during our scrutiny work, for example in respect of the Committee's work on **endoscopy services** in 2019, or the **Welsh Government's draft national dementia strategy** in 2017.

We anticipate including in our legacy report an indication of issues our successor committee in the Sixth Senedd may wish to consider. We will include a reference to the Petition Committee's suggestion in respect of the implementation of NICE guidelines in Wales.

Thank you for your continued engagement with the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on these cross-cutting matters.

Yours sincerely



Dr Dai Lloyd MS  
**Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee**



**Senedd Cymru**  
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# Agenda Item 7

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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