

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Video Conference via Zoom	Gareth Price
Meeting date: 13 September 2021	Committee Clerk
Meeting time: 10.00	0300 200 6565
	Petitions@senedd.wales

- 1 Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**
(10.00) (Pages 1 – 46)
- 2 New Petitions**
(10.00–10.30)
 - 2.1 P-06-1172 Ban fireworks from public sale**
(Pages 47 – 61)
 - 2.2 P-06-1174 Stop the Welsh government & public groups from making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary**
(Pages 62 – 73)
 - 2.3 P-06-1175 Stop firebreaks during half terms. These are the only breaks teaching staff are permitted to have**
(Pages 74 – 78)
 - 2.4 P-06-1176 The Dignity Charter to inspire all citizens to become ambassadors of and for Wales**
(Pages 79 – 80)
 - 2.5 P-06-1177 Provide Free Period Products for all Menstruating People in Wales**
(Pages 81 – 87)
 - 2.6 P-06-1178 Free school meals for all pupils in Wales**
(Pages 88 – 93)
 - 2.7 P-06-1180 Increase the teaching and readily available information on drugs in Welsh secondary schools**
(Pages 94 – 101)
- 3 Updates to previous petitions**
(10.30–11.30)



Environment and Rural Affairs

- 3.1 P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals**
(Pages 102 – 115)
- 3.2 P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters**
(Pages 116 – 143)

Health and Social Services

- 3.3 P-05-912 Supporting Families with Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults**
(Pages 144 – 151)
- 3.4 P-05-1035 Allow birthing partners to be present at scans, the start of labour, birth and after the birth**
(Pages 152 – 156)
- 3.5 P-05-1045 To make shared-decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews a legal requirement**
(Pages 157 – 161)
- 3.6 P-05-1062 Abandon the rt-PCR test for covid-19 testing as its unfit for purpose**
(Pages 162 – 164)
- 3.7 P-05-1138 COVID-19 Weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical health needs**
(Pages 165 – 166)

Education

- 3.8 P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence**
(Pages 167 – 170)

3.9 P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres, now unable to operate for 12 months

(Pages 171 – 179)

Culture, Sport and Tourism

3.10 P-05-949 SAVE COWBRIDGE OLD GIRLS' SCHOOL FROM DEMOLITION

(Pages 180 – 183)

The following two items are grouped together for consideration

3.11 P-05-1073 Create and build a new branch of National Museum Wales dedicated to Welsh involvement in colonialism

(Pages 184 – 190)

3.12 P-05-1086 Create a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage

(Pages 191 – 194)

Finance

3.13 P-05-1069 Save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston

(Pages 195 – 209)

Petitions that are now resolved

The following three items are grouped together for consideration

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

(Pages 210 – 212)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](#)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021 - Explanatory Memorandum](#)

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

(Page 213)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](#)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021 - Explanatory Memorandum](#)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021, Plenary 23 March 2021](#)

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

(Pages 214 – 215)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](#)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021 - Explanatory Memorandum](#)

[The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021, Plenary 23 March 2021](#)

3.17 P-05-1068 Allow socially distanced meets in private gardens to follow science and avoid isolation

(Pages 216 – 221)

3.18 P-06-1191 Abolish social distancing measures at all Welsh weddings this Summer following July 15th 2021

(Pages 222 – 226)

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from item 5 of the meeting.

5 Forward work programme

(11.30 – 11.45)

Document is Restricted

P-06-1172 Ban fireworks from public sale

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2021

Reference: SR21-0497-2

Petition Number: P-06-1172

Petition title: Ban fireworks from public sale

Text of petition:

Fireworks are an explosive and should only be used in a controlled environment. They cause anxiety to vulnerable people and pets. They can also be used as weapons. Items such as this should only be available to licenced events.

1. The law on selling, owning and using fireworks

There are restrictions on the sale, possession and use of fireworks. The Fireworks Act 2003 grants the UK Government powers to control the use of fireworks in England and Wales, to limit the risk of fireworks causing death, injury or distress to persons or animals, or damage to property.



The [Fireworks Regulations 2004](#) prohibit the sale of fireworks to the public by unlicensed traders, except for days around ‘permitted fireworks nights’ (Chinese New Year, Diwali, Bonfire Night and New Year). They also ban the sale of fireworks with noise levels over 120 decibels. [The Pyrotechnic Articles \(Safety\) Regulations 2015](#) impose age restrictions on the sale of fireworks and ban the sale of professional display fireworks to the public.

The Fireworks Regulations make it illegal for anyone under 18 to possess an ‘adult’ (outdoor) firework in a public place. They also make it illegal to use fireworks between 11pm and 7am without permission in England and Wales (except for permitted fireworks nights). Under the [Explosives Act 1875](#) (as amended), it is illegal to set a firework off in a street or public place.

Local authorities have powers under the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#) to address noise from homes or gardens between 11pm and 7am. If the noise breaches permitted levels, an environmental health officer may serve a warning notice on the person responsible. If the warning is ignored, the person may be prosecuted.

2. Action

2.1. UK Parliament and Government

The House of Commons Petitions Committee has considered several petitions about misuse of fireworks. It [reported on fireworks](#) in November 2019.

The Committee did not support a ban on the sale and use of fireworks, noting that a ban could have unintended consequences, such as restricting community events and encouraging a black market to emerge. However, the Committee made several recommendations, saying that the UK Government should:

- introduce legislation to enable local authorities to introduce mandatory permit schemes for fireworks in places where misuse is a problem;
- review the decibel limit of consumer fireworks, with a view to reducing the limit to protect animals better;
- set a strategy on tackling illegal sales of fireworks via social media; and
- fund and coordinate an awareness campaign on using fireworks responsibly.

In response, the [UK Government agreed](#) to coordinate an awareness campaign, but rejected most of the other recommendations. It said the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) would gather evidence on fireworks ‘in order for the Government to identify whether people’s perceptions and concerns are reflected in evidence, and if so, what action—if any—is appropriate

for the Government to take'. The OPSS published information on developing an evidence base on fireworks in October 2020 and an analysis of consumer behaviours and attitudes to fireworks in the UK in April 2021.

2.2. Senedd and Welsh Government

The Deputy Minister for Climate Change responded to this petition on 24 August, saying that the Welsh Government is 'very concerned about the effect of loud firework noise on animals and vulnerable people' and outlining recent action.

On 14 January 2020, the then Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs wrote to the UK Government to call for 'a detailed and positive response' to the recommendations of the House of Commons Petitions Committee. She supported the Committee's recommendations for reviews of decibel limits and online sales and said there should be a 'dialogue' on local authority powers, including whether a mandatory permit scheme should be introduced.

Members of the Senedd asked oral questions about fireworks in Plenary on 10 and 18 November 2020. The First Minister said that the Welsh Government had worked with the UK Government on a campaign on responsible use of fireworks in the run-up to Bonfire Night. He also said the Welsh Government was 'very keen to work with others on this issue' and was 'in discussions with BEIS [in the UK Government] [...] and indeed with the Scottish Government over their proposals'.

The Minister met with counterparts in the UK and Scottish Governments on 28 January 2021. Following the meeting, the Minister wrote to the UK Government to raise concerns that current legislation in Wales is not 'adequate to protect vulnerable people and animals from the effects of firework noise' and to express interest in changes made in Scotland.

She noted that the UK Government currently holds powers on fireworks in England and Wales and said she would welcome 'coordinated action' across Great Britain to make it harder for people to avoid geographical limits on sales. However, she also said:

In the absence of a clear commitment by the UK Government to tighten regulations in England and Wales, towards the end of our meeting I raised the possibility of transferring these powers to Welsh Ministers, enabling the next Welsh Government to make the regulations it considers appropriate. [...] You agreed to give the matter further consideration and made a commitment to discuss this with the Secretary of State for Wales. I would welcome an update on this.

In response, the UK Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Market Paul Scully said:

I remain committed to considering if it would be appropriate for the Welsh Government to be given additional powers in respect of fireworks. Before advancing on

this matter, I would want to wait until the outcomes of commitments the Government has made and the impact of the changes the Scottish Government have implemented have been evaluated.

2.3. Scottish Government

The Scottish Government's view is that the use of fireworks is devolved in Scotland, but 'implementing a ban on [the sale of] fireworks is reserved to the UK Government'. The Scottish Ministers have powers to control fireworks under the Fireworks Act 2003.

In 2020, the Scottish Government commissioned a Fireworks Review Group to make recommendations on tightening fireworks legislation. The Group recommended changes to the law on how fireworks can be accessed and used. It did not recommend banning the sale of fireworks.

In response to the recommendations, the Scottish Government made secondary legislation using powers in the Fireworks Act 2003 to restrict the times of day that fireworks can be sold and set off and to limit the quantity of fireworks that can be supplied to the public to 5kg. The Scottish Government also consulted on proposed changes to primary legislation, to:

- require adults to apply for a licence before they can buy fireworks, including completing an online safety training course and paying a fee;
- restrict the days that fireworks can be sold and used to permitted periods;
- give local authorities the power to create 'no firework areas', where the general public may not set off fireworks; and
- criminalise the sale of fireworks to under-18s.

The First Minister indicated support for the recommendations of the Fireworks Review Group in Plenary in November 2020, saying that 'if [the measures] were introduced on a whole-UK basis, Wales would certainly benefit.'

3. The UK Internal Market Act 2020

The UK Internal Market Act 2020 set new rules for the regulation of goods across the UK. The Act established the principles of mutual recognition and non-discrimination and enshrined them in UK law as Market Access Principles.

Under the mutual recognition principle, if a good complies with rules relating to its sale in the part of the UK in which it was produced or into which it was imported, then it can be sold in any other

part of the UK without having to meet the standards in those other parts, even if they are different.

Under the non-discrimination principle, any rules regulating how goods must be sold in one part of the UK that discriminate directly or indirectly against providers from other parts of the UK do not generally apply.

A ban on the sale of fireworks in Wales might come within the scope of the Market Access Principles. This could have an impact on the effect and enforceability of that ban.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1172
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/10808/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair – Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
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24 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July regarding Petition P-06-1172, calling for a ban on fireworks for public sale. I am replying as representations on this matter tend to focus on noise, which falls within the Climate Change portfolio.

The Welsh Government is very concerned about the effect of loud firework noise on animals and vulnerable people. In November of last year, both the First Minister and the then Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs spoke about this issue in the Senedd. In those exchanges, cross-party support was voiced for tightening regulations in this area.

In responding to this petition I must point out that fireworks come in many shapes and sizes. They range from sparklers and quiet garden fireworks to the very largest fireworks, which are only suitable for professional use. When used responsibly, they all bring pleasure to a great many people. However, when used irresponsibly or without providing advance warning, loud fireworks cause distress and anxiety to vulnerable people and animals. On balance, the Welsh Government does not believe the current legislation is sufficient to adequately protect those groups.

Powers to regulate the sale and use of fireworks in England and Wales exist under the Fireworks Act 2003. These powers currently sit with UK Government Ministers, specifically the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

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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.

In 2020 Welsh Government Ministers wrote to BEIS, endorsing House of Commons Petitions Committee recommendations to improve fireworks regulations. Then in early 2021 Lesley Griffiths MS met with Ministers responsible for fireworks policy in the UK and Scottish Governments. There they discussed the merits of tightening the regulations around fireworks across Great Britain. Following this meeting, the Welsh Government wrote again to the responsible BEIS Minister, Paul Scully MP, urging UK Government action. Once again we said we would like to see a reduced maximum decibel limit to reduce risks to animal health.

In the absence of a UK Government commitment to tighten the rules, we raised the question of transferring functions to Welsh Ministers. This would enable us to make the regulations we consider appropriate for Wales. However, we recognise the proximity of Wales' most populated areas to shops in England, and the ease of shopping online. Therefore, we would ideally like to see concerted action across Great Britain. We want the fireworks available to people in Wales to be quieter and used at more predictable times in future. To this end, we would like to see tighter regulations apply on both sides of the border. Joined-up action across Great Britain would help us to send clear, consistent messages to the public. It would also make it harder for people to get around geographically limited restrictions on sales introduced by a single administration.

I trust this shows the Welsh Government takes this issue seriously and has been pressing for improvements in this area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', with a long vertical stroke extending upwards from the top of the 'e'.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

Hannah Blythyn AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/LG/6033/19

Kelly Tolhurst MP
Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
minister.tolhurst@beis.gov.uk

14 January 2020

Dear Kelly

As Ministers with policy responsibility for animal welfare, air quality, noise and veterans' issues in Wales, we urge the UK Government to provide a detailed and positive response to the recommendations of the House of Commons Petitions Committee inquiry into fireworks, published on 5 November 2019.

Without prejudging the outcome of such work, we urge you to accept the Committee's recommendation for the UK Government to lead a review, working with animal welfare experts and the fireworks industry, of the effects of fireworks noise on animal welfare, with a view to setting a workable reduced maximum decibel limit which would diminish the risks to animal health. We would welcome the opportunity for Welsh Government officials to be involved in and contribute to the terms of reference for such a review, ensuring it addresses serious issues around the effects of fireworks on animals which have arisen here in Wales.

We strongly support the Committee's recommendation for the UK Government to fund and coordinate a major awareness campaign on the responsible use of fireworks. The campaign should encourage people who use fireworks to let their neighbours know in advance, so they can take steps to protect themselves and their animals if they need to. The campaign should include explicit information in relation to the potential impacts of fireworks on vulnerable groups such as autistic people, veterans and those with PTSD and other health conditions, as well as on domestic and working animals. Our officials would be pleased to work with yours to ensure any specific requirements for Wales are met.

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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 are open-minded regarding the provision of additional powers to assist Local Authorities in managing issues surrounding fireworks. The Committee has recommended piloting a revenue-neutral, mandatory permit system for firework displays at a local level. Local Authority officers in Wales have raised both pros and cons of such an approach with our officials. The prior notification of displays is helpful for informing local residents and ensuring health and safety, and works well on a voluntary basis in some authorities. However, there are concerns a permit system might deter some organisers from mounting public firework displays, potentially leading to an increase in less well run private displays. Some Welsh Local Authority officers have suggested the Licensing Act 2003 should be looked at as a possible vehicle for regulating large firework displays. The Welsh Government would welcome dialogue with the UK Government on the various approaches to reviewing Local Authority powers in this area, with a focus on the practicalities, likely positive outcomes and potential unintended consequences.

We agree the level of concern about fireworks is likely to be under-reported by those affected, and people should be enabled and encouraged to make their concerns known. Our officials should work together, perhaps on guidance to improve the systems public authorities have in place for reporting concerns around the misuse of fireworks and establish a consistent approach to data collection and publication.

We support the Committee's recommendation for the UK Government to conduct a review of online sales of fireworks, with a particular focus on sales via social media, and take measures to exert pressure on social media companies to identify and remove posts advertising unlicensed or illegal fireworks for sale on their platforms. We urge the UK Government to ensure fireworks intended for storage at home are not packaged and designed in a way which appeals to children.

On 10 December, we launched a 13-week public consultation on a Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales. It states we will assess the contribution domestic bonfires and fireworks make to levels of fine particulate matter, and we are taking a cross-Government approach to consider what, if any, further action should be taken in this area. Welsh Government air quality officials would welcome a discussion with officials in the Office for Product Safety and Standards in relation to the air quality impacts of fireworks, including consideration of the range of chemicals which may be present.

We would be grateful if you would take account of the views of Welsh Ministers in formulating your response to the Petitions Committee, and engage with us as work is taken forward. This matter cuts across a number of devolved policy areas, and we should work collaboratively to secure improvements to health and well-being of people and animals.

This letter is being copied for information to Ash Denham MSP, Minister for Community Safety in the Scottish Government, and to the Secretary of State for Wales.

Regards


Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd,
Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment,
Energy and Rural Affairs



Hannah Blythyn AC/AM
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a
Llywodraeth Leol
Deputy Minister for Housing
and Local Government



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Leslie Griffiths AM
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs
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Our ref: CC2020/00847

Your ref: MA/LG/6033/19

25 January 2020

Reef (estio),

Thank you for your letter dated 14 January 2020. I am grateful for the time taken to write setting out the views of the Welsh Government with regard to the conclusions of the Petitions Select Committee inquiry around fireworks. I will be responding to that inquiry on behalf of the Government in due course.

I am pleased that officials in the Office for Product for Safety and Standards (OPSS), who have responsibility for fireworks policy, have met with officials from both the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government. I would like to encourage their continued joint working, particularly as they are considering how to develop a joint campaign to help educate the public and make them aware of the issues associated with firework use.

Following the two most recent e-petitions and subsequent debates in parliament, I have taken a keen interest in the issue of fireworks and have been listening to the concerns that individuals have been raising in debate and through correspondence. We receive representations from a wide range of stakeholders, including members of the public, organisations and charities, all with ranging views on what the issues are and what action they would like to see.

As you may be aware, I have asked OPSS to develop a fact-based evidence base on the key issues that have been raised around fireworks. This includes looking at data around noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour, non-compliance, environmental impact, and the impact on humans and animals. The aim is to build a full picture of the data around fireworks in order for us to identify whether there is a problem, and if so, what action - if any - is appropriate. This work will also help us identify trends across fireworks seasons.

I was interested to read of your proposed consultation on a Clean Air Plan for Wales and hope you will be able to share any evidence that you have in relation to the impact of bonfires and fireworks, so that it can be included as part of OPSS' evidence base.

Thank you again for sharing your views. I look forward to the continued joint working of our respective officials.

KELLY TOLHURST MP

Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Corporate Responsibility

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DC/LG/02850/21

Paul Scully MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Minister.Scully@beis.gov.uk

3 March 2021

Dear Paul Scully MP,

Thank you for meeting with Ash Denham MSP, Minister for Community Safety in the Scottish Government and me on 28 January regarding issues around the regulation of fireworks across Great Britain.

As discussed, I do not believe the current legislation is adequate to protect vulnerable people and animals from the effects of firework noise, and I was very interested to hear about the improvements to fireworks legislation being made in Scotland. I am concerned about England and Wales falling behind.

You mentioned the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) was carrying out testing on the decibel levels of fireworks currently sold in Great Britain. You said this work had been delayed by the pandemic but the results would be available later this year. I previously wrote to your predecessor urging the UK Government to accept the Petitions Committee recommendation seeking a workable reduced maximum decibel limit which would diminish the risks of firework noise to animal health. I would be grateful if you could set out how the OPSS work will inform improvements to the regulations, and current timescales for necessary changes to be made.

During the meeting, I highlighted regulation-making powers under the Fireworks Act remain with the Secretary of State in relation to England and Wales. Therefore, Welsh Ministers are not able to mirror in Wales the regulations recently made by the Scottish Government, tightening conditions on the sale and use of fireworks.

Given the proximity of Wales' most populated areas to shops in England, and the ease of shopping online, I would welcome concerted action across Great Britain to ensure fireworks available for sale to the public in Wales are quieter and used at more predictable times going forwards. Joined up action across Great Britain would allow us to send clear, consistent messages to the public. Co-ordinated action would also make it harder for people to get around geographically limited restrictions on sales introduced by a single administration.

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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.

In the absence of a clear commitment by the UK Government to tighten regulations in England and Wales, towards the end of our meeting I raised the possibility of transferring these powers to Welsh Ministers, enabling the next Welsh Government to make the regulations it considers appropriate. You raised concerns around policy divergence. I would point out divergence within Great Britain is inevitable if England and Wales do not keep pace with the improvements to legislation currently being made in Scotland. You agreed to give the matter further consideration and made a commitment to discuss this with the Secretary of State for Wales. I would welcome an update on this.

I look forward to receiving your views on the issues addressed in this letter.

I am copying this letter to Ash Denham MSP and the Secretary of State for Wales.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'L' and 'G'.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

- CC: 1. Ash Denham MSP
Minister for Community Safety
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2. Secretary of State for Wales



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Our ref: CC2021/08129
Your ref: DC/LG/02850/21

23 March 2021

Dear Lesley,

Thank you for your letter dated 3 March 2021 about our meeting, together with Ash Denham MSP, Minister for Community Safety in the Scottish Government, on 28 January to discuss fireworks. It was helpful to have the opportunity to hear your views and thoughts.

As you know, the Petitions Committee carried out an extensive inquiry into fireworks that covered the whole of Great Britain and published its report in November 2019. The Committee concluded that they could not “support a ban (of consumer fireworks) before other, less drastic but potentially more effective, options have been fully explored”.

The Government agrees with the Committee’s approach. Furthermore, we do not feel at present that any further restrictions in relation to fireworks are appropriate, as they could have unintended consequences. We acknowledge the experience of the National Fire Chiefs Council and the National Police Chiefs Council who believe banning fireworks would push the market underground and make it more difficult to monitor. Nevertheless, we are not complacent and have been carrying out work to deliver the commitments we made in response to the Petition Committee’s inquiry.

As you will understand, the pandemic has been a key focus, meaning stakeholders’ attention has been on other highly important matters. Despite this, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) continues to engage regularly with animal welfare bodies, including the RSPCA, The Kennel Club and the British Horse Society. This is intended to ensure we have access to all available evidence. The Government also engages with a wide range of other stakeholders, including ex-armed forces charities, to ensure we understand the issues and that we are focusing on the right messages in our awareness campaigns.

On 29 October 2020, OPSS published a Fireworks Evidence Base that collated available data and research about noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour, non-compliance, environmental impact, and the impact on humans and animals. The intention of the evidence base was to collate existing information, to build a full picture of the data around fireworks.

A key commitment the Government made in response to the Petition Committee’s inquiry was to run a public awareness campaign for the 2020 fireworks season. We believe the campaign was successful and far-reaching. Subsequent reports from Twitter showed that, between 11 October and 9 November 2020, the campaign materials had a potential reach of 2.6 million (total number of people who saw the content) and 9.4 million potential impressions (number of times content was displayed).

The Fireworks Evidence Base work with stakeholders and the conclusions of the Petition Committee's inquiry indicate that awareness raising and education are key to ensuring anti-social behaviour is minimised and that fireworks are used considerately. I am pleased that the assets for the 2020 campaign were translated into Welsh. I also understand that they were used in the campaign and shared with your officials to promote in the most appropriate way for Wales. We have started to plan for the 2021 campaign, and we will be keen to engage with your officials as we develop the approach.

Other commitments the Government made and continues to work on include:

- Engaging with Local Authorities to better understand what specific issues they face. To date we have received limited evidence, but we continue to engage and monitor issues by area;
- Engaging with the Department for Health and Social Care and Home Office to determine whether data collection of firework related incidents could be improved and if it would be beneficial to do so;
- Engaging with the Home Office, the police and fire services to better understand what issues they face with fireworks, to inform a decision as to whether non-compliance or criminal activity incidents require a change in the way they are reported;
- An OPSS project aimed at reducing the flow of unsafe products through fulfilment houses within the UK. The project includes capturing data on fulfilment activity within the UK and disrupting the activity of any fulfilment houses supplying unsafe products. While the project does not focus on fireworks, we believe the lessons learned can be applied more widely;
- Engaging with online platforms to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and are taking action to remove any listings of unsafe products;
- Engaging with the fireworks industry to consider what action can be taken on a voluntary basis. The industry is already considering how they can encourage consumers to read the instructions that come with fireworks (an issue we have identified as part of our evidence base work).

As part of the Government response to the Petition Committee's inquiry, OPSS committed to do further work on noise, and a research programme was commissioned to test the decibel level of commonly used fireworks. The objective of the testing work is to help us understand the decibel level associated with a range of fireworks, and whether there are any that can be considered as "low" noise. In the context of the pandemic, the testing laboratories had to re-prioritise their workload and we hope the testing can be completed later this year.

With regards to the legislative amendments the Scottish Government is implementing, I am keen to understand the impact the changes have made. I believe this is necessary to consider whether similar changes are needed for England and Wales and to what extent the objective could be achieved through non-legislative ways in England and Wales.

I remain committed to considering if it would be appropriate for the Welsh Government to be given additional powers in respect of fireworks. Before advancing on this matter, I would want to wait until the outcomes of commitments the Government has made and the impact of the changes the Scottish Government have implemented have been evaluated. I am mindful that

this approach is supported by the extensive Petition Committee's inquiry (of which I was a member).

I encourage our officials across England, Scotland and Wales to continue to engage and work collaboratively. Of course, I would be happy to discuss the matter again as work progresses.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write, I hope my response is helpful to you.

This letter is copied to Ash Denham, MSP.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Scully', is centered on the page.

PAUL SCULLY MP
Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets
Minister for London

P-06-1174 Stop the Welsh government & public groups from making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2021

Reference: RS21/0497-4

Petition Number: P-06-1174

Petition title: Stop the Welsh government & public groups from making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary

Text of petition:

The Welsh government and public groups, are actively promoting Wales as "a nation of sanctuary" for foreign nationals (refugees and asylum seekers) to come and live in Wales. This is NOT the will of the majority of the people in Wales. The Welsh government have yet to consult with their constituents (ie the Welsh nation), regarding this matter. If Wales becomes the Nation of Sanctuary, the Welsh heritage will very quickly be eroded away.

On <https://wales.cityofsanctuary.org> they state (and i quote) "We're pleased we already have the support of Welsh Government and have started some really exciting work with universities, the health service and trade unions". Just because a very small minority of people in Wales, are willing to open their arms, homes and country to refugees and asylum seekers, that DOES NOT represent the majority of the Welsh nation.

We as a nation simply can not sustain any more refugees and asylum seekers to be placed/housed in Wales. The Welsh government can not afford to look after people and families that are struggling to put food on the table or a roof over their heads as is. There are thousands of people/families (including children) that are homeless in Wales and require urgent help. The money saved by not accepting these refugees and asylum seekers into Wales, could go towards helping people of Wales that really need it.

We (the signed) want to abolish Wales as a nation of sanctuary.



1. Background

1.1. Historical context

The protection of people fleeing their homelands began in 1921 when, following the First World War, the League of Nations began coordinating a set of international agreements to provide travel documents to those persons.

Following the sharp increase of displaced persons during and after World War II, a diplomatic conference in Geneva resulted in the 1951 Refugee Convention, which was later amended by a Protocol in 1967. The United Nations' Refugee Agency (UNHCR) oversees both agreements, which have 149 state parties and are the main international agreements for the protection of refugees.

The core principle of the Refugee Convention is 'non-refoulement', which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom.

Non-refoulement is now considered a rule of customary international law. This means that it has universal application to all states, regardless of the existence of an international agreement or their status in relation to it.

The protection of refugees is also indirectly enshrined in other regional agreements to which the UK is a party, such as the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). For example, Article 2 guarantees the right to life and Article 3 provides for freedom from torture and inhumane or degrading treatment. Together, they prohibit 'indirect refoulement', which means an expulsion to a state from where migrants may face further deportation without a proper assessment of their situation.

1.2. Definitions

According to the Refugee Convention 1951, a refugee is:

a person who is outside their country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.

This differs from the definition of an asylum seeker, which is:

a person who has crossed an international border in search of protection, but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been decided.

An asylum seeker is therefore someone who has arrived in a country and asked for asylum. Until they receive a decision as to whether or not they are a refugee, they are known as an asylum seeker.

In the UK, asylum seekers **do not have the same rights** as a refugee or a British citizen. For example, people seeking asylum aren't allowed to work or claim benefits.

1.3. UK Government support for asylum seekers

The **UK Government provides** asylum seekers with housing, financial support and access to services if they meet the **eligibility requirements** (that they are homeless or do not have money to buy food).

Equivalent provision is made for those whose **asylum application is refused**, who must meet **different eligibility requirements**.

Housing

Housing is allocated by the UK Government and asylum seekers are not able to choose where they live.

Financial support

Asylum seekers **receive £39.63 per week** per person in the household for food, clothing and toiletries. This allowance is pre-loaded onto a debit card each week..

Additional sums are provided to pregnant mothers and mothers of young children, as follows:

Pregnant mother	£3
Baby under 1 year old	£5
Child aged 1 to 3	£3

An additional one-off maternity payment of £300 can be provided to mothers if their baby is due in 8 weeks or less, or if their baby is under 6 weeks old.

Services

Asylum seekers are able to receive free NHS healthcare, including free prescriptions, dental care, eyesight tests and help paying for glasses.

Children are able to attend state schools, including applying for free school meals.

In Wales, asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers are entitled to the same equity of access to health services as the resident population.

1.4. UK Nationality and Borders Bill

The UK Government's Nationality and Borders Bill is currently progressing through the UK Parliament. The three main objectives of the Bill are to:

1. Increase the fairness of the system to better protect and support those in need of asylum.
2. Deter illegal entry into the United Kingdom, thereby breaking the business model of people smuggling networks and protecting the lives of those they endanger.
3. Remove those with no right to be in the UK more easily.

According to the House of Commons Library, 'irregular journeys to the UK and late claims for asylum would be deterred and penalised in various ways.'

It would allow for the off-shore processing of asylum claims, a practice which the United Nations describes as 'dehumanizing, expensive and fail(s) to resolve the underlying causes of movement and displacement'. The Bill would introduce new ways to deter certain claims, would broaden criminal sanctions for related offences and maximise their associated penalties. It would also grant additional powers for vessels in UK territorial seas to be stopped and redirected.

The UNHCR issued a statement that it was 'saddened' that the Bill had passed its second reading.

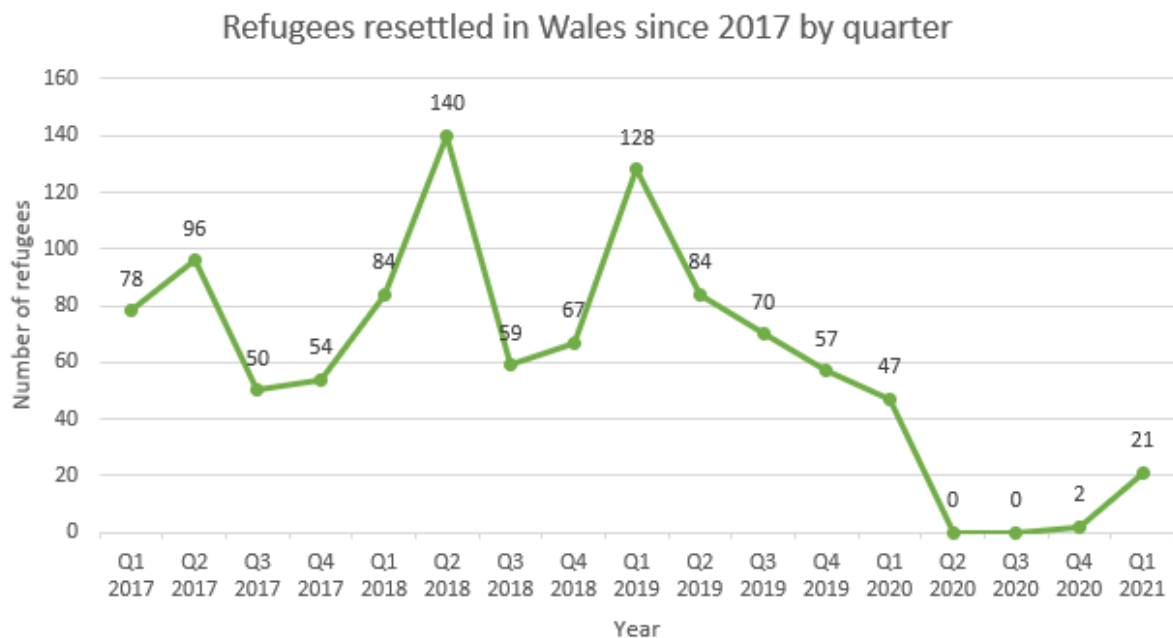
2. Wales

2.1. Statistics

Refugees in Wales

Resettlement of refugees was paused during the second and third quarter of 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Resettlement recommenced in December 2020, when 2 refugees were resettled in Wales. 21 refugees were resettled in Wales in the first quarter of 2021.

The number of refugees resettled in Wales since 2017 by quarter is shown in the graph below:



Source:

Home Office Immigration Statistics, [Res_D01: Refugees resettled by resettlement scheme and local authority](#) (updated 27 May 2021)

Asylum seekers in Wales

As of 31 March 2021, there were 2,734 asylum seekers in Wales.

Local authority [data shows](#) the number of asylum seekers in receipt of support up until 31 March 2021. Support is provided under UK-wide legislation and is divided into two categories: subsistence only and dispersed accommodation. [Dispersed accommodation](#) means long-term temporary accommodation provided through the Home Office.

As of 31 March 2021, 10 of Wales' 22 local authorities were providing support, as follows:

Local Authority	Number of asylum seekers receiving support: subsistence only	Number of asylum seekers receiving support: dispersed accommodation
Caerphilly	1	0
Cardiff	48	1,322
Conwy	0	6
Merthyr Tydfil	2	0
Neath Port Talbot	1	0
Newport	23	403
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2	0
Swansea	18	783
Vale of Glamorgan	1	1
Wrexham	3	120

Source: Home Office Immigration Statistics, Asy_D11: Asylum seekers in receipt of section 95 support by local authority (updated 27 May 2021)

3. Welsh Government action

In 2019, the Welsh Government announced it would become the world’s first Nation of Sanctuary. This was in response to a 2017 inquiry by the Fifth Senedd’s Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee into refugees and asylum seekers in Wales.

The Welsh Government’s impact assessment summarises how the policy:

seeks to remove barriers to asylum seekers accessing services, improve employability support for refugees, improve integration and knowledge of rights for refugees and asylum seekers and mitigate destitution, mental ill health and homelessness.

The assessment concluded that ‘no negative impacts of these proposals have been identified.’

International compliance & recognition

The Welsh Government and its Ministers are required to comply with the UK’s and Wales’ international obligations.

In the plan, the Welsh Government explains how the policy ensures that it fulfils Wales' international obligations and complies with the seven United Nations Conventions signed and ratified by the UK.

The Nation of Sanctuary policy was endorsed by the United Nations, which gave the policy its 'full backing'.

Devolution

The plan also provided an opportunity for the Welsh Government to set out its position on devolution arrangements, given that asylum and immigration are reserved to the UK Government:

Responsibility for asylum and immigration rests with the UK Government rather than the Welsh Government. This means that some of the key levers to prevent harmful outcomes, such as timely and good asylum case decision-making, the quality of asylum accommodation and provision of legal aid, are out of our control.

However, the successful integration of refugees and asylum seekers will require concerted effort on the part of the Welsh Government, Welsh public services and Welsh communities.

Costs

In November 2020, the Welsh Government responded to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request for the total cost of its Nation of Sanctuary programme to date. These are provided as follows:

Annex A

Name of Project/Scheme	Cost (Jan 2019 – Oct 2020)
ReStart: Refugee Integration*	£1,502,922
Asylum Rights Programme	£760,500
Asylum Justice	£45,000
Sanctuary Website	£17,071
WARD Scheme	£54,466
Move On Project**	£323,330
Research (Hosting)	£10,000
Research (Employer Gaps and Opportunities)	£14,998
Hate Crime Funding (WRC)	£36,000
Total	£2,764,287

* This Project is funded through the EU Asylum Migration Integration Fund.

** This cost is based on the annual allocation for the project during 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The following disclaimer accompanied the information:

The Nation of Sanctuary plan was developed through extensive cross-government working on the basis that all parts of the Welsh Government should be ensuring that schemes and initiatives are inclusive of those with protected characteristics, including refugees or asylum seekers. Accordingly, many of the actions in the plan reflect in-depth discussions about how existing funded schemes can be better aligned to the needs of these individuals. It is not possible to quantify how much of these general budgets has been used to support these members of our communities.

The following quoted information was also requested but not held by the Welsh Government:

- for a breakdown of costs for housing, healthcare and translators etc;
- have any of these people been involved with crimes, and if so what crimes;
- what percentage of these people are employed

In response to 'have the people taken in had any stock of social housing and if so how much in each county', the Welsh Government explained that:

Asylum seekers are provided with accommodation on a 'no choice' basis by the Home Office – this is not considered to be social housing and is rented from private landlords. If granted refugee status, local authorities are able to provide homelessness assistance to individuals but the Welsh Government does not hold information relating to the number of refugees accommodated in social housing.

The response also explained that the Nation of Sanctuary plan was developed in for the Fifth Senedd term, which concluded in April 2021 and that work beyond then would need to be considered by a future Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government had previously responded to an FOI request on the number of 'illegal migrants/refugees (who) are being housed in hotels, hostels and private residence in Wales' (September 2020).

Latest Welsh Government statements

The Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt, is responsible for the Welsh Government's activities in relation to asylum seekers and refugees since the Senedd elections in May 2021.

On 17 June 2021, the Minister gave a statement marking Refugee Week which provided an update on the Welsh Government's recent activities. The statement explained that:

- Funded services, such as the Asylum Rights Programme and Asylum Justice legal advice, have continued to deliver during the coronavirus pandemic on virtual platforms;

- Welsh Government's **Sanctuary website** has been updated to ensure that key messages around Covid-19 regulations can be easily accessed in many languages. Over the coming months, the information provided on the website will be expanded to include information for EU citizens and Hong Kong British Nationals, before adding additional categories of migrants who may travel to Wales to start a new life;
- Has funded the temporary installation of internet access into asylum properties in Wales for a period of 6 months to help them connect with family and friends and access key integration services, such as English language classes;
- Will ensure that the UK Government 'fully understands' its views on its New Plan for Immigration, including 'placing asylum seekers into communities and not in isolated prison-like reception centres'.

The statement also provided an update on the activities of schools, universities, colleges, businesses and local authorities in supporting Wales as a Nation of Sanctuary.

Afghanistan

At the time of writing, many states have announced that they will accept those fleeing from the Afghanistan.

The Welsh Government is supporting the UK Government's **Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy**. The Welsh Government has not yet announced its plans to provide sanctuary, although it **has confirmed** that it is working with the UK Government and Welsh local authorities have **advised the BBC** of their plans. 5,000 refugees will be accommodated in the UK in the policy's first year, with priority being given to women and girls. The **UK Government has committed** to providing sanctuary to 20,000 refugees, however, no specific timeline has been given for the remaining 15,000 other than 'in the coming years'.

4. Action taken by the Senedd

The Fifth Senedd's **Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee** published its report on refugees and asylum seekers in 2017. The report, "**I used to be someone**" led to the **Welsh Government announcement** that Wales would become a Nation of Sanctuary.

Following the Senedd elections in May 2021, the Sixth Senedd's **Equality and Social Justice Committee** was established on 23 June 2021. The **Committee's remit** encompasses equality and human rights, fair work, community cohesion and safety, tackling poverty, and implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and any related cross-cutting issues within its remit.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1174
Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/10312/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
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19 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Petitions Committee seeking views raised in Petition P-06-1174 requesting consideration of the request to stop the Welsh Government and public groups from making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary and to cease support for some of the most vulnerable in our society.

Equality and human rights are the cornerstone of the Welsh Government and our vision for Wales. They are also the cornerstone of our national identity. I do not believe that the strength of what it is to be Welsh is defined by a desire to turn a blind eye, but by a compassion that is so profoundly entrenched in our identities. It was no doubt that compassion and care for one another, particularly during these remarkably difficult times, which led to more people than ever choosing to put their faith in this Government once again.

The Nation of Sanctuary plan was developed through a three month open consultation which commenced on 22 March 2018 and concluded on 25 June 2018. We met and listened to people seeking sanctuary and public services across Wales, both before and during the consultation. The consultation was also open to the public to comment. A copy of the consultation summary of responses can be found [here](#). As the report makes clear “Overall, the consultation responses demonstrate substantial support for the draft Nation of Sanctuary proposals.”

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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 72
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 Nation of Sanctuary plan is about ensuring people seeking sanctuary can rebuild their lives here. It is about ensuring they can become a part of our communities and can utilise their skills and experience to the fullest extent. This Government remains steadfast in our commitment to the Nation of Sanctuary plan and to the people it seeks to support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a horizontal line above it.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice

Stop firebreaks during half terms. These are the only breaks teaching staff are permitted to have

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2021

Reference: RS21/0497-5

Petition Number: P-06-1175

Petition title: Stop firebreaks during half terms. These are the only breaks teaching staff are permitted to have

Text of petition: We have already had one firebreak during half term and teaching staff in Wales were unable to go anywhere or do anything. We cannot just book a week or two off work when we want, they have to be during the school holidays only. It is only fair that teaching staff and the children can go and enjoy their break for all their hard work during term times, just like we could if we had a choice of holiday. Allow children, staff, parents the freedom to enjoy valuable time together doing what they want.

1. Current position regarding COVID-19 restrictions

Wales is currently at Alert Level 0. Whilst some restrictions remain, for example people must still self-isolate for 10 days if they test positive for COVID-19, face coverings are still mandatory in



many indoor settings, and the Welsh Government advises against non-essential international travel, most of the restrictions brought in to manage the spread of COVID-19 have ended.

1.1. Education

Schools and colleges are currently open to all pupils and students other than those who are self-isolating due to COVID-19.

On 27 August 2021, the Welsh Government published Local COVID-19 Infection Control Decision Frameworks for schools and colleges. These set out arrangements for the delivery of learning, enabling schools, colleges, work-based and adult learning providers to tailor interventions to reflect local risks and circumstances. The frameworks follow the issuing of operational guidance on 9 July 2021.

The Welsh Government's guiding principles behind the frameworks are to:

- enable education to operate as 'business as usual' as far as possible;
- secure the best outcomes for all learners by considering both their educational needs and wellbeing; and
- manage the ongoing risks of COVID-19 as safely as possible as for other infections, and ensure clarity of actions required if there is a case in a school or college.

The previous arrangement whereby whole classes, year groups or 'bubbles' as they were known had to stay away from school in the event of a single positive case has ended. The Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) system will instead be used to identify close contacts of learners who have tested positive, rather than the whole bubble not being able to attend school.

2. Previous school closures

There have been two prolonged periods whereby schools have closed to pupils other than vulnerable pupils and children of key workers for whom there was no safe alternative:

- From 23 March 2020 until the start of academic year 2021/22 in September (other than for several 'check in, catch up and prepare' days in July).
- Between the final week of the term before Christmas 2020 and Easter 2021 (infant pupils returned in late February, junior pupils in mid March while secondary pupils not in exam year groups did not return at all until after Easter).

[Note that secondary schools closed for an additional week following the October 2020 half term during the autumn 'firebreak'. There have also been instances where pupils have experienced disruption to face to face learning whilst schools have generally being open, due to 'bubbles' or whole year groups having to learn from home for a certain time due to positive cases amongst peers.]

3. The timing of ‘firebreaks’ or ‘lockdowns’ and the impact on teachers and pupils

As the Minister’s letter indicates, the decision to time the October 2020 firebreak during the school half term was influenced by the desire to minimise the disruption to pupils’ education. He also says while the Welsh Government hopes to be able to minimise the need for future firebreaks during school holidays, it will have to make decisions based on COVID-19 transmissions and public health conditions at the time.

The petition appears to ask for firebreaks or lockdowns, if they are judged necessary, to take place during school terms rather than school holidays in order to preserve teachers’ and pupils’ holiday and leisure time. However, this would not minimise disruption to pupils’ education.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1175
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10793/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
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17 August 2021

Dear Jack

Thank you for your letter dated 22 July on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding practitioners concerns about the potential for national firebreaks during half term periods.

As you know, coronavirus restrictions across Wales are being eased, however keeping the people of Wales safe and minimising the transmission of the COVID-19 virus remains an absolute priority, particularly given the emergence of the Delta variant. It is vital that we consider and act upon the latest scientific and medical advice available to us, and the recommendations made by our Technical Advisory Group. We therefore continue to monitor the public health situation closely and changes to national restrictions and school operations are considered as part of our 21-day review process.

On the 09 July I issued a [written statement](#) on our plan for schools and educational settings after the summer holiday period. I also wrote to head teachers before the end of the summer term and published updated [Operational Guidance](#) that provided further detail. I therefore expect that school staff received further advice and information on plans for the autumn term from their own head teachers.

It is also our intention to publish an operational framework and supporting guidance at the start of September that enables schools and settings to tailor some of their intervention measures to reflect the level of risk identified locally. The draft framework has been recently shared with our key partners, such as the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW), the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Schools Social Partnership Forum and the unions for feedback, before it is published. Schools and settings will be supported by public health officials and their local authorities to ensure COVID-19 measures are appropriate to their own circumstances when learners and school staff return to education establishments after the summer holiday period.

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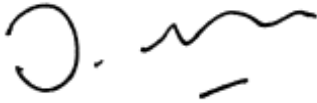
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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 continue to be in a very dynamic situation related to the operation of schools with decisions that need to be considered alongside wider Government discussions on vaccinations for children and young people and the new rules on self-isolation, which will also have a bearing. We will ensure the changes we make are in line with the wider easing of restrictions in Wales. We have also recognised the need to move to a more localised approach that allows schools to be flexible and able to react and respond to local circumstances and public health issues. We expect this approach to minimise any unnecessary future disruption to learning opportunities.

I fully appreciate how committed our educational workforce are and how hard they have worked especially during the pandemic. However, as you will appreciate, we often need to respond to fast changing situations in relation to the transmission of the coronavirus and whilst we would hope to be able to minimise the need for future firebreaks during school holiday periods, I cannot make any guarantees that this will not be necessary in the future. We also know the long impact that missing school has on our children and young people, it is for this reason that when firebreaks have been necessary in the past that they have been implemented during half-term breaks so as to minimise disruption to the education of pupils.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1176
Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/10314/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
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17 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July regarding the petition asking the Welsh Government to introduce a Dignity Charter of Cymru.

This would be a cross government initiative covering areas such as health, social care and wellbeing as well as equality and nation of sanctuary, and could be something worth exploring further.

Considerable work is already underway across Government and our ambition for the future is a Wales where everyone is included and no-one is held back or left behind. Only then will we live in a truly fair and equal Wales. With that in mind, the Strengthening and Advancing Equality and Human Rights in Wales Research report, which is due to be published shortly, will help inform the Welsh Government's future work in relation to safeguarding and promoting equality and human rights of individuals and communities in Wales.

The voting franchise in Wales has recently been extended to allow 16 and 17 year olds to vote in Senedd and local government elections. We are supporting the extension of the franchise by providing education resources. These resources aim to inspire young people to discuss and debate what they care about, and make the connection between this and politics. The resources will increase young people's understanding of politics at a local and national level, of the political institutions that serve them and how they interact with each other.

Officials have worked closely with WJEC to produce a teaching and learning resource pack for KS4 Welsh Baccalaureate students as part of the Global Citizenship Challenge. We are

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also working on developing professional learning resources to support teachers to deliver political education. This approach supports the delivery of political education in schools in line with the principles of the new curriculum. The new curriculum, through the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, aims to give learners an understanding of historical, geographical, political, economic and societal issues and provides opportunities to develop and engage in informed discussions about ethics, beliefs, religion and spirituality.

The new curriculum will help to develop a generation of politically engaged and informed young people who are ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world. The Welsh Government is also working with the Politics Project, a third sector organisation, to run a pilot scheme in Wales. This project connects schools with either their local councillor or MS. It supports engagement between the representative and the schools encouraging young people to take a scrutiny role and discuss those issues important to them with decision makers.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act provides a legislative framework to reform and strengthen local authority democracy, accountability, collaboration and performance. We are working towards the introduction of a Democracy Handbook which will bring together guidance for local government underpinning the themes and actions related to greater transparency. This work will be undertaken in two phases, the first of which will be to map the current and intended guidance for inclusion within the handbook. The second phase will focus on the development, alongside partners, of the guidance itself in readiness for May 2022. A fundamental part of this development is to ensure diversity and equality is considered and included throughout the guidance.

We want to ensure democracy is equal to all areas in Wales and provide role models and structures so that the citizens of Wales are able to become involved in their local and national democracy.

On the international front, our International Strategy, published in January 2020, sets out our ambitions to establish Wales as a globally responsible nation to make us more competitive and well known and a trusted partner on the global stage to bring benefit to the people of Wales. We want to be considered amongst the world's most globally responsible nations, building on long traditions of internationalism and concern for fairness and a focus on people and planet.

Since 2015, our sustainable development legislation has stimulated both action and discussion about how we transform Wales into a more sustainable nation. We established the world's first statutory independent Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to be an advocate for the long term and to support decision-makers in Wales.

I hope you find this helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a horizontal line above it.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice

Provide Free Period Products for all Menstruating People in Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2020
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2020

Reference: SR21/00497

Petition Number: P-06-1177

Petition title: Provide Free Period Products for all Menstruating People in Wales

Text of petition:

The £3.1 million provided to schools in Wales to purchase sanitary products is not enough to keep all young women out of period poverty and stay in education. Having experienced period embarrassment first-hand, I know how it feels to sit through a lesson, bleeding through my sanitary product because I was too embarrassed to ask a friend, or a teacher, if I could borrow a panty liner. We need to end the stigma around periods, and give all women free sanitary products. 1 in 10 girls aged 14-21 in the UK can't afford sanitary products. 49% of girls have missed a day of school because of this. Young girls are risking their physical health by making improvised sanitary products from tissue, socks and plastic bags. This isn't just an issue for young teenagers 56% of 18-24 year olds have had to go a day without period essentials, or cut down on them due to lack of funds. Many women are embarrassed by their periods, and are even embarrassed about buying necessary sanitary products for them. This shame is incredibly harmful as it prevents necessary conversations about periods, which ultimately leads to a lack of knowledge of the implications that come with menstruating. For example, the lack of effective menstrual cramp pain relief, which is shown to reduce classroom performance.



1. Background

Period poverty is a lack of access to sanitary products as a result of financial constraints. Period dignity relates to addressing period poverty, whilst also ensuring products are free and accessible to all people who menstruate in the most practical and dignified way.

A 2017 survey by Plan International UK, a global children's charity, found that of 1000 girls aged 14 to 21 years old, 10% were unable to afford sanitary products, Lucy Russell, UK Campaign Manager said:

Distributing products at school, including reusables, could play a role in ensuring that no girl struggles to afford sanitary wear.

Another survey by Plan International UK during the first Covid lockdown in 2020 found that 30% of girls aged 14-21 had issues with either affording or accessing sanitary wear in lockdown. Plan International UK said it welcomed free period products being made available in schools but with schools and youth centres closed during lockdown, many girls had been left not knowing where to access free resources.

Previously across the UK, 5% VAT was added to sanitary products, including tampons, pads and towels. The UK Government removed this so-called "tampon tax" at the start of 2021.

In 2020, Scotland became the first country in the world to ensure that period products are obtainable free of charge.

2. Welsh Government action

On 23 March 2018, the Welsh Government announced £1 million of new funding to tackle period poverty and dignity in Wales. £440,000 was allocated over two years to local authorities to tackle period poverty in local communities, with an additional £700,000 of capital funding made available to improve facilities and equipment in schools. Julie James, then Leader of the House and Chief Whip said:

It is unacceptable that some women and girls in Wales cannot afford to buy essential feminine hygiene products when they need them. I am committed to doing everything I can to tackle this inequality.

On 5 March 2019, the Welsh Government announced free sanitary products to all women in Welsh hospitals. The then Minister for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething said:

Currently the provision of sanitary products for hospital inpatients varies across Wales as each health board has their own policy. I want to ensure all women admitted to hospital in Wales can access these essential products.

A Period Dignity Grant for Schools was announced on 15 April 2019 by the First Minister, which comprised £2.3 million of funding to provide girls in Welsh primary and secondary school with a range of sanitary products. The grant would provide over 141,000 girls with a range of sanitary products.

The First Minister, Mark Drakeford, said:

It is essential ample sanitary products, as well as good facilities, are available to all female learners so they can manage their periods with confidence and remove what is an unnecessary barrier to their education.

As part of the Period Dignity Grant, schools were encouraged to support reuseable, environmentally sustainable products to allow maximum choice for learners.

In December 2019 the Welsh Government committed funding to tackle period poverty, with £3.3 million set aside for 2020-21. £3.1 million was made available to primary and secondary schools and colleges to provide free sanitary products to students who might need them. Additionally, the Welsh Government committed to continue to provide £220,000 for local authorities to provide free period products in public buildings, such as libraries, with local authorities able to decide how to use this funding in their own local areas. The then Deputy Minister and Chief Whip Jane Hutt said:

We've made considerable progress in tackling poverty in 2019 and the £3.3m for 2020-21 will mean we can continue to ensure period dignity for every women and girl in Wales by providing appropriate products and facilities.

3. Welsh Parliament action

The Senedd held a debate and passed a motion on 2 May 2018 on period poverty and stigma; brought forward by Jane Hutt and Jenny Rathbone. The motion called on the Welsh Government to consider research on the potential impact of period poverty and stigma on learning, to improve education on the subject and to provide free access to sanitary items in education institutions and through foodbanks.

A petition submitted by Malpas Women's Institute was considered by the Petitions Committee on 12 February 2019 calling for the provision of free sanitary products to all women in low income households.

4. Action across the UK

The UK Government introduced a period product scheme to provide free period products for all learners in 2019. The latest [guidance](#) (16 December 2020) states that all learners in state-maintained school and 16 to 19 education organisations in England will continue to have access to free period products in their place of study in 2021.

The [Scottish Parliament brought in a law](#) (12 January 2021) making period products available for free to people who need them. Under the Bill schools, colleges and universities must make a range of period products available for free, in their toilets.

The [Northern Ireland executive approved a pilot](#) (17 December 2020) to make period products freely available to pupils in primary and secondary schools. The three year pilot is projected to cost £2.6 million. Education Minister, Peter Weir said:

Providing free period products will help pupils manage their periods confidently as school, reduce anxiety and stress and enable students to focus on their learning.

In [May 2021](#), the Northern Ireland Economy Minister Diane Dodds announced a one year pilot to provide free period products for university students. The Minister said:

This issue has the potential to seriously impact on students in higher education. Preventing attendance at classes, work placements, and even examinations could seriously hamper an individual's chances of successful completion of their course.

The pilot will run during the academic year for students attending Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast, Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College.

5. Welsh Government response to the petition

The Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt MS, responded to the petition on 6 August 2021. She highlighted that the Welsh Government's [Programme for Government 2021 - 2026](#) includes commitments to embed period dignity in schools and expand free period provision in communities and the private sector.

The Minister said that work had begun on a draft Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan, but that its publication was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A revised plan is expected to be published for consultation later this year.

The Plan will include a wide range of actions linked to education, health, tackling period poverty, access to appropriate facilities and environmental issues. It will aim to tackle the stigma, myths, misunderstandings and lack of knowledge which persist as this will be key to ensuring people understand periods, are confident to talk about them and seek help or advice when needed, whether they have periods or not.

The Minister said she would welcome the views of the petitioner as part of the consultation on the Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan in the autumn.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-06-1177
Ein cyf/Our ref: JH-/10313/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru
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6 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July regarding Petition P-06-1177: Provide Free Period Products for all Menstruating People in Wales.

Period poverty and period dignity are important issues which, directly and indirectly, affect the lives of so many people across Wales. For too long, having a period has meant that some people miss out on education, employment or social activities. It can affect physical or mental health. This is unacceptable.

Periods remain a subject which is often misunderstood, not talked about and linked to stigma, myths and embarrassment. We are working to change this. Our Programme for Government includes commitments to embed period dignity in schools and to expand out free period provision in communities and the private sector. This demonstrates our continued commitment to tackle this issue and builds on the work we have been doing over recent years.

We have provided funding to tackle period poverty and address period dignity since 2018 and currently provide over £3.3million per year to ensure free period products are available in schools, further education colleges and communities across Wales.

We ask that period products are made available in the most dignified way possible to ensure that situations such as that described by the petitioner, when an individual has to ask for a period product, can be avoided whenever possible. We have not been prescriptive

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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.

in how this is achieved and know that a range of methods are being used across Wales which include, for example, coin free dispensers and subscription services where products are dispatched directly to an individual's home address.

We are also driving a move towards reusable and plastic-free period products through our funding. This is a relatively small measure which could have an important environmental impact. Such change often takes time but the progress we have already made in this area demonstrates that there is clearly a demand for eco-friendly product options.

Whilst the provision of free products to those most in need is an essential first step in tackling period poverty and addressing period dignity, I know there is more to do.

I chair the Period Dignity Roundtable which comprises stakeholders from the public, private and third sector across Wales. The work of the group has been invaluable as it enables Welsh Government to hear directly from the people on the ground across Wales – to hear what the issues are, to learn more about what is working well and what we could do better.

Last year, prior to the pandemic, Welsh Government officials held a workshop with a range of stakeholders, including members of the Period Dignity Roundtable, to inform future policy. From this, we began to develop a draft Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan. Unfortunately, the final development of the plan was impacted by Covid-19 and its publication was delayed. My officials are now working at pace to revise the plan and publish for consultation later this year.

It is crucial that the Strategic Action Plan sets out the Welsh Government approach to ensuring period dignity in Wales and that the Plan is grounded in a commitment to work across Government, and with stakeholders, to develop and deliver a series of wide ranging, holistically intersecting actions.

Provision of free products in as wide a range of settings as possible is an important part of our vision as this helps ensure access to products whenever needed. However, we know that we will not move towards period dignity without addressing a broader range of issues. The Plan will include a wide range of actions linked to education, health, tackling period poverty, access to appropriate facilities and environmental issues. It will aim to tackle the stigma, myths, misunderstandings and lack of knowledge which persist as this will be key to ensuring people understand periods, are confident to talk about them and seek help or advice when needed, whether they have periods or not.

I would welcome the views of the petitioner as part of the consultation on the Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan in the autumn.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke above the first letter.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice

Free school meals for all pupils

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2021

Reference: RS21/0497-8

Petition Number: P-06-1178

Petition title: Free school meals for all pupils in Wales

Text of petition: We call upon Welsh Government to immediately

- Amend the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals so that any child in any family receiving Universal Credit or equivalent benefit is eligible.
- Permanently extend free school meal entitlements to families with no recourse to public funds
- Introduce universal infant free school meals across Wales

As the first step towards implementing universal provision of nutritious free school meals for all school-aged children in Wales.



1. Campaign to extend eligibility criteria and the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

The issue of eligibility for free school meals (FSM) has received considerable attention in the past year and a half, partly as a result of the pandemic. The Welsh Government has provided funding during the pandemic to enable local authorities to continue providing FSM during school holidays. This will run up to Easter 2022.

There has been a campaign to extend FSM eligibility to all pupils living in families receiving Universal Credit and potentially to all pupils. Both the Child Poverty Action Group (briefing October/December 2020 and report, August 2021) and the Bevan Foundation (costs and practical considerations) have published reports on this.

The purpose of free school meals is mainly two-fold. Firstly, to avoid financial hardship on families and provide children with a meal whose family cannot easily afford it, and secondly to support their educational outcomes. Evidence is relatively mixed in terms of the benefits of FSM on educational attainment, as this 'Full Fact' article from 2017 explains.

2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2021-26 includes a commitment to:

Continue to meet the rise in demand for Free School Meals resulting from the pandemic and review the eligibility criteria, extending entitlement as far as resources allow.

The Minister's letter says that this **review has now commenced**, with work underway to gather data and set out its structure and scope, and consideration of research and evidence. The Minister told the Senedd on 14 July that he **expects the review to be completed in the autumn**, and will provide an update to Members at the beginning of the new Senedd term in September.

In relation to WQ81850, the then Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, published some estimated costs of extending FSM eligibility to all children in households receiving Universal Credit, as well to all primary school pupils. These were based on 2020 FSM numbers (note that these have increased in 2021).

3. Welsh Parliament action

There was a Plaid Cymru-led debate on free school meals in [Plenary on 14 July 2021](#)

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Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1178
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10796/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
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8 August 2021

Dear Jack

Thank you for your letter of 22 July about the Petition P-06-1178 (Free school meals for all pupils in Wales).

Free school meal provision continues to be a priority for the Welsh Government and we are committed to ensuring that our learners who are most in need continue to benefit from this provision. Our Programme for Government includes a commitment to continue review the eligibility criteria for free school meals, extending entitlement as far as resources allow. Since the start of the pandemic the number of learners in receipt of free school meals has increased steadily.

The latest provisional Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) 2021 data shows there are 108,203 pupils eligible for free school meals (FSMs). This figure is an increase of almost 18,000 pupils since the 2020 PLASC data showed there was 90,662 pupils eligible for FSMs. This increase supports the need to review the eligibility criteria for free school meals and I am pleased to report that we have now commenced this work, gathering data and setting out a structure and the scope of the review, which includes careful consideration of research and evidence, such as that commissioned by the Bevan Foundation and the Wales Anti-Poverty Coalition. The scope of the review will include families with no recourse to public funds who are living in poverty.

I will provide an update on the progress of the review and a timetable for completing this work when we return in September.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Miles AS/MS
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Minister for Education and Welsh Language

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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-06-1178 Free school meals for all pupils in Wales, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 25.08.21**

To: Jack Sargeant MS Chair - Petitions committee
25 August 2021

Dear Jack Sargeant MS

As the originator of the e Petition P-06-1178 (Free school meals for all pupils in Wales) I would very much appreciate it if you could place this response before your Committee to consider as a response to the letter to you from the Minister of Education Jeremy Miles MS dated 8 August 2021.

The People's Assembly Wales which supported the petition has been in communication with the Senedd Labour Group. Our most recent letter to the Group is in this link and it provides in some detail a response to the points made in the Minister's letter:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ClwJY68a_eyeazf2aeArQDeMt6CQXqY/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109831181562023645185&rtpof=true&sd=true

As the People's Assembly Wales state in this letter to the Senedd Labour Group they are concerned that the policy of free school meals becomes 'the' priority of the Welsh Government in combating family and child poverty and not just 'a' priority among others. As Previous Senedd reports and the charities mentioned in the Ministers letter have already pointed out, this provision is the most effective way of reducing this experience of poverty which rose by 3% in Wales in 2020.

The Minister places considerable emphasis on the review of eligibility that is taking place. I welcome this review which has been promised from before the May Senedd elections. The Minister's letter makes reference to the increase demand for free school meals under the existing eligibility criteria; the way this is worded is potentially worrying as it could imply that there is a view that the costs need to be constrained by reducing eligibility, we hope the Petition Committee can secure a response from the Minister confirming that this is not the intention and is not part of the terms of reference for the review.

Having said that, it appears that the review focus will be largely on the cost of providing free school meals to all in families in receipt of UC and without recourse to public funds. I also hope that the cost of universal free school meals will be explored as well and would ask that the Petitions Committee put this request to the Minister.

I would also ask, if alongside the evidence and research of Bevan Foundation and Wales Anti-Poverty Coalition, the review also will be seeking evidence from Islington, Southwark, Newham and Tower Hamlets Councils in London who already give eligibility for free school meals to all primary school children, and the Scottish Government who will be rolling out free school meals to all primary school children over the next twelve months?

I understand that the review will evaluate the range of costs that have been undertaken. In this regard I would like to suggest to the Petitions Committee that they propose to the Minister that the review explores a way of separating other benefits 'linked' to school meal eligibility without reducing their current eligibility.

More importantly, I would like to suggest that some 'joined up thinking' and costing would help. Universal free school meal provision could have 'knock on effects' to other Welsh Government spending budgets: procurement could be focused on supporting local food producers so overlapping with agricultural and economic development; the infrastructure providing meals at a community level could be used to support and re-introduce 'meals on wheels' services thus feeding into social care budgets and services; a more healthy population of young people feeds into illness prevention strategies and the health budget; and perhaps also recycling products from local stores and supermarkets and producers that otherwise go to waste, feeds into recycling and green new deal policies and spending, along with the procurement suggestions. I hope that that the Petitions Committee can put this suggestion to the Minister for inclusion in the review or meetings with other relevant Ministers.

Yours

Adam Johannes

Increase the teaching on drugs

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Medi 2020
Petitions Committee | 13 September 2020

Reference: RS21/0633

Petition Number: P-06-1180

Petition title: Increase the teaching and readily available information on drugs in Welsh secondary schools.

Text of petition:

I aim to make information on drugs more widely available in Welsh secondary schools in hope to increase Welsh children's understanding of drugs and the culture surrounding it. I think that it would be detrimental to a child to not know about drugs and the implications they can cause. The amount of information taught on drugs in schools is not enough. My personal experience in school was one day of being told about different drugs and their health effects. I was able to develop my knowledge on drugs in school through taking GCSE PE. And still, I believe this is not enough. I have had conversations with teachers surrounding this topic but it feels like I am getting nowhere. I have made this petition not only to urge the Education Ministers in Wales to implement more mandatory teaching on drugs into the secondary school syllabus, but to also consider teaching children the detrimental effects of accepting a 'drug culture'. When I say this, I mean, drug dealing. I can completely acknowledge the stigma and animosity given to the idea of increasing the information of drug awareness in schools but, If you have visited Cardiff City Centre you may have an understanding that the drug use there is extremely prevalent and this is where thousands of kids go to socialise.



1. Current curriculum

Currently, mental and emotional health and well-being is included in the current curriculum through Personal and social education (PSE). Delivery of PSE is a statutory requirement of the basic curriculum although content is at the discretion of schools. The non-statutory Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales (2008) provides a recommended approach and learning outcomes. Health and emotional well-being is one of five themes of the PSE framework. This states that:

In addition to understanding positive health choices, learners should be aware of the potential risks of the use and misuse of legal and illegal substances.

2. New Curriculum for Wales

The Curriculum and Assessment Act 2021 establishes a new 'Curriculum for Wales', which the previous Welsh Government planned to be implemented from September 2022 on a phased basis; initially in primary schools and Year 7 then rolled out to an additional older year group, year by year, until it reaches Year 11 in 2026/27. The Minister for Education and the Welsh Language announced on 6 July 2021 that secondary schools will have the option of introducing the new curriculum in Year 7 in September 2022 and it will become statutory for Year 7 and Year 8 in September 2023. It will then be rolled out to an additional older year group, year by year, until it reaches Year 11 in 2026/27.

The new curriculum represents a shift away from the traditional heavily prescribed approach of the national curriculum to one where schools have flexibility to design their own curricula, within a broad national framework. The Curriculum for Wales is therefore intended to be purpose-led rather than content-based, with a greater emphasis on skills and teaching what matters.

The Act sets out the four purposes of the curriculum:

- To enable pupils and children to develop as ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- To enable pupils and children to develop as enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work;
- To enable pupils and children to develop as ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world;
- To enable pupils and children to develop as healthy, confident individuals, ready to live fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

The Act also sets out six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) for the new curriculum and the mandatory elements within them. The AoLEs are:

- Expressive Arts
- Health and Well-being
- Humanities
- Languages, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology.

The mandatory elements within the AoLEs will be English; Relationships and Sexuality Education; Religion, Values and Ethics and Welsh.

The Act provides for a 'What Matters Code' to set out key concepts of learning and experience in each AoLE and schools' curricula must encompass each of these concepts. The Welsh Government has published 'Statements of What Matters' in the Curriculum for Wales documentation. This is intended to provide the 'national approach' which Kirsty Williams, then Minister for Education said will ensure consistency for learners.

The provisional statutory guidance on the Health and Well-being AoLE, was published in January 2020. Two of the Statements of What Matters are:

- Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others; and
- How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being.

The Welsh Government consulted on revisions to the Statements of What Matters (which will form the statutory What Matters Code) between 21 May and 16 July 2021. The above two Statements of What Matters remained unchanged.

The provisional statutory guidance on the Health and Well-being AoLE states the following:

Learners should be supported to develop positive behaviours in their wider physical health and well-being. This could relate to a range of factors, including diet, substances, hygiene, infection, the physical environment, sleep and rest. Settings, schools and practitioners should consider what experiences will support learners to understand how these factors can influence their health and well-being, develop the skills to support healthy behaviours relating to these factors, and the confidence and motivation to support those behaviours for life.

In discussing how links can be made between the teaching of the Health and Well-being, and Science Technology, AoLEs, the provisional statutory guidance also states: 'How lifestyle choices can impact the human body (including diet, drug use and exercise) can be considered'.

3. Other Welsh Government Action

In July 2013, the Welsh Government published [Guidance for substance misuse education](#). This provides information relating to the delivery of appropriate substance misuse education according to the current curriculum requirements.

The Welsh Government funds the Wales Police Schools Programme. This operates in all primary and secondary schools, delivering education on substance misuse and wider community and personal safety issues at all key stages of the curriculum. [SchoolBeat.org](#) is a bilingual site from the Wales Police Schools Programme, providing information and resources for teachers, pupils and parents to follow up on the lessons provided to all school children by our School Community Police Officers. The Welsh Government has allocated £1.98m for the programme for 2021-22. The Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Welsh Language's [paper to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee](#) on the draft budget (21 January 2021) said:

This Programme is important from an education and prevention perspective (complimenting the Curriculum Reform as it does), but also supports the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people as a result of the impact of COVID-19, in line with the continuity plan.

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Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1180
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10797/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
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3 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July to inform me about a petition the Committee received which is currently collecting signatures to increase the teaching and information available on substance misuse in Welsh secondary schools.

The new [Curriculum for Wales](#), which is due to be introduced from September 2022 will include a [Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience \(Area\)](#) which has equal status in law to the five other area of the curriculum. It will enhance the new curriculum's focus on the health and well-being of learners which includes substance misuse.

This innovative new Area provides a holistic structure for understanding health and well-being and is concerned with developing the capacity of learners to navigate life's opportunities and challenges. The fundamental components of the Area are physical health and development, mental health and emotional and social well-being. It will support learners to understand and appreciate how the different components of health and well-being are interconnected recognising that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning.

Within this Area it is important that there is a sufficient degree of flexibility to support learners. The 'descriptions of learning' in the guidance for each Area includes key learning and details how learners should progress as they journey through the continuum of learning. A Description of Learning under the 'Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits' statement of What Matters specifically relates to enabling learners to "..... Learn how the brain works and can help learners understand their thoughts, feelings and emotions. How lifestyle choices can impact the human body (including diet, substance misuse and exercise)."

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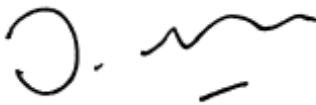
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Learners are also supported to develop their understanding to be able to not only understand and recognise the connections between physical and emotional changes that occur, but to be able to adapt and modify behaviour to support their physical and emotional health. The ‘Developing Physical health and well-being as lifelong benefits’ statement of What Matters also has a description of learning which enables learners to “recognise some of the behaviours, conditions and situations that affect my physical health and well-being, and I know how to respond and get help in a safe way” which will support learners to develop knowledge and understanding on how to manage behaviours and conditions.

The Welsh Government has supported the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP) since 2004. We invest £1.98m, each year, which is match funded by the four Welsh Police Forces. The programme involves Police Officers going into schools and delivering lessons on a range of areas. The programme was originally established to reduce the number of young entrants into the criminal justice system and tackle substance misuse issues. Over the years, the programme has evolved by broadening its scope to cover wider community and personal safety issues at all key stages of the curriculum. The core programme includes substance misuse, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, bullying, online safety, sexting, child sexual exploitation and consent, delivering a balanced programme within primary and secondary schools. It focuses 50% on delivering the core content to meet the needs of pupils and schools and 50% with proactive interventions on safeguarding and incident management.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

Petitions Committee

Response

Dear Petitions Committee,

Firstly, I would like to thank you for welcoming my thoughts on the document attached to my email. Also, I would like to show my gratitude towards Jeremy Miles for taking the time to explain his plans to widen the Curriculum for Wales and, I would like to show my appreciation to Jack Sargeant for passing on this exciting information.

I believe that, by expanding the Curriculum for Wales with the introduction of a Health and Well-being Area of Learning, the Welsh Government are taking a step in the right direction. In addition, I feel that, if executed correctly, Welsh students will have the ability to make more educated choices in their lives. Moreover, whilst acknowledging that the innovative new area aims to invite pupils to reflect, and change, their behaviour in order to improve their physical and emotional health: it should be considered that some decisions are not within the grasp of the child. For example, when discussing diet, on occasion the child will have little to no choice over what they eat - in several cases this could be to do with family income, and in other cases this may involve a child's medical needs. Also, the same idea should be taken into consideration when discussing the child's choice of activities. For instance, a child may not possess the means of transport to participate in certain activities and, there may be a lack of information on activities in a child's area. Thus, in summary, I think that it is vital to include widely accessible choices in the new area in order to ensure that the impact of the new area of curriculum is similar for all children.

Furthermore, the new area of curriculum will need to be introduced correctly to see positive results in students, so I believe that the teachers of the new curriculum should be thought about carefully. Upon reflection, I believe that the differences in teachers who deliver lessons on the new area of curriculum will create disparities amongst the students who are taught. To be quite frank, I do not believe that students will take in as much of the new area of curriculum being taught by an older, old-fashioned, science/history teacher as they would in comparison to a younger, more flexible, specialist teacher. Perhaps this idea may be seen as ageist but, this thought has crossed my mind when thinking of the delivery of lessons in the innovative new area.

In addition, I am really overjoyed that the Welsh Government has chosen to create a base line knowledge on drugs for students in Welsh schools. And, from reading the information about the 'Area of Learning and Experience: Health and Well-being' on the Hwb, I have assumed that the topic of drug misuse falls under 'an understanding of health-harming behaviours'. I completely agree that the topic of drug misuse belongs within this category, however, I believe that 'an understanding' should literally be 'a full understanding' because if students are just informed that 'drugs are bad' the cycle will never end. I believe that students should be informed about, what drugs are, why are

they illegal, who you can talk to about a situation involving drugs, why do people use drugs and, last but not least, the wider implications of drug dealing. Overall, the letter in question (written by Jeremy Miles) does address my plea to implement more mandatory teaching on drugs into the secondary school syllabus but, I do believe that the new area of curriculum could be entirely successful if the consequences of drug dealing were included. Ultimately, with no teaching on drug dealing, children are oblivious to the possible detrimental effects for the economy, law and society as a whole.

So, in response to the letter written by Jeremy Miles, I would like to know more about how the delivery of lessons will avoid widening inequality amongst students. And, I would also like to know how much (if any) of the new area of curriculum will teach children about the implications of drug dealing. Lastly, I would like to add that, with reference to the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP), in some communities, the police are not widely regarded as reliable or trustworthy and, this does trickle-down to the children of these communities.

Therefore, it should be acknowledged that, due to reasons beyond their control, some children may not make an effort to listen to police officers which may prove detrimental to the delivery of lessons.

I hope that my thoughts are helpful in shaping a brighter future for all.

Kind regards,
Pearl Crumb.

Agenda Item 3.1

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

P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 24.08.21

To the Chair and Members of the Petitions Committee of Senedd Cymru.

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

Firstly may I thank the Chair and Members for having this petition as an agenda item and for asking me to contribute.

The Ministers Response.

I am grateful for Lesley Griffiths MS response of March this year. I can fully understand why the Welsh Government's priority at that time was dominated by Covid. As I am sure Lesley and yourselves now appreciate more than most how Covid has affected every level of our lives here in Cymru not least people's financial situations. You would also agree I think we are not in a position either to fully evaluate the situation - only the years ahead will do this.

As the minister herself states "pressures on veterinary services have been immense ". However I am concerned that the other side of the consulting table so to speak hasn't been looked at - us " ordinary " companion animal owners who share our homes and hearts with these sentient beings.

I am puzzled as to why the Minister hasn't mentioned CAWGW (Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales) as they kindly have contributed to this issue during the previous Senedd term . Their contribution showed that they had a true understanding of the situation here in Cymru.

RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) Response.

I am grateful to Dr Mandisa Greene for her response which clearly showed the problematic situation in regards to the Royal College being the regulator of it's own profession a situation that has spanned many decades.

As Dr Greene clearly states the RCVS are governed by legislation (The Veterinary Surgeons Act) that is five decades old . In very simplistic terms this greatly limits the way in which they act. Last year after many years of criticism from the UK Government's EFRA Committee (among others) the Royal College conducted a consultation on Legislation Reform (LRC). Out of an estimated nine million Dog owners and ten million Cat owners in the UK 58 took part in this exercise. Only 1,330 individual veterinary surgeons chose to take part in this exercise. **1**

In my last submission I made the Chair and Members aware of the response from the British Veterinary Union (BVU) to the RCVS LRC . As the said document was not in the public domain at that time I requested that the document was not included in the public bundle .

I quote from the document:

Introduction

There is a strong distrust in the ability of the RCVS to perform its duty as a regulator, and reach fair conclusions through its disciplinary committee. This is highlighted in a recent survey (previously shared with the RCVS legal team) where 85% of surveyed veterinary employees reported knowledge of unethical or illegal activity in their practice, and only 2% reported it to the RCVS.

BVU

members perceive that innocent vets, nurses and paraprofessionals will be placed under undue stress and have their livelihood impacted by some of the proposed changes. This perception is the result of poor performance by the RCVS in managing complaints and disciplinary proceedings over many years. Specific issues highlighted by BVU members are the exorbitantly long times to complete cases, disorganised hearings and investigations (e.g. key documents going missing) and no

powers to investigate complaints properly. BVU members have also noted being present at hearings where hearsay was treated as evidence. In addition, the RCVS has failed to act against some unethical veterinarians, leading to the view that it functions as an 'Old-Boys' club 2.

It's my understanding that after their recent LRC the RCVS have decided not to change a vital element of their disciplinary process. The RCVS will still work to the criminal standard " beyond reasonable doubt " and not the civil standard unlike numerous other similar professions.

In my Rosa's case for example tests were conducted on her without my knowledge or consent. Her historic clinical notes were altered with the names of the veterinary surgeons who treated her removed . Her clinical notes clearly showed that a veterinary surgeon experienced difficulty during a routine ex- ray procedure (performed under general anaesthesia). Which I knew nothing about until I requested the notes from the veterinary practice I moved her too . If I had known about this together with the " false positive " element of a blood test (it is standard practice to do a second test examined in a external laboratory). I wouldn't have took the heartbreaking decision to euthanise My beloved Rosa. I think you can imagine the effect this all had on me and still does. Yet the RCVS admitted all the above was out of their remit .

The Code of Conduct of a Veterinary Surgeon is underpinned by five principles of practice including Independence and impartiality. 3

I was deeply saddened but not surprised by Dr Greene's statement that the Royal College cannot act in regards to the se

I have laid evidence before many Members particularly my own Senedd Cymru Members and those who are Shadow Ministers with this portfolio that show clinical decisions by many veterinary practitioners are influenced by the policy's of the corporate companies they work for.

The incident of a Dog owner's simple request for her Dog to be referred to a specialist referral practice not owned by the corporate group who also owned the GP the Dog was being treated at . Resulted in a significant delay and the Dogs death. How can that sit within the third principle to practice above ? 4

Corporate equity owned veterinary practices.

Since my last submission to you this has situation has only got worse. With more than half of all first opinion veterinary practices in the UK being owned by corporate veterinary companies. Here on Ynys Mon we have no fully independently run veterinary practice.

However the corporate groups are now extending their attention to referral practice's and animal hospitals.

Independent Vetcare Evidensia have now announced plans for such a facility in Birmingham. 5

Professor Noel Fitzpatrick MRCVS has stated that Fitzpatrick Referrals is the last remaining multi-disciplinary specialist referral centre of their size that remains independent in the UK. 6

Just how can this situation be seen as being a level playing field for either us who share our lives with these sentient beings, the animals themselves or for that matter those who operate independently run veterinary practices?

It is getting to the stage where veterinary professionals who do not wish to work to the corporate's moral and ethical rule book have only one other alternative - leave the profession they love so much . To quote a RVN who has left after 30 years at the coal face " Linda I wear my badge proudly that I have never worked for a corporate".

Conculsion.

Animal welfare is a matter which is largely devolved to our Senedd Cymru and Welsh Government. However the appointment of an independent external ombudsman for the veterinary profession is not a devolved issue. DEFRA have recently stated that they see no need or reason for one to be appointed as the RCVS are doing just fine.

I am proud to say that I have more faith in My Senedd and Government. Who clearly have more understanding of issues together with the will and determination to lead the way. Such a scheme would be ground breaking, but is in line with so many peoples thinking which is now coming to the forefront within the media, the veterinary profession and rescue sector.

The fact that Independent Vetcare Evidensia one of the biggest corporate venture capitalist veterinary companies have decided to start their own fund which allows a veterinary surgeon to help to the sum of £500 (for an animals treatment at their practice alone) is testament to IVC realising there is a problem 7.

As I have said in previous submissions I know many will see companion animals as a luxury , indeed sadly that is an argument I have heard many veterinary surgeons express publicly in recent months. I use Sandra's words with her permission :

Some people like my self have lost everything
in life my son was murdered husband left no parents left brother
and sister dead totally on own in life my dog is the only company I have when you see a
old man or woman with a little dog it's probably the only company they have not a
luxury the dog most likely the only thing
that person lives for don't be so selfish saying should not have a
dog lonely pensioners need thire dog post may seem a bit strong but it annoys
me when folk come out with that statement they don't know wot loneliness is that's
plain to see.

If I can assist Members further I will of course do so .

Cofion Linda Joyce-Jones.

Ynys Mon Constituency Cymru.

25/8/21.

1: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/publications/legislative-review-consultation-report-2021/>

2: full document sent to clarking team .

3: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/code-of-professional-conduct-for-veterinary-surgeons/#principles>

4: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9642305/Calls-inquiry-equity-vultures-snap-vets-amid-rising-bills-welfare-fears.html>

5: <https://www.business-live.co.uk/commercial-property/plans-revealed-new-ivc-evidensia-21331068>

6: Professor Noel Fitzpatrick MRCVS Being the Supervet.

7: <https://ivcevidensia.co.uk/News/IVC-Evidensia-Care-Fund-hits-milestone>

Unite the Union response to:

The RCVS Legislative Reform Consultation

This response is submitted by the British Veterinary Union in Unite. Unite is the UK's largest trade union with 1.5 million members across the private and public sectors. The union's members work in a range of industries including manufacturing, financial services, print, media, construction, transport, local government, education, human and veterinary health, and not-for-profit sectors.

Unite the Union represents in excess of 100,000 health sector workers. This includes eight professional associations – British Veterinary Union (BVU), College of Health Care Chaplains (CHCC), Community Practitioners and Health Visitor' Association (CPHVA), Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists (GHP), Hospital Physicists Association (HPA), Doctors in Unite (formerly MPU), Mental Health Nurses Association (MNHA), Society of Sexual Health Advisors (SSHA).

Unite also represents members in nursing, allied health professions, healthcare science, applied psychology, counselling and psychotherapy, dental professions, arts therapy, radiography, audiology, optometry, building trades, estates, craft and maintenance, administration, ICT, support services and ambulance services.

Introduction

There is a strong distrust in the ability of the RCVS to perform its duty as a regulator, and reach fair conclusions through its disciplinary committee. This is highlighted in a recent survey (previously shared with the RCVS legal team) where 85% of surveyed veterinary employees reported knowledge of unethical or illegal activity in their practice, and only 2% reported it to the RCVS. BVU members perceive that innocent vets, nurses and paraprofessionals will be placed under undue stress and have their livelihood impacted by some of the proposed changes. This perception is the result of poor performance by the RCVS in managing complaints and disciplinary proceedings over many years. Specific issues highlighted by BVU members are the exorbitantly long times to complete cases, disorganised hearings and investigations (e.g. key documents going missing) and no powers to investigate complaints properly. BVU members have also noted being present at hearings where hearsay was treated as evidence. In addition, the RCVS has failed to act against some unethical veterinarians, leading to the view that it functions as an 'Old-Boys' club.

While we strongly support the goal of a modern, fair and effective veterinary regulator, we do not believe that the RCVS is fit to regulate the profession. In line with all other professions, the veterinary profession should have an independent regulator under the professional standards authority. Our concern is that the proposed changes would give too much power to an organisation that does not meet the high standard of a truly fair, unbiased, independent regulator in the interest of the public and the profession.

Part 1: The Vet-led team

1.1 Statutory regulation of the vet-led team

The BVU does not oppose the regulation of paraprofessionals, but do not feel that the RCVS is in a position to fulfil this function in its current format. Whenever new para-professions will be required to register with the regulator, all currently practicing paraprofessionals should enjoy grandfather rights in order to protect livelihoods. It is in the interest of veterinary workers and the public that regulation of veterinarians and paraprofessionals should lie with an independent regulator under the professional standards authority.

1.2 Flexible delegation powers

The BVU supports the principle of flexible delegation powers, but do not feel that the RCVS is in a position to fulfil this function in its current format.

1.3 Separating employment and delegation

The BVU feels that more clarity is needed on the details of how this would work. We are concerned that veterinary nurses may be exploited if there is no regulatory control over their employers. The person responsible for the patient should be clearly defined. We are also concerned that the separation of employment and delegation has the potential to negatively impact continuity of patient care.

1.4 Statutory protection of professional titles

The BVU strongly supports the statutory protection of the veterinary nurse title

Part 2: The role of VN's

The union broadly supports the expansion of the VN role. We are however concerned that employers whose priority is profit may exploit an expanded VN role. Increasing the scope of the VN role prior to providing appropriate training and adequate support will place a large amount of professional risk on the VN. This is a particular concern with surgery and anaesthetics - procedures that have an inherent risk of death to the patient. The union calls on the RCVS to require employers

to provide suitable training and support prior to extending a VN's role, and until suitable training is provided and suitable support is in place, the risk and responsibility must remain with the employer or veterinary surgeon.

One way to ensure competency is through training, examination and certification of nurses in specialised fields.

The regulator must also clearly define what is meant by supervision and direction and how this relates to the regulation of veterinary nurses as professionals in their own right. The role, relationship and responsibility of the delegating vet and independently employed nurse must be clearly defined.

Part 3: Assuring Practice Regulation

3.1 Mandatory Practice Regulation

The BVU supports mandatory practice regulation, but do not feel that the RCVS is in a position to fulfil this function in its current format. It is in the interest of veterinary workers and the public that regulation of practices should lie with an independent regulator under the professional standards authority. Practice regulation by an organisation made up of veterinarians employed by practices and corporate groups creates a blatant conflict of interest.

Mandatory practice regulations should include provision of secure employment to all veterinary employees, so that livelihoods are protected when a practice's non-compliance with the regulator results in suspension or closure of a practice. There should also be whistle blower protections in order to encourage employees to report unethical practices to the regulator without risk of retaliation from their employer.

In the course of the work of the BVU, we are regularly confronted with veterinary workplaces that treat their employees so poorly that practice management significantly impedes the employee's ability to do his/her job well. This significantly impacts the standards of care in our profession. The practice standards scheme therefore needs to include minimum standards for employment, in addition to the current clinical practice standards. Examples of important requirements to include are:

- All employees should have employment contracts
- Minimum standards for contracts
- Provision of rest areas and rest breaks

3.2 Powers of entry for the RCVS

The BVU does not oppose powers of entry for the veterinary regulator, but do not feel that the RCVS is in a position to fulfil this function in its current format.

3.3 Power to issue improvement notices

The BVU does not oppose the power to issue improvement notices for the veterinary regulator, but do not feel that the RCVS is in a position to fulfil this function in its current format.

Part 4: Introduce a modern 'Fitness to Practise' regime

4.1 Introducing 'current impairment'

The BVU is in favour of this change.

4.2 Widening the grounds for investigation

Due to the sensitive nature of personal medical information, this committee should operate in a strictly and absolutely confidential manner. It is widely known that poor management and abusive workplace practices negatively impact the health and fitness to practise of veterinary professionals. The regulator should therefore investigate the impact of poor workplace practices on the vet or vet nurse's fitness to practise and take appropriate steps against managers and practices whose actions contribute to poor health e.g. those who fail to provide adequate support for workers, or emotionally blackmail or otherwise exploit their employees. Throughout any investigations, it is important that vets' livelihoods are protected. This is another instance where the lack of independence of the regulator poses a significant risk of abuse and discrimination. In order for a health and performance committee to be effective and acceptable, it must be truly independent. We are a small profession, and there is a significant reputational risk for veterinarians and other professionals where the regulator is not independent.

4.3 Introducing powers to introduce interim orders

The BVU would only support this change for an independent regulator under the Professional Standards Authority. In addition, any veterinarian or veterinary nurse who has an interim suspension must continue to receive a salary, which should be paid by the regulator, until the disciplinary process is completed as it is unacceptable to remove a person's livelihood without due process.

4.4 Introduce reviews of suspension orders

The BVU would support suspension reviews contingent on completing specific actions (e.g. specific training), and not tied to time periods. These actions should be clearly defined at the onset of suspension to avoid subjective bias in the review of suspensions

4.5 Introduce a wider range of sanctions

Great pains must be taken that these sanctions should not be used by the public to discriminate against minority groups (e.g. veterinarians for whom English is a second language), and all sanctions must be fair and proportionate.

As mentioned above, many of our members are concerned about giving greater power to the RCVS, as they answer to no-one but themselves. While a good idea in theory, these powers are only appropriate for an independent regulator under the professional standards authority.

4.6 Introduce the power to require disclosure of information.

We are in favour of an independent regulator having powers to require disclosure of information. Requests for disclosure should however be specific and relevant in order to prevent fishing expeditions. The request for information should also be placed in context, by letting the veterinary professional know what complaint was made against them.

4.7 Formalise role of case examiners

The BVU is concerned that this system will result in more cases being referred to the disciplinary committee (DC) with the proposed lower standard of proof. We would support the role of case examiners in the interest of expediency only if cases that are not resolved are not directly referred to the DC, but that the usual steps of first convening a preliminary investigation committee are followed.

4.8 Futureproofing the disciplinary process

The BVU cannot support these powers for a regulator that is not independently regulated under the professional standards authority as it creates a massive potential for abuse.

4.9 Statutory underpinning for Health and Performance Protocols

While the BVU is not opposed in principle, these powers should only be given to an independent regulator. Please refer to our response to 4.2.

4.10 Reduce the DC Quorum to three

The BVU opposes this change. Modern technologies such as Zoom and Teams facilitate meetings without any significant logistical needs or costs. There is therefore no reason to decrease the number of people on the committee, as it is much easier to 'convene' a quorum using modern technology.

4.11 Reformed restoration periods

No comment

4.12 Allow voluntary removal

The BVU supports this recommendation

4.13 Case Management Conferences

The BVU supports this change, and would add that these conferences should be done via teleconference.

4.14 DC should be given power to order costs

BVU strongly opposes this change. Power to order costs can be used by a regulator to discourage legitimate appeals.

4.15 Appeals against DC decisions

The BVU supports the right of appeal.

4.16 Appeals mechanism for reprimands and findings of misconduct

The BVU supports the right of appeal.

4.17 Automatic removal offences

The BVU supports temporary automatic removal, while due process is completed.

4.18 Power to appeal unduly lenient decisions

We support the power to appeal in cases where DC decisions are deemed too lenient, as well as too harsh.

Parts 5-8

5.1 Introduce powers to create limited licensure provisions, including for those with a disability

The BVU supports all efforts to make the profession more inclusive, but would oppose any legislation that limited a practitioners' ability to act in the client or patient's best interest.

5.2 Empower the RCVS to introduce revalidation

There needs to be more clarity on how this would work before the BVU could support such a change. What form would revalidation take; who would be doing the appraisal, etc. While there is merit in the principle, any revalidation would have to be independent from corporate and financial interests and ensure that vets are not held accountable for practice and economic shortcomings.

5.3 Underpin Mandatory CPD

The BVU would be in favour of mandatory CPD if veterinary practices (that under new legislation should be regulated) are required to provide time during the normal work week to meet this requirement. Mandatory CPD should never be used to discriminate against people who take a leave

of absence from the profession due to maternity or other reasons (e.g. illness or bereavement). One way to mitigate the potential for discrimination is to have a rolling three-year requirement (e.g. 105 hours), with a smaller annual minimum (e.g. 15 hours).

5.4 Registration of UK graduates

The BVU does not support outright refusal of registration without due process. In the interest of the public and the profession, the RCVS should be allowed to delay registration until a fitness to practise process can be completed. This delay should pertain only to serious criminal offences. For less serious offences, registrations should not be delayed once convictions are spent.

5.5 Not relevant anymore

5.6 Not relevant anymore

5.7 Not relevant anymore

5.8 Separation of registration and license to practise

The BVU supports this change.

5.9 Temporary registration nomenclature

Please refer to comments on 5.1 & 5.2

5.10 Restoration following voluntary removal/removal for non-contact

The BVU supports this change for people who have been off the register for more than 6 months. For restoration, proof of relevant CPD in line with that required from registered veterinarians should be expected. The RCVS should however make sure that there is a cost-effective route to 'return-to-work' training and re-registration for mothers with young children or other veterinary professionals that take an extended career break.

5.11 Restoration following voluntary removal/removal for non-contact

Please refer to comments on 5.4

5.12 Annual renewal – declared convictions

Please refer to comments on 5.4

6.1 Powers to revise the statutory examination

The BVU has no objection to this change

6.2 Ability to charge UK vet schools for accreditation visits

The BVU is in favour of this change

7.1 Power for the minister to make further changes to size/composition via Ministerial Order

The BVU opposes this change as changes to the RCVS governance are too important to rely on a single minister.

8.1 No comment

8.2 Empower the RCVS to set the annual renewal fee

The BVU supports giving the RCVS power to decrease the renewal fee, or increase it by no more than the national average increase in salary of the relevant professionals. Privy Council approval should be required for any additional increases in renewal fees.

8.4 Preserve the Royal College/Regulator relationship

The BVU strongly opposes this relationship. The veterinary profession, including all paraprofessionals, needs an independent regulator separate from the RCVS under the professional standards authority.

Agenda Item 3.2

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 – Natural Resources Wales to Committee, 10.05.21

Further to our previous discussion on responding to the letter from Janet Finch-Saunders MS (dated 23 March), please see our response below to the matters raised.

CR-39 Testing

We have consulted with our technical experts, and they have provided the following advice;

- a. If plutonium were present in the environment around Hinkley Point A, it would be accompanied by a range of other radionuclides such as fission products like caesium-137. These other radionuclides would be readily detectable by gamma spectrometry and could be used to indicate samples on which to undertake radionuclide specific analysis for alpha emitters such as plutonium. This tiered approach was used for the analysis of sediment samples from the Bristol Channel and has been supported by the findings of the independent Hinkley Point C Stakeholder Reference Group.
- b. Regulators require that any analytical measurements made as part of environmental monitoring apply the best available techniques and expect-recognised standards to be followed. Radiological analysis should be accredited to ISO17025 or an equivalence demonstrated. We are only aware of UKAS ISO17025 accreditation being given to laboratories using CR39 for radon measurement in the UK i.e. the accreditation does not apply to the radiological analysis in question.

Marine Licence Applications

All applications for a marine licence are thoroughly and robustly assessed, to ensure the proposed works do not harm people or the marine environment. The collection and analysis of the samples must be in accordance with the sample plan we publicly consulted upon and subsequently approved on 15 September 2020 (SP1914). We will base our decision of whether the sediment is safe to dispose at sea on robust scientific evidence, in line with the following accepted international standards:

- OSPAR guidance for the management of dredged material at sea (in line with London Convention) of 2014 covering physical, chemical, and biological characterisation of sediment; and
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards (in line with London Convention) of 2003, 2004, 2015 used for radiological assessments.

The application will be processed in accordance with the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017). All documents submitted in support of such an application will form part of a minimum 42 day consultation with our technical advisors and with the public. All relevant representations to the consultation will be considered as part of our determination process.

We have a dedicated position statement on this matter: [Natural Resources Wales / Disposal of dredged material from Hinkley Point C off the coast of Cardiff, South Wales^{\[1\]}](#)

Kind regards,

P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters, Correspondence – EDF to Committee, 02.08.21

I am writing to update you on plans for dredging in the Bristol Channel as part of construction work for Hinkley Point C.

Dredging for Hinkley Point C has generated some media and community interest in recent years, due to inaccurate claims that the mud is contaminated and could pose a risk to health. In this context, we wanted to keep you informed of any new developments.

The key updates are:

- Our application for dredging and disposal of mud at the Portishead licensed disposal site has now been approved by the Marine Management Organisation
- We intend to begin work shortly, following receipt of the appropriate licences and agreed conditions for this activity
- There will be two phases of dredging and disposal as part of this next stage in marine construction; the first will begin this summer, with the remaining dredging being completed in 2022
- We will now consider the next steps with respect to our application for the use of the Cardiff Grounds disposal site

For this phase of dredging the Government's marine science experts at Cefas have conducted testing that went above and beyond internationally recognised best practice, with more samples at greater depth and with a greater range of analysis. The results confirmed previous analysis that the mud is perfectly safe for disposal at sea and poses no risk to humans or the environment. The results also confirmed that the low levels of radioactivity in the mud is predominantly naturally occurring - as found up and down the Severn Estuary, as well as around the coast of Britain. The additional artificial radioactivity from a range of human activities is very low. An independent report commissioned by the Welsh Government also found that the mud would be deemed suitable for disposal at sea.

A more detailed briefing is available on our website at [Dredging mud in the Bristol Channel | Hinkley Point C | EDF \(edfenergy.com\)](#) and you are welcome to share this link with your constituents. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

P-05-1003 Demand an EIA now on the dumping of radioactively contaminated mud in Welsh waters, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 25.01.21

CR-39 Testing

NRW do not provide any response to our expert specialist evidence on alpha-testing as opposed to gamma-testing. The latter looks at radiation from bulk samples, whereas alpha testing looks at microsamples. Gamma-testing has picked up nuclear particles of 100micron sizes near Sellafield and on beaches near Dounreay. Gamma-radiation from smaller nuclear particles is not detectable above radiation levels from the bulk material. Alpha-spectroscopy also works on bulk material, so is not adapted to detect the very sparse nuclear microparticles in it.

The nuclear particles in Hinkley mud would be sized 5 microns or less, as that was the filter size on the Magnox cooling ponds. Their gamma signal would be 10 000 times smaller than for the Dounreay 100micron particles. The CEFAS spectrometry was far too insensitive to detect them.

We submit a report from Prof Keith Barnham that analyses the contradiction between the gamma and alpha results for the Hinkley discharges.

NRW report advice their “technical experts”. This advice is unchanged from what CEFAS was telling them earlier. The Hinkley Report (‘Hinkley Point C Reference Group’ the Davidson committee) recommended that NRW and the Welsh Government do not use CEFAS in cases where CEFAS are working from EDF, because of conflict of interest. The MMO say they avoided consulting CEFAS on this ground. Could the Petitions Committee ask NRW if they intend to change their practice in view of the recommendation?

EDF application to NRW for further dumping at Cardiff Grounds

EDF applied mid-Feb; NRW say they are still waiting on EDF to supply further (sufficient) information. The parallel application to MMO just sailed through, with no request for further information. We suspect NRW was treating it less leniently. Also, we have a Welsh National Marine Plan that specifies a high degree of protection in the Severn *Marine Protection Area*, specifically that activities in it have “no adverse effect”. MMO have no policy to protect MPAs.

There is joint Wales/England responsibility for the 2018-declared MPA under OSPAR, where conservation is top priority and other activities are limited. However MMO did not follow procedure and consult with the Welsh Government and/or NRW, and paid no regard to the adopted Severn Estuary Management Plan in just issuing its approvals.

The Committee should ask NRW for their view on MMO’s failure to consult with Welsh authorities over their ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’.

EIA defective

Hinkley mud dumped at Portishead will of course spread round the Estuary. Its chemical and nuclear pollutants will land on beaches and come ashore in south Wales as well as on the English side. EDF’s EIA was no better that they argued in 2018 for Cardiff. They assumed pollutants follow the

Morecambe Bay model, where there are few receptors (= people) and the Irish Sea flushes away pollutants.

The committee informed NRW of issues that should be covered in the EIA, most of which apply likewise at Portishead. NRW were consulted by MMO, but we don't know what they responded and whether they represented Welsh concerns. We can be pretty sure that they relayed to MMO the CEFAS views on nuclear microparticles that they have given the Committee, instead of saying it's up to MMO to make their own assessment of our expert evidence.

We therefore suggest the Committee should ask NRW to disclose whether they represented views from Wales or narrowly their own views in responses to MMO.

The Future

Geiger Bay do not consider the issue decided, having obtained legal advice that we have a good chance of challenging MMO's decisions to allow the Portishead dumping. Please ask NRW why they have not made public MMO's application as is normal practice of public authorities and ask them to place the documents and correspondence in a public file forthwith.

Report to: Natural Resources Wales

From: Keith Barnham, (Correspondence author: [REDACTED])
Emeritus Professor of Physics, Imperial College London
Denis Henshaw,
Emeritus Professor of Human Radiation Effects, University of Bristol

Date: 25th August 2021

Further evidence for Plutonium Microparticles in the Hinkley Point sediment in EDF's dredging application, Part 2 TR534

Introduction

For EDF's dredging application that preceded the first Hinkley Point C (HPC) dredge and dump operation in 2018, CEFAS did not directly test the sediment for the alpha emitters sensitive to plutonium contamination. They relied on interpreting measurements of the gamma emission from the americium isotope Am241 to infer the contamination of Pu(241). CEFAS assumed that the plutonium has similar isotopic composition to that discharged from the Sellafield reprocessing plant, to determine an upper limit for plutonium contamination.

The Marine Monitoring Organisation (MMO) has recently approved a new dredging application for which CEFAS have studied 27 core samples for alpha emissions. The CEFAS report [1] concludes that concentrations of the plutonium radionuclides were lower than those estimated using gamma emissions. This report demonstrates that this conclusion is based on an unscientific and inappropriate analysis of the measurements. Instead, the data in Ref.1 confirms the existence of significant amounts of plutonium in the core samples. Some of the evidence suggests the plutonium is in particulate form.

This report should be read in conjunction with Ref. 2, submitted to National Resources Wales (NRW) through the Petitions Committee on 9-3-21. This contained evidence from the report NRPB-M173 for plutonium in the historic waste discharges from Hinkley Point A (HPA) in the form of plutonium microparticles (PMPs).

1) CEFAS unscientific interpretation of the alpha measurements

CEFAS conclusion [1] that the alpha spectroscopy data from the core samples indicates plutonium contamination lower than the estimates determined from an analysis of the gamma results, was based on the summary Table 2. Averages of specific activities of Pu(239+240) and AM(241) are presented there. One can only assume that the MMO assessors approved the application without reference to Table 4 in the Appendix where the measurements of all 27 cores are presented. Table 4 clearly shows that these averages were made of data sets that varied by factors of more than 1000. Such an error would be unacceptable in an undergraduate science report that averaged data varying by a factor of 10. CEFAS should have been aware it was inappropriate to average such data sets.

Even if the MMO assessors had only studied Table 2 they should have been aware that the Pu(239+240) and Am(241) averages are inconsistent with the gamma data. The Pu and Am concentration averages were approximately equal (0.12 Bq/kg and 0.13 Bq/kg respectively) for the alpha data. However, the gamma results in Table 2 differ by a factor of

1.75 (Pu(239+240) = 0.95 Bq/kg and Am = 1.66 Bq/kg). Either the alpha or gamma results in Table 2 are wrong, or both. This should have prompted a close inspection of Table 4. Both results are incorrect as explained in the Sections 2) and 3)

When comparing radionuclides concentrations extracted from gamma and alpha measurements on the same core samples, it is necessary to make a large correction because gamma radiation penetrates far more easily through the mud than alpha particles. Alpha radiation only travels a very short distance in sediment. Hence, the deeper the alpha emitter in the sample the more attenuated the alpha signal when it reaches the detector compared to a gamma emitter at the same depth. It does not appear that such corrections were made to the alpha measurements.

The CEFAS gamma estimate for the plutonium concentration assumed the plutonium had isotopic compositions similar to Sellafield discharges. They should therefore have been aware that the plutonium in the Sellafield discharges is in the form of PMPs which need to be extracted from the sediment by well researched separation techniques **before** the alpha spectrometry measurements are performed. This is another major error which, as discussed in Section 3, severely underestimates the plutonium contamination and its threat to public health.

2) Evidence for plutonium in 24 of the core samples in Table 4

In Fig.1 the results of Table 4 for the specific activity of Pu(239+240) are plotted against the Am241 values. The scales are logarithmic to cover the large range of values of the respective signals as discussed in Section 1. The data closely follows a power law dependence over two decades with exponent close to unity. Though the plutonium results in the 3rd and 4th decades are more spread, as expected because the measurements are reaching the limits of detectability, it is impressive that, even below 0.01 Bq/kg, the results are consistent with the trend in the regions of higher detection efficiency.

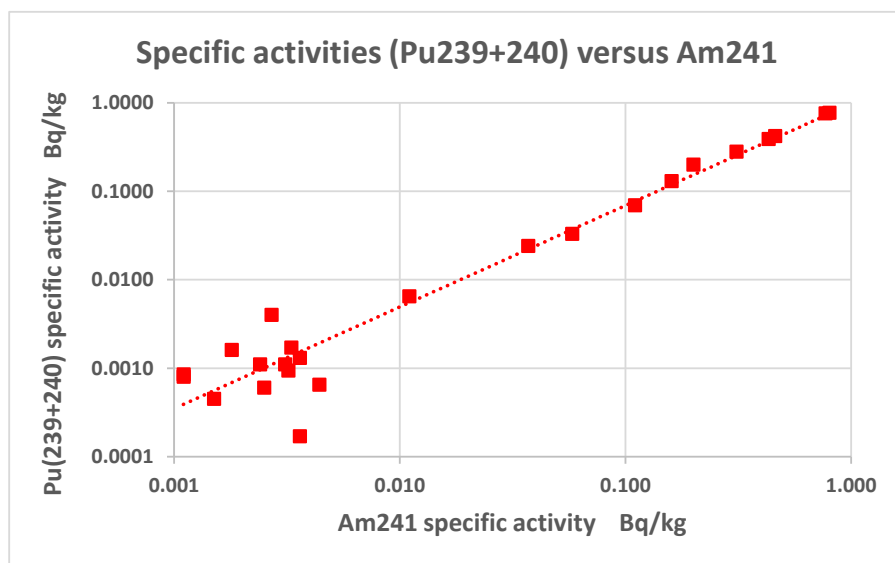


Fig. 1. The specific activity (i.e. concentration) of Pu(239+240) is plotted against that of Am(241) on logarithmic scales. The data in the lower decades has a wider spread, as expected as the limits of detection approach. However, the it is still consistent with the trend in the highest decades.

Am241 originates from the Pu241 isotope that was generated at the time the fuel was removed from the reactor core. The consistency of the trend in Fig. 1 over 24 of the 27 core samples tested suggests that all the Am241 was generated from this plutonium in one or more fuel elements that were removed from the HPA reactor around the same time after the same length of exposure. This is the case with the fuel elements containing weapons grade plutonium that were discharged from HPA in 1968 [3,4]. Serious accidents damaged the cladding of the spent fuel elements in the cooling ponds in 1969 [2].

The self-consistency of the data in Fig 1. confirms the presence of plutonium in 24 of the 27 core samples in Table 4 of Ref.1.

This report will now concentrate on what can be learnt from the core samples with highest Pu(239+240) and Am(241) specific activity in Table 4. Fig. 2 shows the specific activity of the 10 core samples with the highest Pu(239+240) concentration, plotted against the ratio of this specific activity to the Am(241). The dotted blue line (at 0.572) is the value of the ratio Pu(239+240)/Am(241) predicted by CEFAS on the basis of their gamma measurements assuming the PU(241) content of the plutonium is similar to that found in historic discharges from Sellafield.

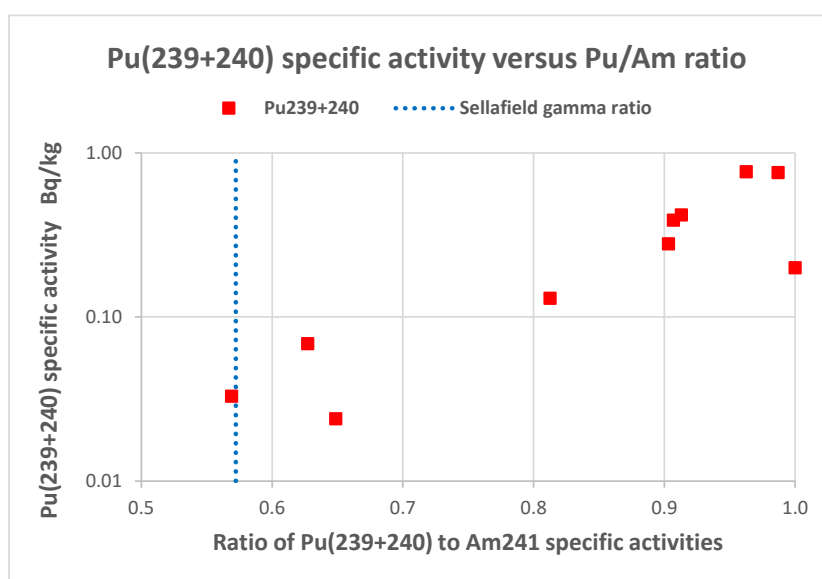


Fig. 2. Specific activities of the 10 core samples with the highest Pu(239+240) concentrations plotted against the ratio of Pu(239+240) to Am(241).

CEFAS concluded that, because the plutonium concentration calculated from their (erroneous) averaging of the Pu(239+240) results in Table 4 is **lower** than they derive from their analysis of the gamma data, the alpha measurements can be ignored. However, Fig. 1 shows that 9 of the 10 core samples with the highest plutonium concentration all have a plutonium to americium concentration ratio **higher** than that in the CEFAS gamma analysis.

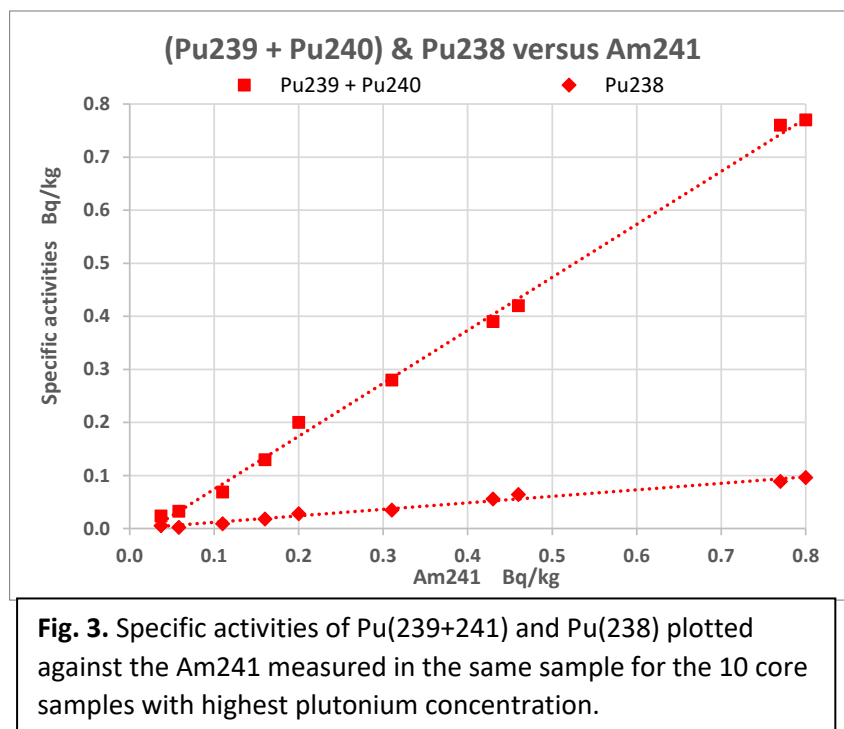
Fig. 2 shows that the CEFAS gamma analysis requires correction and is not a “conservative” estimate of the plutonium concentration as they claim.

The remaining 17 core samples not included in Fig.2 have concentration ratios Pu(239+240)/Am(241) lower than 0.5, but none have ratios greater than 1. This suggests the

fall in this ratio results from different sediment penetrations at the different alpha radiation energies from Pu and Am(241). This further confirms the importance of correcting the alpha signal for penetration depth that CEFAS ignored.

In addition to the alpha measurements of Pu(239+240) and Am(241), Table 4 contains the results of measurement of the alpha signal for the plutonium isotope Pu(238). Fig. 3 plots the Pu(239+241) and the Pu(238) concentrations against the Am(241) specific activity for the 10 core samples with the highest plutonium concentration.

The consistency of these isotopic ratio with the trend lines in Fig. 3 is further evidence for **the presence of plutonium radionuclides in 10 of the core samples.**



3) Evidence in Table 4 for Plutonium Microparticles in the core samples

Ref.2 presents plutonium alpha emission data from the report NRPB-M173 which shows two large peaks in the plutonium contribution in the liquid waste discharged from Hinkley Point A (HPA) in 1969 and 1982. All the plutonium discharged from HPA recorded in NRPB-M173 must have been in particulate form of less than 5 micron diameter, as this is the aperture size of the filters at the exit of the HPA cooling ponds. This is where the accidents that compromised the spent fuel cladding occurred in 1969.

Ref. 5, describes the definitive study of PMPs in estuaries around Sellafield resulting from historic plutonium emissions from Sellafield. Radiochemical separation of the sediment samples resulted in a range of grain sizes. The plutonium content of the grains was measured by alpha spectroscopy. Table I presents their results for the largest and the two smallest grain sizes.

The 5.5 μm PMP size had the highest specific activity of the grain sizes studied. All the plutonium that leaked through the HPA filters into the sediment will still, in 2021, have these extremely high specific activities given Pu(239) has a 24,000 year half-life.

Table 1	Pu(239+240)	Pu(238)/P(239+240)
Grain size	Bq/kg	Ratio
< 63 μm	306 +/- 14	0.25 +/- 0.02
< 5.5 μm	15,642 +/- 59	0.27 +/- 0.01
< 2.0 μm	13,279 +/- 240	0.26 +/- 0.26

Table 1 shows the specific activity falls dramatically if grain size increases to 63 μm , suggesting that the PMPs giving the alpha signals in Table 4 are near the surface. There must be a comparable concentration of PMPs throughout the sample each emitting many thousands of alpha particles a second that never reach the surface and detectors. Specific activities in CEFAS Table 4 are a gross underestimate of the PMPs throughout each sample.

In Fig.4 the Pu(238) data points have been scaled up by the inverse of the average branching ratio given by the trend lines in Fig.3. The scaled Pu(238) points add 10 more determinations of the plutonium concentration at the surface. The regular increase in the Pu(239+240) level in Fig.4 is possibly due to different PMP grain sizes. A random increase is expected from variations in sediment absorption. This hypothesis is supported by noting in the 10 core samples there are two pairs of cores with similar values. This regularity is consistent with the plutonium signal in the sediment being entirely particulate.

The Pu(238)/Pu(239+Pu240) branching ratio from the trendlines in Fig. 3 is 0.123. This is around half the values in the table observed in the PMPs from Sellafield in the table. This is consistent with the Hinkley Point PMPs resulting from the low burn-up, weapon's grade Plutonium discharge in liquid waste from HPA due to the 1969 cooling pond accident.

This is further evidence, additional to that in Section 1) that CEFAS' extraction of a plutonium concentration from the AM(241) gamma data by a model based on the isotopic composition and spent fuel extraction dates of Sellafield plutonium is incorrect.

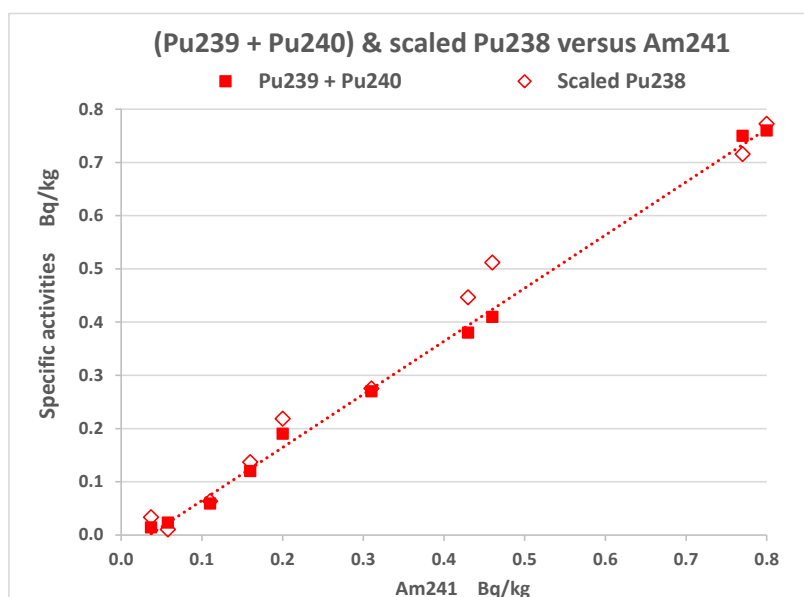


Fig.4. Open diamonds represent the Pu(238) data points in Fig. 3 scaled by the inverse of the average branching fraction of the trend lines in Fig.3.

4) Summary of errors in the CEFAS interpretation of alpha measurements

- i. Averaging data sets that vary by factors of more than 1000.
- ii. Not noticing the alpha and gamma results for the Pu/Am ratio in Table 2 differed significantly
- iii. Comparing alpha and gamma results without sediment penetration corrections.
- iv. Using the isotopic ratios appropriate to Sellafield high burn up plutonium rather than weapon's grade plutonium from HPA in modelling the extraction of a plutonium signal from gamma measurements.
- v. Not using 1968 as the date the bulk of the weapons grade plutonium in the sediments was removed from the HPA core in the modelling of a plutonium signal from the gamma measurements.
- vi. Not being aware that the plutonium in the Sellafield discharges is in the form of PMPs which need to be extracted from the sediment by well-known techniques **before** the alpha spectrometry measurements graphic analysis is performed.
- vii. Not sending the samples for testing by particulate sensitive techniques such as the radiochemical grain separation techniques of Ref. 5 as soon as an alpha spectroscopy signal was detected at the surface of the core samples.

5) Conclusions and Recommendations

The plutonium in the Hinkley Point sediment consists of microparticles less than 5 microns in diameter. Such PMPs represent a very serious health risk as they can be inhaled. They have been observed around Sellafield, blown back in sea spray. If inhaled into the lungs the short range of their high energy alpha radiation can severely damage internal organs. PMPs less than 1 micron in size can readily pass through the lung to reach all the organs in the body including the brain and a fetus.

Our analysis shows that CEFAS estimates of plutonium concentration are likely to be a gross underestimate of the plutonium content of the sediments dumped into Cardiff Bay in 2018.

We request that National Resources Wales forward this report, and re-submit Ref. 2, to the Environment Agency, for their urgent attention. We recommend the following:

- i. EDF to halt all dredge and dump preparations and all civil engineering work on HPC involving excavations and tunnelling, while the workers concerned receive lung-burden tests for alpha emitters, as is routine for some Sellafield workers.
- ii. NRW to request the Environment Agency order the Marine Management Organisation to reconsider their approval of EDF's application.
- iii. NRW to request the EDF pass the samples to an independent body to perform radiochemical grain separations and alpha spectroscopy as in Ref. 5.
- iv. NRW to request the Westminster Government urgently institute an independent, public enquiry of how the historic evidence for plutonium leaks from Hinkley Point A was covered up and why the sediment dumped in Cardiff Bay was not analysed for

PMPs given the known plutonium leaks resulting from the cooling pond accidents in 1969.

References

- 1) EDF, TR534, "Radiological Assessment of Dredging application for Hinkley Point C. Part 2", (2020).
- 2) Keith Barnham, "Misleading information from the Environment Agency concerning evidence for Plutonium Microparticles in the Hinkley Point sediment
- 3) K.W.J.Barnham et al., *Nature*, **407**, 833, (2000).
- 4) K.W.J.Barnham et al., *Nature*, **317**, 213, (1885).
- 5) S.R.Aston. D.J.Assinder & M.Kelly, *Estuarine, Coastal & Shelf Science* (1985), **20**,761

Report to: Natural Resources Wales

From: Keith Barnham, Emeritus Professor of Physics, Imperial College London

Date: 9th 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?

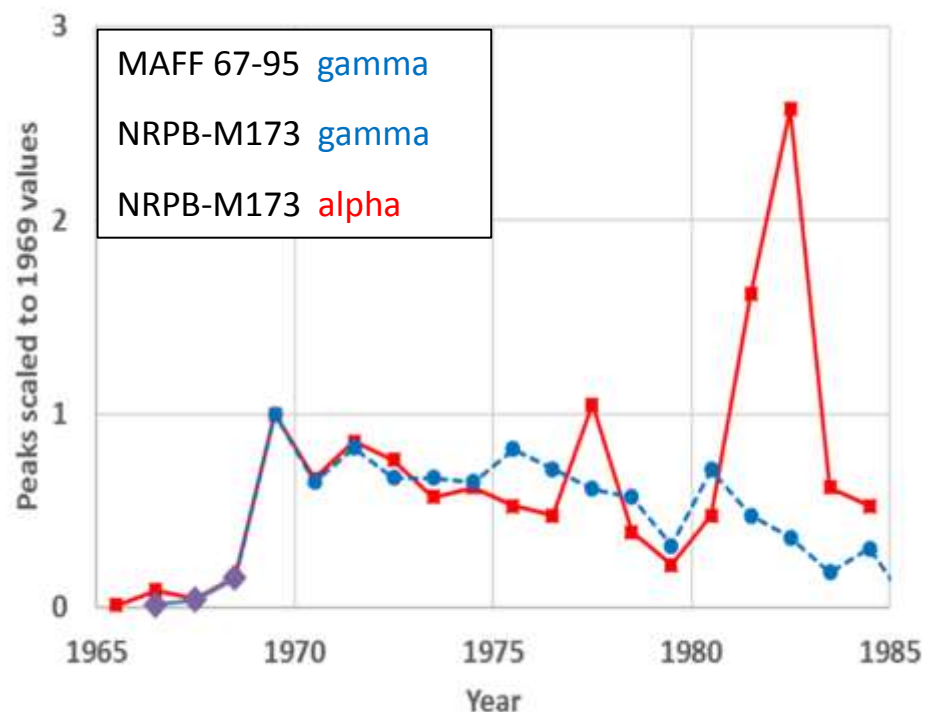
2) Over many years of annual monitoring, and to the best of our technical advisors' knowledge, hot particles have never been identified around the Hinkley area. The high levels emitted by these particles will mean that they would have been detected by gamma spectrometry in the first instance. Furthermore, 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 ofsome 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, CEBG Hinkley Point", PDRW (69) 74
- 4) S.R.Aston. D.J.Assinder and M.Kelly, *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science* (1985),20,761-771

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
7 September 2021

[REDACTED]
Support Officer
Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament

Hello [REDACTED]

Please could this be added to the papers for Petitions Committee's meeting 19th September?

On 23rd March 2021 the outgoing Petitions Committee informed Natural Resources Wales that ... *the Committee would welcome a response to the request made for CR-39 testing to be carried out on the material proposed to be dredged and disposed of in the Cardiff Grounds. They added The Committee also agreed to ask its successor committee to consider the issues raised by the petition further in light of the situation once it has been established.*

NRW's response (10th May 2021) states that:

If plutonium were present in the environment around Hinkley Point A, it would be accompanied by a range of other radionuclides such as fission products like caesium-137. These other radionuclides would be readily detectable by gamma spectrometry and could be used to indicate samples on which to undertake radionuclide specific analysis for alpha emitters such as plutonium. This tiered approach was used for the analysis of sediment samples from the Bristol Channel and has been supported by the findings of the independent Hinkley Point C Stakeholder Reference Group.

This paragraph ignores the fact that the core of a reactor is made of uranium. The intense radiation creates other elements including plutonium but, even by the time the fuel contains so many pollutants that it has to be routinely replaced, 96% is still uranium. It also fails to mention particles, although in consultation responses we have referred to UN data ¹ on licensed releases of particles from every operating nuclear power station in the world. The UN data are quantified in Becquerels (a unit of radioactivity) so there is no doubt that the particles are radioactive.

NRW refers to the independent Hinkley Point C Stakeholder Reference Group (chaired by Dr. Jane Davidson). The Group relied heavily on submissions from CEFAS whose methodology we are questioning here, and it failed to report on submissions that discussed uranium contamination. The report ² contains only a single reference to CR-39:

'Hot particles' containing alpha emitters can be detected by using CR-39 track detectors, but these will be detected by gamma spectroscopy through the additional presence of gamma emitting radionuclides.

This dismissive observation should be considered in light of the following comments provided to me yesterday by Prof. Denis Henshaw:

... gamma counting gives no idea of whether the activity is associated with hot particles. CR-39 is a non-destructive technique (which) allows activity to be detected from small point sources, notably individual hot particles or, for example, activity ... coated on fuel rod fragments. Furthermore, since the time exposure of the sample against the CR-39 is

¹ http://www.unscear.org/docs/publications/2000/UNSCEAR_2000_Annex-C-CORR.pdf - Table 34

² <https://gov.wales/implications-hinkley-point-c-independent-report>

known, the radioactivity can be determined as well as the microscopic size of a hot particle and its structure. It is also possible to identify individual inhalable hot particles against a background of natural alpha-emitters. CR-39 is selective in detecting alpha-particles and not beta or gamma. (The alternative) radiochemical analysis is destructive of the sample and gives no idea of where particular activity comes from.

In the second paragraph of the 10th May letter NRW refers to the need for *best available techniques and expect-recognised standards* (probable reading *expert-recognised standards*) and states that *radiological analysis should be accredited* etc. I agree with this, but NRW's tone is unhelpful. Prof. Henshaw pioneered the establishment of accredited laboratories to use CR-39 for radon measurement, which is an established and well-justified technique providing unique information. (If members have ever tested their homes for radon gas they will have used CR-39, and Prof. Henshaw worked on its use in monitoring contamination inside the Chernobyl sarcophagus.)³ The only problem in setting up an accredited laboratory to test for alpha-emitting particles in the UK is that there are no obvious commercial applications.

CEFAS say

" the suggestion that large numbers of 'hot particles', containing significant levels of plutonium, would be present in sediments around Hinkley Point is contrary to that observed from environmental measurements over several decades from annual routine monitoring. Unlike at Sellafield, 'hot particles' have not been identified around the Hinkley Point coastline."

This cannot be relied on; it fails to mention uranium and, in any case, uranium is routinely not monitored. In 2018 the Low Level Radiation Campaign (which I represent) asked all four environment agencies in the UK what data they held on radioactive particles in marine and littoral sediments. All answered that they had none and they referred us to annual RIFE reports, which likewise have no data on particles. Despite the inevitability of the discharges catalogued by UNSCEAR (above) particles have not been identified because no one is looking for them. The Hinkley Point mud must be assumed to contain many particles, yet CEFAS's tests failed to use any technique capable of detecting them. In view of the potential impact on Wales' healthcare budget it would be wise to consider a programme of direct monitoring and measurement of particles.

It may be thought that EDF's decision to shift the dumping of sediment to Portishead cancels or diminishes any need for Wales to test it. This would be a mistake; the Davidson report identified that the currents on the south side of the estuary flow eastward, swing round at the second M4 bridge and flow westward on the Welsh side.

Finally I wonder whether the Committee could consider convening an evidence session to gather information on:

- the prevalence of alpha emitting particulates in the environment in Wales;
- the practicality of detecting wind-borne particulates using High Volume Air Samplers and CR-39 or any valid alternative techniques;
- the availability of laboratories to conduct appropriate monitoring and analysis;
- how such laboratories might be funded given that this is a matter of public interest with no apparent commercial applications.

Sincerely

Richard Bramhall

³ Application of SSNTD for maintenance of radiation and nuclear safety of the Sarcophagus: "Radiation Measurements" 30 (1999) 709 - 714: O.A. Bondarenko, A.A. Korneev, Yu.N. Onishchuk, A.V. Berezhnoy, P.B. Aryasov, D. Antonyuk, A.V. Dmitrienko.

Agenda Item 3.3

P-05-912 Supporting Families with Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults

This petition was submitted by Rhian Mannings having collected a total of 5,682 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide support for a service here in Wales to ensure families who unexpectedly lose their child or young adult aged 25 years and under get the support they require.

In February 2012 my son George died suddenly in an Emergency Unit in Wales. We walked out into the night with nothing, alone and frightened. Nobody came, nobody reached out to support us and it was left to devastated friends and family to support my husband Paul and I. Five days after we lost our son my surviving two young children and I faced more heartache when Paul took his own life. Once again nobody came.

Families require support immediately after such loss. They need to have a point of contact if they have questions and a friendly ear to listen. You never get over the loss of your child and families need to know there is long term support in place for to help them through the grieving process.

There is no planning or preparation prior to a sudden death and the effect of traumatic loss can have a huge impact on the mental health of parents, siblings and other family members. We believe this support is essential and will prevent families walking out into the night with no hope, no support and most importantly without their child.

Additional Information

Since 2012 I have been determined to ensure families get the same support when they say goodbye to their child as they do when they welcome it into the world at birth. 2 Wish Upon A Star was established to support families and staff through the unexpected loss of a child or young adult aged 25 years and under. This support includes memory boxes, counselling and an immediate support pathway working with health boards and police forces here in Wales. We have had more than 465 referrals since we started

supporting families in 2015. The causes of death include SIDS, accidents, illness and more recently many young suicides. The feedback we get from both families and staff has been extremely positive, but we know many families are not being referred to us and many still need our support.

2 Wish Upon A Star already works with every health board in Wales and are supported by every police force. We have immediate support pathways in place in every Emergency Unit and Critical Care Unit and our pathway is clearly outlined in the Public Health Wales PRUDiC document. We also work with every Coroner, Mortuary, Organ Donation Team and Wales Air Ambulance to make sure no family is missed. However, many families still go without support. Staff have been known to 'forget' to give memory boxes, decided that the family of a 18 year old does not require support as 'he had stubble' and that the offer of support at time of death is 'not appropriate'. It is not for the professional involved to decide if a family require support.

We know by speaking to staff and families that our service is changing lives for everyone involved in the sudden death of a child or young adult and we want the Welsh Government to ensure all families get the offer of support when needed most.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE	Scoping Study of Bereavement Services – Welsh Government Response
DATE	13 February 2020
BY	Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services

This written statement follows the statement issued on 22 July 2019 on NHS bereavement support. It provides an update on the work undertaken since that statement was issued and sets out the actions the Welsh Government will take in response to the scoping study of bereavement services undertaken recently by Cardiff University and its partners.

Bereavement can be defined as the sorrow you feel or the state you are in when a relative or close friend dies. Bereavement is associated with elevated risks to mental health, morbidity and mortality and services that provide bereavement support can be vital in managing these risks. Bereavement support can also reduce the emotional, physical and mental impact of grief.

The bereavement services scoping study was undertaken by Cardiff University in conjunction with Marie Curie and the Wales Cancer Research centre on behalf of the End of Life Care Board. The study mapped existing support, ranging from signposting through to specialist counselling, and identified areas where further resourcing is needed. The study was published in December and can be accessed at:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-12/scoping-survey-of-bereavement-services-in-wales-report.pdf>

The scope of the study covered the broad range of bereavement support, including that for children and young people. It highlighted the gaps and challenges in bereavement support, and raises a number of considerations for service development. These are centred on the need to develop a national framework for bereavement care in Wales. This would then facilitate investment in bereavement support at organisational and regional levels and provide equity and access to appropriate levels of support responsive to local need.

A national framework would support the establishment of clear referral pathways, risk and needs assessments, training for staff and volunteers and a directory of available bereavement provision. It would also support improvements in how services are evaluated and assessed and enable standards for use as audit and quality improvement tools.

To develop the framework, a dedicated project manager has been recruited and will start work later this month. The national clinical lead for end of life care (Dr Idris Baker) has also been asked to establish a National Bereavement Steering Group to support the project manager with this work. Dr Baker has considerable knowledge and experience in bereavement care.

The existing Bereavement Support Working Group will be merged into the National Bereavement Steering Group, thereby ensuring that organisations supporting children, young people and those affected by baby loss and sudden death are all represented. The group will also include organisations supporting those bereaved by suicide and agricultural bereavement charities.

To address the gaps in bereavement service provision, the Welsh Government will be making an additional £1m available for bereavement support from 2021-22. This will provide time to enable the national bereavement framework and the pathways, training and standards that will follow to be developed. It will also allow time to agree how to allocate the funding so that health boards and existing local and national bereavement charities have the opportunity to access and make best use of this funding.

In the interim, funding has been provided in 2019-20 to four bereavement organisations (2 Wish Upon a Star, Papyrus, Cruse and the Jacob Abraham Foundation) to support the work that they undertake with those bereaved by suicide.

These measures will ensure that the Welsh Government is able to respond to the bereavement study in a timely manner and enable a national framework for the delivery of bereavement care to be in place before the end of 2020-21.

P-05-912 Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 18.08.21

Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults

“We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide support for a service in Wales to ensure families, who unexpectedly lose their child or young adult aged 25 years and under, get the support they require.”

In November 2019, I submitted a petition to the Welsh Assembly which called for a uniformed approach to bereavement support in Wales to ensure that no family is forgotten or unsupported. The petition focussed specifically on supporting suddenly bereaved parents. In 2012, I established a charity called 2 Wish Upon A Star following the sudden death of my one year old son, George, and, five days later, the sudden death of my husband, Paul, who took his life as a result of the death of our son. The charity provides immediate support as well as a range of other services to support those bereaved during the initial aftermath of the death, as well as in the longer term. Nearly ten years on, the charity works with every health board in Wales, are supported by every police force in Wales, has a clear pathway outlined in the Public Health Wales PRUDiC document and, since service delivery began in 2015, have supported over 900 families. Yet, we know that families are still not being referred into our services, are being missed and expected to cope, alone and vulnerable at the worst time in their lives.

The petition was delayed from being discussed in the Assembly due to the upcoming publication of the bereavement survey at the start of 2020, followed by the pandemic and the 2021 elections.

I am extremely grateful to the Welsh Government for publishing the Bereavement Survey of Bereavement Services in Wales in 2020. I appreciate the time and effort such a document takes to collate, am very interested in its content and am keen to ensure that the next steps ensure comprehensive support is available to all that require bereavement support. I am also pleased to be part of the Welsh Government Bereavement Strategy group and have been involved in writing the draft framework on bereavement services, which was recently out for consultation. It is reassuring to know that bereavement is being taken seriously at a strategic level and, as a result, funding is now available for organisations across Wales.

However, upon reading the finalised survey of existing services, I believe it raises more questions than it answers. The content tells us very little about who provides these services and what services they deliver. I have listed below some of my main comments/concerns with the survey and have concluded with further questions, recommendations and final comments.

1. The survey states that there are **25 services in Wales who support paediatric death**. That, across Wales, in **every local authority, there are 6-11 services for paediatric death**. That there are **25 services supporting sudden death and 26 supporting suicide**. That, across Wales, in **every local authority there are 5-10 services supporting sudden death and 5-9 supporting suicide**. Yet, it provides little information as to where these services are, who they are and what support services they are delivering. 2 Wish Upon A Star was founded because there were no support services in place for either of Paul nor George’s untimely deaths. If there are 25 services in Wales for paediatric death and 26 for suicide, then presumably services should have been available at the time of their deaths. The survey states that, in **Rhondda Cynon Taf specifically, there are 8 services for paediatric death and 10 for suicide**. It also states that, across all respondents, 75% have existed for nine years or more. Yet, the policeman who sat with me following the death of

my boys, researching support services on the internet, came up with no services available locally or nationally.

2. Bereavement support has been described by NICE as encompassing three components and the survey collated data in guidance with these components. There is no information on organisations who provide all three components, or all three components as well as 'other' services. Comprehensive support that avoids a postcode lottery approach is paramount and the survey does not identify who is able to provide all-three NICE components across the whole of Wales. As far as I am aware, 2 Wish are the only existing charity to provide services for all sudden and unexpected child death in line with all three NICE guidelines across the whole of Wales. Yet the survey does not acknowledge or, is not able to, dispute this.
3. The survey states that there are **23 services providing support for neo-natal deaths**. In April 2019, 2 Wish reached out to all neo-natal units across Wales to ensure partnership working similar to the pathways in place with A&E, Critical Care and Organ Donation. **2 Wish received 28 referrals for neo-natal deaths** in the remaining eight-month period of 2019, which is the second highest cause of death for the year, second only to death by suicide for which the charity received 49 referrals. If, as it states in the survey, there are **23 services for neo-natal bereavement** support being delivered across Wales then uptake on the service 2 Wish provides would not be so great. The same applies to the referral rate for those who have died by suicide, which is the highest it has ever been despite the 26 services providing services across Wales.
4. The survey states that there are **26 services in Wales supporting suicide and 5-9 services in every local authority which support those bereaved by suicide**. From 2016-19 alone, the referrals 2 Wish received for those who have died by suicide have more than quadrupled; in 2016, 10 referrals were received, in 2019, 49 referrals. Those figures continue to increase because there are so few organisations able to offer immediate and ongoing support, yet this is not demonstrated within the survey results. The 'Talk to me 2: Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Action Plan for Wales 2015-20' contains sixteen priority actions, ordered according to six principal objectives. Objective 3 is "information and support for those bereaved or affected by suicide or self-harm" and the priority action is the "further dissemination of Help is at Hand Cymru". As far as I am aware, of the organisations listed within the resource, none provide immediate and ongoing support for bereavement by suicide in line with all three NICE components across the whole of Wales. 2 Wish Upon A Star do.
5. The survey states that 45.6% of organisations are "unable to meet the demand for service". However, it also states that 62.2% of provider respondents "do not have a waiting list for their service". This contradictory information does not allow for a clear understanding, but only increases confusion. 2 Wish Upon a Star have seen an increase for demand year upon year since service delivery began. Yet the service remains able to meet the demand without a waiting list. That said, the continual increase in demands causes other challenges such as the need for funding to ensure the delivery of services continues to be able to meet its demand.
6. The survey states that a "number of respondents, from different types of organisations, stated that clear referral pathways to bereavement support were lacking". Through this petition, I hope to address this and ensure that a mandatory approach to bereavement support is implemented across Wales. And with training, increased awareness and a strategic approach, support will be available to every individual who lose a child or young person suddenly and unexpectedly. However, until we fully understand what already exists, how can a strategic plan be constructed that includes support for all.

Further questions about the Bereavement Survey

1. What is the bereavement support being provided? A flyer, a phone call, a group? What is the definition of bereavement support? Does an information leaflet and/or signposting count as bereavement support?
2. Who is providing the bereavement support? Who are the organisations, what are their services and where are they delivered?
3. When is this support offered and for what duration? The bereavement survey states that 42% of services provide 'immediate support'. Which services do that? 2 Wish provide support within 48 hours of a referral into our services. In most cases, the referral is made the same day as the death occurred.
4. How are quality of service and outcomes measured across all bereavement services?

Following on from the bereavement study and with my involvement in the Bereavement Strategy Group, I strongly believe this petition still requires discussion and my recommendations to be considered.

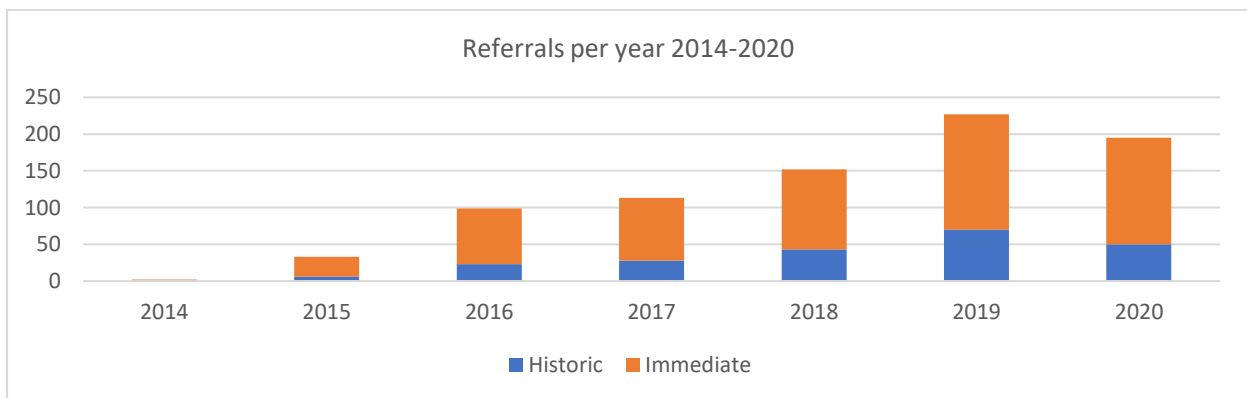
Recommendations

1. **Early intervention to support families who lose a child or young adult aged 25-years-old and under.** This will help avoid long-term intensive support through other services such as mental health pathways. Every single bereaved family needs to understand, accept and be reassured about their feelings.
2. **To ensure professionals in hospitals, as well as all other professional environments, follow an immediate support pathway.** The pathway relieves pressure from the bereaved individual and the emphasis is placed upon the organisation to contact the individual. At the time of death, families should be offered a memory box and, with consent, family details should be passed onto the relevant organisations. This needs to be a mandatory offer of support enforced by Welsh Government. The impact of this pathway not only supports families in a proactive and immediate manner; but allows professionals to feel they have provided all the care and support they are able. The consequential impact this has on staff too must not be underestimated.
3. **An All-Wales, immediate support pathway to ensure all families who lose a child and young adult are offered the same support no matter where they live in Wales.**
4. **Adherence to the 'Talk to me 2: Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Action Plan for Wales 2015-20'.** Objective 3 is "information and support for those bereaved or affected by suicide or self-harm

5. **To provide training to professionals working with suddenly bereaved families.** To initiate conversations around the support families can access, using memory boxes and ensuring referrals are made during what is a difficult time for everyone involved.
6. **Professionals involved in the sudden death of a child or young person can also require support.** There needs to be immediate support pathways to ensure that all professionals have an offer of support when they are involved in the traumatic and sudden death of a child or young person.

Summary

2 Wish Upon A star are delivering every single recommendation as listed above and have seen the positive impact of such support on more than 900 families since 2015.



This petition calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge Welsh Government to make the offer of immediate support mandatory and ensure that no family, professional or individual is missed or left to cope on their own when a child or young person dies suddenly and unexpectedly.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my petition and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Best wishes

Rhian Mannings

Agenda Item 3.4

P-05-1035 Allow birthing partners to be present at scans, the start of labour, birth and after the birth.

This petition was submitted by Hannah Albrighton having collected a total of 7,326 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Due to COVID-19 there has been restrictions on birthing partners being present for scans, labour and birth in many hospitals.

There hasn't been many reviews on this topic, if any at all.

It seems unfair, and an insult to new families that they can stand 2m apart from complete strangers down the beach or even in a shop, but they cannot have their partner or birthing partner there to witness first time experiences such as scans, the baby's heart beat, labour and birth.

It needs to change.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Neath
- South Wales West



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/02208/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

13 April 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 27 January on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding current maternity visiting guidance: Petition P-05-1035 Allow birthing partners to be present at scans, the start of labour, birth and after the birth.

The safety and wellbeing of all mothers and babies, as well as the staff who support them, is at the heart of the guidance on women being accompanied by their partner or nominated person when accessing maternity services during the current time.

After listening to women and families and consulting with midwives, doctors and sonographers, we have made amendments to the visiting guidance for maternity services. This guidance can be found by following this link:

<https://gov.wales/hospital-visiting-during-coronavirus-outbreak-guidance>

Visiting in maternity services will now be based on a risk assessment approach by individual health boards. This will take into account local transmission rates, environmental factors such as room sizes, ability to socially distance and infection prevention and control risks in enabling partners to safely accompany pregnant women and new mothers.

This approach applies not only in clinics (for attendance at scans) and in waiting areas but also on maternity wards where women may be supported in early labour. This early labour support is often provided in shared ward areas where distance between bed spaces and flow through wards needs to be considered. While we are in alert level 4 we would not expect relaxation of visiting restrictions such as partners being present prior to the woman being in active labour but would expect as infections fall and a lower alert level is announced that relaxation of restrictions would follow. This would be locally determined and risk assessed.

Any changes to local visiting restrictions will be reported to the Chief Nursing Officer.

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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.

Yours sincerely,

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

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE Further update to Hospital visiting during the Coronavirus outbreak: guidance – June 2021

DATE 18 June 2021

BY Eluned Morgan, Minister for Health and Social Services

The Welsh Government is publishing revised NHS Wales Hospital Visiting Guidance that will come into force on 5 July 2021. This supersedes previously published Guidance of 25 March, 20 April, 20 July and 30 November.

I expect all requests for visiting in healthcare settings to be treated with compassion and empathy whilst ensuring the patient's best interests are met and local risk assessment processes are followed.

The risk of nosocomial transmission (transmission in a healthcare setting) remains high, particularly in light of the more transmissible Delta variant. The revised Guidance does not expect health providers to relax all visiting restrictions at present but recognises that a balance is required. It reinforces the principle of local decision making based on local conditions.

The Guidance is clear that it cannot foresee all requests for visiting and contains an exceptionality provision to allow requests for visiting that are outside the categories listed in the Guidance to be considered taking into account individual circumstances, but still following local risk assessment processes.

The accompanying Supplementary Statement allows providers to depart from the Guidance in response to rising or falling levels of coronavirus transmission. In order to ensure some continuity, individual NHS bodies have been asked to make such decisions after taking advice from Public Health Wales.

A new annex aims to give health providers an aid to decision making when considering the use of particular COVID-19 tests to support hospital visiting. The annex has been developed by the Welsh Government Nosocomial Transmission Group and states that COVID-19 testing may be considered by health providers for visitors to hospitals as part of a risk assessed approach.

Testing can help to identify people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus. Those who test positive must immediately self-isolate to avoid passing the virus on to others.

The principles make it clear the use of testing for hospital visitors is to be determined at a local level. Implementation of the 'hierarchy of controls' including protocols and procedures for social distancing, environmental cleaning and infection prevention and control, including PPE remain the principal ways of preventing the entry and spread of COVID-19 within health care settings.

The guidance recognises the special circumstances of parents in neonatal and paediatric settings, and partners of women in maternity services. The principle of local risk assessment still applies and it is recognised that there may be a useful role for regular lateral flow testing to facilitate access for partner and/or parent support throughout pregnancy/ birth/ postnatal and in provision of support to children. There could also be opportunities to utilise Point Of Care devices to test parents and partners.

Parents of children in hospital and pregnant women and their identified support partner in maternity services are now able to access LFD test packs by collecting test kits from their closest community collection point or by ordering test kits direct to their home.

The Welsh Government recognises that restrictions on visiting can impact adversely on patients and their loved ones and staff. The health, safety and wellbeing of patients, communities and health care provider staff remains an absolute priority. Of course, virtual visiting in healthcare settings continues to be encouraged and supported where possible.

The Guidance and accompanying Supplementary Statement is being kept under review and can be found here: [Hospital visiting during the coronavirus outbreak: guidance | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/hospital-visiting-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak-guidance)

Agenda Item 3.5

P-05-1045 To make shared-decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews a legal requirement

This petition was submitted by Tesni Morgan having collected a total of 1,462 signatures.

Text of Petition:

On the 27th of August 2020 our darling Bronwen took her life after a long battle with her mental health.

We as a family truly believe that it could have been prevented. During the last 6 months of her life, Bronwen's mental health deteriorated drastically. She was making multiple attempts to take her life, putting herself in dangerous situations on a regular basis. Bronwen was hopeless, her current care-plan was not fit for purpose and she and the family were begging for something to change.

Additional Information:

We begged to be listened to, so did Bronwen. We were ignored.

We are striving for shared decision making and regular reviews of mental health care and treatment plans. We also call for an opportunity for next of kin to contribute to those reviews. The current NICE guidelines state that shared decision making is essential in order to meet the needs of the patient.

NICE states that shared decision making is important for:

Different choices to be made available to the patient and are discussed openly.

The ultimate decision to be reached together by the health professional and the patient.

To help health and social care professionals to tailor the care or treatment to the needs of the individual.

This in was NOT the case for Bronwen. Shared decision making is ESSENTIAL for patients to receive the best care that is tailored to their individual needs.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1045
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/03894/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

24 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your further letter of 16 February on behalf of the Petitioner regarding Petition P-05-1045 and shared-decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews.

The further comments and proposals received will continue to inform our work that we outlined in our previous response. We will also share this information with our mental health programme leads in order to support their work.

Please also be assured that all future work in this area will involve service users and carers with lived experience in order to provide opportunities to inform our ongoing policy response. I also want to take this opportunity to reiterate that it is important that the petitioner discuss their concerns directly with their health board to ensure that the investigations into this incident consider their experiences fully.

Thank you again for writing to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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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.

P-05-1045 To make shared-decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews a legal requirement, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 24.08.21

Additional comments in relation to Petition P-05-10 45: to make shared decision making and monthly mental health care-plan reviews a legal requirement.

In addition to previous notes given to the committee on the 01.02.2021, we wish to provide further comments in relation to the petition at hand and in response to the letter received from the Minister for Health and Social Services Vaughan Gething.

We are not satisfied with the responses from the Minister as we although it is encouraging that this issue is being investigated, we believe that without this being a legality – the issue will get swept under the carpet in day-to-day practice and be forgotten as it has previously. As stated in our first response give to the committee, the NICE guidelines are for Care and Support Plans to be reviewed monthly – however as we all know, this is a guideline. Due to the mental health services currently being so overwhelmed, this is a priority for the staff members and therefore this vital part of individual’s care is being ignored as it is not a legality. Clinicians will not prioritise this work as we can evidence.

Additionally, there has not been a specific response in relation to ensuring that patients and their families are given the opportunity to consider and put forward suggestions during the Care and Support Plan review and again for this to be a requirement. Similarly, as the overworked staff members try to complete a Care and Support Plan – the quickest and easiest way to do this is by doing it themselves and not in collaboration with the service user and their family and this is more time consuming and again, this is not being done.

I fear that without creating a formality/requirement to complete regular care-plan reviews, as well as a requirement for the comments of the service user and their family – the service users will not be given this opportunity since is it not a legality, so it is unlikely be prioritised. We believe that no matter what recommendations or guidelines are put in place – Care and Support plan reviews will not be completed with the service user and their family due to the time this will take. It is simply easier for it to be completed quickly and without consultation to save time. However, in doing this they are taking away the patient’s autonomy and their right to have a say in their treatment. Also potentially not giving the right support at the right time, resulting in the patient receiving support and care that they do not want or will not engage with – only to be bounced to a different service later, putting more strain on the services. It is about giving the right support at the right time and this can only be achieved by consulting the service user regularly and ensuring the support they are receiving is right for them, as well as hearing from their family – the ones who know them the best.

I feel further investigation and research needs to be carried out so that the Minister for Mental Health can see the sheer amount of service users who have no say at all in their

23.08.2021

care, and their wishes and requests are being ignored. Resulting in more strain on crisis services and wider. I feel the committee or those responsible need to take time to speak with service users or complete a survey to understand how often the average service user is offered a Care Plan review and how much say they and their family have on their care. This will open your eyes to just how irregular this is and why we are so passionate about making this change. The service users themselves are the ones with the knowledge and truth of their experiences, so I urge you to use them as a resource to find out just how much a change like this would mean to them.

We would also like to note, that we would be happy to meet with the committee on Zoom or wherever is convenient to discuss this further and encourage any specific questions the committee might have.

Many thanks,

Tesni Morgan

Agenda Item 3.6

P-05-1062 Abandon the rt-PCR test for covid-19 testing as its unfit for purpose

This petition was submitted by Robert O'Shea having collected a total of 96 signatures.

Text of Petition:

It has come to light that the NHS only used 35x amplification on PCR testing prior to the alleged pandemic. But now the NHS are using 45x amplification and the amount of false positives increases dramatically. This is utterly absurd! The PCR is not testing for a novel coronavirus – it is testing for the subjects nonspecific endogenous cellular exudation! RNA particles. End the case-demic now and cease all swob rt-PCR now.

Additional Information:

At 45x amplification it is clear to those who independently research and have an academic science background that the PCR test is being used to cause fear and hard-hitting headlines.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/08421/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

13 April 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 27 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee concerning 'Petition P-05-1062 Abandon the RT-PCR test for covid-19 testing'. I apologise for not replying sooner. The Welsh Government has received an unprecedented amount of correspondence regarding the pandemic and we are working to respond to each enquiry as quickly as possible.

The major elements for evaluation of test accuracy are diagnostic sensitivity and specificity, which determine the likelihood of false positive or false negative results:

- The likelihood of false positive results is primarily determined by the specificity of the test.
- The likelihood of false negative results is determined by the sensitivity of the test and the prevalence of COVID-19 in the test population.

The performance or accuracy of any given test is not only determined by the test performance but the context in which testing takes place. For example, if the testing targets symptomatic individuals this increases the pre-test probability of a positive result and therefore would reduce the proportion, although not the number, of positive results that were false positive results. Also, if the testing protocol adopted involved repeat testing, each round of repeat testing would reduce the numbers of false negative results.

As agreed by the Technical Advisory Group, the principles for using RT-PCR tests include:

- That clinically-led testing associated with the medical needs of an individual should have primacy over testing for other purposes.
- The utility of additional RT-PCR testing be considered in the wider context of other testing that is taking place, including the Test, Trace and Protect programme.
- The performance of the RT-PCR is at its best when its use is targeted, for example, when used to support diagnosis in symptomatic individuals. It is unsuited to the non-targeted screening of asymptomatic individuals, especially in populations with a low prevalence of infection. Use in asymptomatic individuals should, wherever possible, be on the basis of effective targeting, for example following tracing that has indicated a high-probability of exposure and thus likely infection.

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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.

- The purpose of testing (either 'single' or 'repeat') within defined target settings or cohorts should be clearly defined and agreed prior to the implementation of that testing.
- Criteria for the cessation of repeat testing within defined target setting or cohorts should be clearly defined and agreed prior to the implementation of that testing.

The use of PCR tests is supported by advice from Public Health Wales who confirm that a positive test corresponds extremely well with the presence of SARS-CoV2 RNA, indicating that the person is, or has been, infected with the disease. The PCR antigen test used in Wales has an analytic specificity of 99.96%, which means that there would only be approximately four false positive results for every 10,000 tests performed.

We consider the use of new technologies as they emerge. You will be aware that we have moved to using lateral flow testing (LFT) as well as RT-PCR tests. Lateral flow devices (LFD) are hand-held and can produce results in 30 minutes as no laboratory processing is required. They can also be self-administered. While LFDs are not as sensitive as lab-based RT-PCR tests, scientific advice has indicated that by testing more frequently with LFDs their accuracy is on a par with RT-PCR tests.

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, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

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

Agenda Item 3.7

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/00455/21

Clerk, Petitions Committee

Dear Clerk,

28 April 2021

Thank you for your further letter of 29 March regarding weekly testing for staff caring for people with complex medical needs. In responding to your previous letter I did not appreciate that the staff caring for the petitioner's daughter were employed on a private basis. My apologies for that.

You may be aware that the Welsh Government has recently announced the availability of regular testing with Lateral Flow Devices to all those individuals who are unable to work from home - <https://gov.wales/people-wales-who-cannot-work-home-encouraged-use-lateral-flow-self-tests> Tests can be collected from local test sites centres across Wales and are intended to make regular asymptomatic testing for coronavirus more convenient and accessible for people not covered under existing schemes, including those staff caring for the petitioner's daughter.

It is however important we recognise that testing is not a panacea; it has a key role to play within a wider response to the Covid-19 pandemic and has to have a clear specific purpose in order to have the best effect. Scientific advice is clear that robust infection control and management, careful adherence to social distancing and use of PPE remain the most effective way to prevent transmission of the virus.

Yours sincerely,

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

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Julie.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.Morgan@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 166
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 3.8

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

9^{fed} Llawr
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Fax: 029 20475850

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

7 April 2020

Dear Janet

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

Thank you for your letter dated 30 March 2021. I provide a response on behalf of the Education Workforce Council (EWC) below.

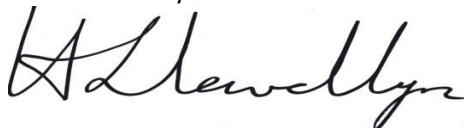
The EWC has a statutory responsibility (under Welsh Government legislation) to accredit programmes of initial teacher education (ITE) in Wales and monitor their compliance thereafter. These considerations are made in line with the *“Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes (ITE) in Wales 2018”*.

The criteria and in turn the contents of programmes are determined by the Welsh Government rather than the EWC and therefore this matter is most appropriately directed to government officials.

However, it might be helpful of me to highlight that the EWC and Welsh Government have received many requests for additions to the syllabus of ITE programmes over the years. It is important to recognise that programmes combine a mix of theory and teaching practice, with the theoretical content being constrained by the limited time available to deliver it, particularly in the case of a one year PGCE. As such, while suggested additional content is well intended, it may not necessarily be practical to accommodate this within the time available.

Please do not hesitate to contact at hayden.llewellyn@ewc.wales or (029) 2046 0099 if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely



Hayden Llewellyn, Chief Executive
Education Workforce Council

P-05-1133 Adapt the teacher training syllabus to include Transformational Coaching and Emotional Intelligence, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 30.08.21

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

I am grateful for a response from the Education Workforce Council, but it does not address the initial problem that we are facing here in Wales of teacher burn out and stress, with a high number of staff leaving the profession.

I understand that there needs to be a balance of theory and teaching practice. Placing an extra few hours a week to a timetable that isn't currently a full time table can be feasible to equip our teachers with some solid EQ tools.

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

I don't feel that it has adequately addressed the issues raised. I understand that that the EWC and Welsh Government have received many requests for additions to the syllabus of ITE programmes over the years.

However, we are moving into a very different era of teaching. Our teachers need a different set of tools to support not only themselves with the resilience of maintaining a job that have high cases of burn out and stress but also to manage to pass the tools to our next generation of children.

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

I'd like to know how we will maintain our teaching staff in the future?

- **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?**

Since the pandemic, our teaching staff and specially many Head Teachers are at burn out point. Having worked with over 200 Head Teachers throughout the pandemic understand first-hand how they are feeling as a result.

I will look forward to hearing from you.

Diolch

Agenda Item 3.9

P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres, now unable to operate for 12 months

This petition was submitted by Sara Jane Jones, having collected a total of 1,181 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Centres across Wales have had to close their doors to school visits for what will be at least 12 months due to government restrictions. They have received no additional funding to any other businesses yet have lost almost all their income. These centres not only provide vital educational services but large inward investment into rural parts of Wales along with many skilled jobs. Without financial support many will close leaving rural areas, local suppliers, services and trades devastated.

Additional Information:

The Scottish government has announced a £2 million fund for Scottish centres to help their centres survive the pandemic. To achieve the same in Wales a £10 million package would be needed. These centres form a larger part of the economy in Wales than in Scotland. In North Wales alone the annual income of these centres is around £50 million supporting 900 jobs. The figure for Wales nationally will be more than double this.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/residential-outdoor-education-centres-fund-opens/>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales

P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres, now unable to operate for 12 months, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 10.03.21

Dear petitions committee.

I thank you again for bringing my petition to the fore and giving consideration to the points raised. I am pleased that the committee agreed that it was a matter of some considerable concern that needed to be addressed.

I am aware that in the committee's last meeting it was stated that I, as the petitioner would be contacted for further information. I remain willing to provide any further details I can to help the committee take informed action. However I have not been contacted at this stage and do feel the information I have already submitted was comprehensive. To this end and given the time sensitivity of this petition I do question why further action is not already underway. This delay will cost more people their jobs and livelihoods and continue to decrease outdoor education provision in Wales.

There is already a shortage of residential outdoor education provision for children in Wales. The past few years have seen the closure of many centres, such as Staylitttle and Ty Gwyn (Powys centres) and as a result many of the remaining centres take a mixture of schools in Wales and schools from over the border. Since writing my statement to the committee I can confirm that out of the 40 centres listed 8 have indeed closed permanently with many more hanging in the balance. I am watching with sadness as buildings go on the market as domestic properties. They will never again be for the use of our children. As a nation outdoor education is an incredible asset, something Wales does fantastically well. I am ashamed that the Welsh Government continues not to see the profession or the people in it recognised and supported.

Furthermore, as I previously stated this as much an economic matter as an educational one. The income that these centres bring into Wales's most rural areas is considerable, as well as the skilled jobs they provide and the supply chains they support. We are yet to be given any recognition as a sector by the minister for Welsh Economy, Ken Skates or indeed any consideration of our situation as businesses. I would state again that these businesses have not been recognised for funding in line with other Welsh businesses. I am also aware that through the winter months the government lockdown grants have been given to campsites. Campsites that would normally be closed at this time of year and in fact their licenses require them to be closed. Still they have received grant funding to maintain their grass fields whereas large residential centres have been given the same to maintain large buildings,

technical equipment, fleets of buses and are losing hundreds of thousands of pounds of income that would have been generated in this period. How can this be fair?

I feel sure that Wales will want to recognise the importance of this sector now as well as the contribution it can make in the future. Both Scotland and Northern Ireland have now provided targeted sector support for outdoor education and continue a dialogue with the sector showing their recognition of the importance.

I reiterate the urgent nature of this petition and the devastating consequences from further inaction.

I am keen to know the timescale of the current deferral and what action or evidence gathering will commence in the interim. I await your response.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE	The Welsh Government Statement on Establishing a Fund for the Residential Outdoor Education (RoE) Sector
DATE	24 March 2021
BY	Kirsty Williams, MS, Minister for Education and Ken Skates, MS, Minister for Economy Transport and North Wales

Today we are pleased to jointly announce that a fund will be established to support the residential outdoor education sector in Wales with an initial allocation of £2m. This fund will provide eligible centres across Wales with support to cover essential operating costs during the period June to September 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected residential outdoor education centres in Wales, as it has in other nations. Many settings have not been able to resume provision of outdoor learning since March 2020. Due to the ongoing pandemic and measures in place to reduce the transmission of the virus, outdoor residential centres are likely to continue to be affected. This not only impacts on the centres, their staff and the economy of the local communities in which they are based, but it also impacts on children and young people who benefit from these residential educational experiences.

Prior to the pandemic, thousands of Welsh school children would benefit from the educational experiences and opportunities that these residential centres provide for children and young people. They provide expert-led learning outside the classroom and recognised wellbeing benefits. Adventurous education is unique in a young person's journey through school, and these learning experiences are so highly valued that parents pay for them, and teachers and specialists give time willingly to ensure these experiences are enriching.

Residential outdoor education experiences will play an important role in supporting the roll-out of the new curriculum for Wales, and the work providers undertake will continue to make a valuable contribution to many local economies as we begin to emerge carefully from COVID-19 restrictions.

We have listened carefully to the concerns of the sector, and the particular challenges in relation to residential outdoor education experiences. Whilst many organisations in the sector have accessed Welsh Government support during the pandemic, there is a need to ensure support continues to be available when necessary. A fund will therefore be established to support the residential outdoor education sector in Wales.

Further details on the Fund, including when it will be open to applicants, will be released in May.

P-05-1135 Targeted funding for residential outdoor education centres, now unable to operate for 12 months, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 29.03.21

We are pleased to hear that the Government has begun to listen to our situation and support what is a very educationally valuable and viable sector. The announcement of a sector specific fund for residential outdoor education is welcomed and I thank you for your time in addressing this matter on our behalf.

The statement communicates that further details of the fund will not be available until May. With the sector being diverse this does leave organisations wondering whether they will be eligible, how the funds will be allocated and how this will support them going forward. Clearly with 8 of 41 centres in Wales already closed permanently because they have not been able to bridge the gap until they can reopen this is a very time critical period. I would be pleased if you were able to shed any further light to this situation for centres that will by May have been closed for a full 14 months.

Furthermore, the announcement also came last week that the DfE have changed their guidance on school visits and that residential school visits should be allowed no earlier than 17th May. It could be the case that after having waited for 14 months centres like ours will now not be eligible for the fund if they are indeed open and able to trade. I would urge the Government to consider the 5 months in 2020 that residential centres were unable to trade yet remained financially unsupported and also the "start up costs" that are now faced after the long period of closure.

I thank you again for your time.

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1135
Ein cyf/Our ref: KW/02005/21

Janet Finch-Saunders AS/MS
Cadeirydd / Chair of the Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

SeneddPetitions@senedd.wales

31 March 2021

Dear Janet

Thank you for your email on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding targeted funding and support in respect of residential outdoor education centres (P-05-1135). I am pleased to be able to provide an update on the support and funding available, and to address the concerns you have raised.

Firstly, I assure you that we all want to see a return to 'normal' – a time when outdoor education providers are able to support our learners. I know how important outdoor experiences are for our children and young people, and how they can play a particularly important role in learning and in our recovery journey. The outdoors will, we hope, also play a key role in realising the ambitions of our new curriculum.

Officials continue to have regular discussions with other UK Governments and with the sector, and when we believe it's safe to ease further restrictions, we will do so. Safety must remain our priority. As you know, our approach is to ease restrictions in gradual steps, listening to the medical and scientific advice and assessing the impact of the changes we make as we go along. Taking a cautious approach enables us to monitor the effect on rates of transmission and to make changes before hospitality, activity and leisure venues and retail is fully opened once again. We are, however, taking forward discussions on how restrictions might be eased, and the mitigations required to ensure outdoor education visits are able to resume safely, at the appropriate time. We will update our guidance as soon as it is appropriate to do so; with the resumption of domestic day visits in the first instance, and in due course the resumption of domestic residential trips.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
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.

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 pleased you recognise that the Welsh Government is doing everything we can to support businesses through this very difficult period. Whilst many organisations in the sector have accessed Welsh Government support during the pandemic, we acknowledged a need to ensure support continues to be available when necessary. On 24 March, I jointly announced the establishment of a £2 million fund to support the residential outdoor education sector in Wales, with the Minister for the Economy, Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates MS. Details of the announcement can be found below:

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-statement-establishing-fund-residential-outdoor-education-roe>

The Residential Outdoor Educational Sector in Wales fund will provide funding to the sector with support to cover essential operating costs during the period June to September, when the current Job Retention Scheme closes. If restrictions still apply, the Welsh Government will consider what support is required to support the sector.

Prior to this, many Welsh businesses from the sector received support from non domestic rates grants support introduced to respond to the restrictions as a result of Covid, and the Welsh Government's Economic Resilience Fund that provides extra support to the Welsh economy, businesses and charities experiencing a sharp drop in trading as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. For many Welsh businesses, the Economic Resilience Fund plugged the gaps in the support schemes already announced by the UK Government, including the Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

Regarding the Welsh Government's business rates relief to the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, in 2020-21 the relief schemes have provided over £365m of support in addition to our permanent relief schemes. This means the Welsh Government has provided over £595m in rates relief this year. The targeted schemes are being extended into 2021-22 providing an estimated £380m of additional relief, with total support provided in 2021-22 being over £610m.

Going forward, an additional £200 million for Covid business support in the final budget for 2021-22 has been approved. It is anticipated that the incoming Government will want to take decisions on the appropriate way of utilising this funding.

Throughout our response to the pandemic, I have sought to prioritise the needs of our children and young people, giving full and careful consideration to their rights. We are all very aware of the impacts on physical, mental and emotional health, and fully agree that access to outdoor spaces and opportunities to engage in a range of different activities are critical to supporting the wellbeing of all of us, and children and young people in particular.

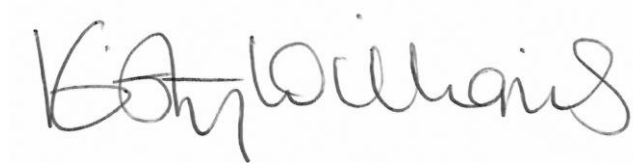
We are looking at what could be done to increase access to these sorts of activities across the summer. As detailed in the updated Coronavirus Control Plan for Wales, we are also looking at how and when we can restart a wider range of organised activities including indoor activities for children and young people, and indoor and outdoor activities for adults.

Currently we continue to advise against educational visits at this time, so unfortunately residential stays such as those that took place historically are not able to restart at this time. However, you will have seen that we were able to restart access to self-contained accommodation from 27 March, but this is on the basis of a single household staying in the accommodation provided. Consequently, I cannot say when we could restart camps, but we are taking steps to restart a wider range of activities which some centres may be able to provide.

Also, as part of the release of the current restrictions in place across Wales, we were able to restart organised activities for children and young people under 18 from 27 March. We have published some FAQs to support that restart, which may be of interest to some outdoor education centres and particularly those able to provide non-residential activities. Decisions on this will hopefully be made in the 22 April review cycle, subject to wider public health conditions. Hopefully this too will increase the opportunities for outdoor education centres.

Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the progress being made, and the funding position for outdoor education centres. I hope this addresses many of the concerns and points raised.

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 3.10

P-05-949 SAVE COWBRIDGE OLD GIRLS' SCHOOL FROM DEMOLITION

This petition was submitted by Sara Pedersen having collected 2,080 signatures online and 3,442 on paper (not final), a total of 5,522 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to protect the former Intermediate School for Girls' in Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan. This was the first intermediate school to be built specifically for the education of girls in Wales (and England) and is the subject of a planning application for demolition. Failure to protect it will lead to the loss of a nationally important historic asset.

Opened in 1896, Cowbridge was the first girls' intermediate school to be built in Wales (and England) as a result of the Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889, a pivotal moment in Welsh History. Amid its contemporaries, Cowbridge was highly unusual in including accommodation for boarders from the outset and largely funded by a local philanthropist.

The original character of the school survives to a very high degree, both internally and externally, including the original hall and staircase. Only 5 comparable (of 95) schools are listed across Wales. A survey of them all confirms that Cowbridge survives to an equivalent degree to some and a better degree than others.

The architect, Robert Williams, was a pioneer of his time and renowned for being a radical, prominent advocate of building conservation, national pioneer of social housing, promoter of the Welsh School of Architecture and proponent for the publication of building literature in the Welsh language. He later went on to work in London and then Egypt for the Davies Bryan family, where many of his buildings still stand and are nationally protected.

In summary, the former Cowbridge Intermediate School for Girls' survives as a prominent and attractive testimony to a pivotal moment in Welsh history and the equal opportunities afforded to underprivileged girls of the time. We urge the Welsh Government, as custodians of our heritage, to protect this building either through listing or the provision of additional social housing funding to allow its conversion.

Additional Information

Reference: Scourfield (2019). FORMER COWBRIDGE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, ABERTHIN ROAD, COWBRIDGE – AN HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL APPRAISAL.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

24th August 2021

Dear Members of the Petitions Committee,

RE: Petition P-05-949. Save Cowbridge Old Girls' School from Demolition

By way of an overview, the purpose of our petition and campaign is to seek listed status for the Former Intermediate School for Girls, Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan. Our petition was submitted in March 2020 having gained more than 5,500 signatures in just 6 weeks. Signatories were not just based in the Vale of Glamorgan but were from every region of Wales, and indeed, further afield. Our campaign is supported by substantive evidence and expert opinion, including some of the most prominent academics and heritage professionals across Britain. The campaign is also backed by the Victorian Society and SAVE Britain's Heritage, with the school being listed in the Victorian Society's 'Top 10 Endangered Buildings' in September 2019.

Why is the building important?

Built in 1895 it was the first school specifically built for the intermediate education of girls following the Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889, which in itself was a pivotal moment in Welsh history. The school was also unusual in that it provided accommodation for boarders to allow less privileged girls to be able to attend the school from further afield. It also was very rare due to the inclusion of a specifically built science laboratory, pioneering women in STEM.

The building itself is very attractive with many unique architectural features. It was designed by Robert Williams, an architect who was an early proponent of the Welsh School of Architecture and seen as a pioneer of his time. He was also a proponent of the Welsh language in building literature and later worked for the Davies Bryan family (of Aberystwyth University) in Egypt where he was central to the Welsh community. As a result of the information revealed through our campaign Robert Williams is now included in the Dictionary of Welsh Bibliography, confirming his importance within Wales and further afield.

These are just some of the many reasons why we are campaigning to ensure that this building is protected for years to come so that it can continue to stand proud as an attractive reminder of a pivotal moment in Welsh history (specifically women's education) and the work of a prominent Welsh architect.

Why is the building at risk?

The site is currently sold 'subject to planning' to a developer who seeks to demolish the school following an application submitted to the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department in December 2018 (please note the application is yet to be determined). Whilst the community welcomes development of the site and the provision of additional affordable housing in the town, the potential loss of the school has been met with dismay. The school building makes a positive contribution to the architectural and historic interest of Cowbridge and has been a prominent and important part of the town for over 100 years. Despite efforts to work with the developer and alternative conversion plans being presented by SAVE Britain's Heritage, the developer still seeks to demolish the school.

A listing request was made to Cadw following the presentation of a substantive report documenting robust evidence to support listing. However, this request was declined based on subjective opinion rather than objective assessment. Cadw appointed an independent consultant to review and support their decision, however, significant conflicts of interest have been raised about the appointment and whether it could be considered truly independent. Due to this an independent peer review of the listing decision was requested but was also subsequently declined. Furthermore, a Freedom of Information request has demonstrated that Cadw have purposefully withheld information and refused to engage in academic debate on the significance of the school.

Established procedures exist with Historic England and Historic Scotland to peer review decisions where there are contrasting opinions. In this instance we have extreme differences in opinion between Cadw (and a consultant employed by Cadw) and more than 20 highly regarded experts in the fields of history, architecture, heritage and archaeology. Within this group are the President of the Royal Historical Society, Director of the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, former members of Cadw's Historic Building Council, a former President of the British Academy and several Founding Fellows of the Learned Society of Wales. Given their collective expertise and experience, their views should be respectfully taken into consideration and Cadw's decision scrutinised. Their letter to the previous Deputy Minister was overlooked and their evidence-based opinions ignored ([22.03.20 Correspondence - Petitioner to Committee Additional information - Group letter of support .pdf \(senedd.wales\)](#)).

As a number of assessments are still required prior to the planning application being considered by the Local Authority, it will be sometime before it will be brought forward to the Planning Committee. Whilst it is appreciated that the Petitions Committee may wish to leave the future of the school in the hands of the Local Authority, the national significance of this building makes it a wider issue, requiring action by the Welsh Government. Furthermore, should the application be refused it still leaves this national historic asset at risk of future applications for demolition. **We ask that you consider putting the petition forward for a detailed inquiry to scrutinise all of the evidence provided in this case and press for an independent peer review through the established channels so that we can ensure that this important part of Welsh history is not lost.**

Yours sincerely,



Sara Pedersen

SAVE Cowbridge Girls' School Campaign Group

Agenda Item 3.11

P-05-1073 Create and build a new branch of National Museum Wales dedicated to Welsh involvement in colonialism

This petition was submitted by Kieran Sawdon having collected a total of 103 signatures.

Text of Petition:

The BLM movement has highlighted some ugly truths about Wales' history that a massive amount of us never learned.

This has been because traditionally in Wales, the Empire is largely ignored as we choose to focus on the colonialist elements that we had to face ourselves. This does not wipe Wales' slate clean of any wrongdoing.

A new, dedicated museum run by National Museum Wales would provide us with a proper means to stimulate these difficult conversations and educate our future generations.

Additional Information:

As we begin to discuss what should happen to our relics of colonialism, such as the statue of Thomas Picton in Cardiff City Hall, an awful lot of people are stating that they should be kept "to educate", the problem is that's exactly the thing that they haven't done.

This facility would allow these tainted historical figures to be shown fully and give a platform to explain the atrocities they committed and how they benefited Wales through despicable methods.

It would be a win-win situation, we would have an avenue to properly educate our nation on the dark truths of Wales' history and we would also then be able to make room in our public sphere for BAME people who are far more worthy of Wales' respect such as Betty Campbell, Wales' first black headteacher. A character such as hers belongs in the company of St David and Owain Glyndŵr, not Thomas Picton.

In light of the pandemic, this would also offer a means to stimulate the economy with more jobs and a new tourist destination.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

Amgueddfa Cymru's response to the Black Lives Matter Movement

1. Contributions to the Development of Government's Policies

Amgueddfa Cymru has had to face some difficult and important truths about ourselves in response to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, and to reflect on our role in combatting racism. As a result we are developing a better understanding of the role that we should play in achieving race equality in Wales.

Together with our community partners and young people, we have been diversifying our collections, increasing representation and contributing to conversations that highlight decolonization, inequality and racism.

Working with communities across Wales, we are taking action to contribute to achieving this goal and have joined Zero Racism Wales and others to publicly commit to standing up against racism in all its forms.

The Slave Trade and the British Empire: An Audit of Commemoration in Wales

The Director General was a member of the Welsh Government Task and Finish Group that prepared the Audit, and the Report of which it is part. The Report was published by the Government in November 2020

Draft Welsh Government Race Equality Action Plan

The Museum contributed to the content of the Culture chapter of the Draft Race Equality Action Plan.

2. Establishing a Black Lives Matter Consultation Group

A Black Lives Matter Consultation Group has been established by Amgueddfa Cymru. Partners involved include BLM Wales, Race Council Cymru, Race Alliance Wales, Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team (EYST), and the Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel (SSAP). Work to date has focused on reviewing the Charter for Decolonising Collections, the Plan for Collecting Black Lives Matter and developing learning programmes for schools, as well as beginning recruitment of new roles (see below) to help us to achieve these programmes. Constructive feedback has been received on the importance of Participatory Action Research and repatriation.

3. Establishing the Amgueddfa Cymru Producers

We recognize our workforce is not diverse enough. With support in part from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation we are in the process of advertising four community roles to support more inclusive learning and public programmes (events and exhibitions) and project manage our work on decolonising the collections.

To diversify youth involvement in our work we established the Amgueddfa Cymru Producers in 2020. The Producers are independent young people between the ages of 18-25 from diverse backgrounds who act as agents of change in the Museum. The Producers are paid for their work which has included reframing policies, mentoring Directors, co-producing exhibitions and launching their own Instagram account, *Bloedd*. This work is supported by a network of partners, and part of a wider provision for the young people involved. Partners involved include Llamau, Barnardo's, Promo Cymru and Children in Wales.

New partners such as the Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel Young Leaders Network, and Jukebox Collective have advised us on reframing interpretations and programmes in response to Black Lives Matter. The first edition of [Cynfas | National Museum Wales](#), part of the *Celf ar y Cyd* initiative (in partnership with Arts Council Wales) focused on celebrating Black culture and artworks in the Museum collection. It was edited by Umulkhayr Mohamed, an Amgueddfa Cymru Producer.

Events delivered include:

- **Lates PITCH BLACK** festival curated by Amgueddfa Cymru Producer Um Mohamed and in partnership with Artes Mundi was delivered throughout May, celebrating blackness and interrogating the impact that the British Empire and culture has had on Black people and their history. The events included collection tours, workshops and performances with successful open call artists. An example of work produced by artists, Gabin Kongolo, can be seen in the link, <https://vimeo.com/showcase/pitchblack-gabin-kongolo> (Password: YfagdduGabin321).
- **In Conversation: David Olusoga** was an event hosted by community partners, the Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel Young Leaders Network, was delivered on the 9 November 2020. Discussions included how this period in British and Welsh history has been considered, what kind of collective memory has developed, and the impact of such memories on framing our national identity and constructing a distorted and incomplete national story. Post event evaluation comments included:

“emotional, inspiring and hopeful for change”

“my ah-ha moment came with the realisation that there has been a historic lack of access to Black educators in Wales and the difference it makes in terms of perspective is evident.”

4. Up and coming Events for 2021 include:

- **Remembrance 2021**, an event developed by the Museum in collaboration with community partners and historians of Black History, who will explore stories of minoritized communities in Wales and their lived experience. Talks and workshops will focus on often forgotten stories of Black soldiers and those who suffered massive casualties in WW1.

Initiatives to support school based learning include:

- In response to the *Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group: final report* chaired by Professor Charlotte Williams and commissioned by Welsh Government, we have been re-framing our learning resources for schools. Approximately 180,000 school pupils and students participated in Amgueddfa Cymru's programme for schools annually, pre-pandemic.
- With such a wide reach we have an important role to play in supporting Wales to become an anti-racist nation. Our current learning offer is varied and broad, yet themes of diversity and race are rarely explicitly addressed.
- We will integrate elements of Black history into relevant thematic resources and develop new resources / workshops to focus on celebrating positive contributions by Black and non-black communities of colour to culture and life in Wales. One recent example is a new learning resource for Key Stage 3 and 4 commissioned and created by poet Marvin Thompson as part of the first edition of *Cynfas*. The resource uses a lithograph by artist Chris Ofili, *For the Unknown Runner*, as a hook to explore aspects of identity and representation.
<https://museum.wales/cynfas/article/2265/Learning-Resources-For-the-Unknown-Runner/>
- The Lead Creative Schools led by Arts Council Wales has recently launched a new strand to their programme - *Cynefin: Black, Asian and minority ethnic Wales*, an opportunity to empower a network of schools to devise and deliver innovative and creative projects that explore these key themes. Amgueddfa Cymru will provide the Arts Council with a list of opportunities that schools and the artists can undertake with collections and exhibitions.

Reframing Picton

As part of this commitment, working with the Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel Youth Leadership Network, we invited artists to help us reframe the colonial narrative around the portrait of Lieutenant-General Thomas Picton by Martin Archer Shee, currently on display at National Museum Cardiff.

We received a very strong response as a result of the call out with over 50 submissions made. The selection process was led by the members of the Sub Sahara Advisory Panel and a shortlist of 7 agreed. Following a series of interviews and detailed follow up discussions, two proposals have been selected both of which are led by female artists with Trinidadian heritage, one of whom lives and works on the island. Details are shortly to be released publicly and we anticipate that the works will be installed at National Museum Cardiff during 2022. Responding to the Black Lives Matter emergency has been an important part of our collecting activity. Staff attended Black Lives Matter rallies and marches in 2020 and collected placards and banners. Some of these will be incorporated into the Re-framing Picton exhibition.

5. Black Lives Matter and Black History collecting activities and projects (2020-21)

Catalogued and available on Collections Online (all tagged with 'Black Lives Matter' keyword to aid searching):

- Placards and digital images donated by Glitter Cymru (social and support group for the LGBT+ ethnic minority community in south Wales) of the BLM rally held in Cardiff, 6 June 2020

https://museum.wales/collections/online/?field0=string&value0=Black&field1=with_images&value1=1&field2=string&value2=Lives&field3=string&value3=Matter&field4=string&value4=glitter

- Digital images of various BLM rallies held in Cardiff between 30 May – 6 June 2020

https://museum.wales/collections/online/?field0=string&value0=Black&field1=with_images&value1=1&field2=string&value2=Lives&field3=string&value3=Matter&field4=string&value4=Anthony&field5=string&value5=Jones

- Digital images of the BLM rally held in Bangor, 6 June 2020

https://museum.wales/collections/online/?field0=string&value0=Black&field1=with_images&value1=1&field2=string&value2=Lives&field3=string&value3=Matter&field4=string&value4=Bangor&field5=string&value5=Jim&field6=string&value6=Ellis

- Digital images of the BLM rally held in Wrexham, 7 June 2020

https://museum.wales/collections/online/?field0=string&value0=Black&field1=with_images&value1=1&field2=string&value2=Lives&field3=string&value3=Matter&field4=string&value4=Wrexham

- Placards and digital images of the BLM rally held outside the Senedd, 27 June 2020

https://museum.wales/collections/online/?field0=string&value0=Black&field1=with_images&value1=1&field2=string&value2=Lives&field3=string&value3=Matter&field4=string&value4=Senedd&field5=string&value5=Shukri

Awaiting cataloguing and digitizing:

- Clay sculpture made at HMP Parc prison, Bridgend, during Black History Month 2020 in response to the disproportionate number of Black and ethnic minority men in the prison system.
- Digital images of the interior and exterior of the Paddle Steamer Café, Butetown.
- Oral history interview with BLM activist, Nelly Adam.
- Digital images of the Jamaican elders of Port Talbot and their families.

6. Presentations, media contributions and events delivered by Museum staff:

- The Museum's Curator of Black History delivered presentations at the following online events:
 - Zero-Tolerance to Racism campaign (Race Council Cymru)
 - George Floyd: One Year On (Race Council Cymru)
 - Webinar organised by the south-east branch of the Archives & Records Association: 'Collecting a Nation: 2020 a year to remember'.
- The Curator of Black History was interviewed on *Inside Museums* – a BBC4 documentary about St Fagans – about collecting the BLM movement.
- The Principal Curator of Contemporary & Community History organised an online screening of *Just ah likkle piece of Jamaica inna Port Talbot* – a film that celebrates the untold personal stories of Jamaican elders who made Port Talbot their home in the 1950s-60s:

<https://museum.wales/whatson/digital/11322/Windrush-Day-Online-Film-Screening-Just-ah-likkle-piece-of-Jamaica-inna-Port-Talbot/>

Agenda Item 3.12

P-05-1086 Create a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage

This petition was submitted by Yasmin Begum having collected a total of 490 signatures.

Text of Petition:

We, the undersigned, petition Senedd Cymru to create a museum to celebrate Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Welsh history.

As part of the national establishment, we hope that the rich heritage of Tiger Bay will be preserved and offer a home for the Tiger Bay Archive.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Tuesday 10th August 2021

TOPIC: PETITION ABOUT THE TIGER BAY ARCHIVE/ THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVE OF THE ENDS

Dear Janet,

Good morning, and thank you for your letter that you forwarded from Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AM of 6 November regarding Petition P-05-1086 to create a national museum to celebrate Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Welsh history.

I am writing today in response to Dafydd Elis-Thomas' letter sent last autumn. I apologise for my delay in response.

Thank you for your letter on 11th December 2021 regarding Petition P-05-1086 to create a national museum to celebrate Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Welsh history. It is good to hear from you on this matter. Please accept my delay in responding to you.

I agree that the history of our BAME communities is an integral part of the story of Wales. I both disagree and agree that these histories in this essential context require a collective effort from our cultural heritage bodies at both a national and local level, rather than by a single organisation for different reasons.

The focus on ensuring that museums and archives across Wales are able to survive the pandemic is extremely important. The pandemic has coincided with the 2021 census that will prove a higher BAME population across Wales than the 4% that has been given by the Office for National Statistics from the 2011 census. The pandemic does not negate the intergenerational forms of the pandemic that is institutional racism that BAME communities have experienced in Wales for hundreds of years.

I agree that there needs to be a collective approach towards the adequate implementation of representation of people in Wales of all races. I disagree that some of these narratives cannot be run by a particular organisation because of the heavily idiosyncratic nature of Tiger Bay and its history, much in the same way that e.g. Brixton is synonymous with Black culture in South London owing to its history, legacy, migration and settlement. By default, an institution located in South Cardiff, once the most busy dockland and the second largest dockland in the world (after New York City), which is home to Northern Europe's oldest continuous Black community, can say, run an institution that platforms and highlights this unique worldwide history of global importance.

The Tiger Bay Archive was created owing to a systemic lack of inclusion of Black

people and people of colour in archival collection and historiography in and of Wales. For example, an adequate implementation of the Race Relations 1968, its 2000 Amendment or the Equality Act would have seen these issues of racism, race, ethnicity, heritage, history and historiography “on the agenda” far more sooner than e.g. Amgueddfa Cenedlaethol Cymru’s 2020 BLM statement that was only written after the murder of George Floyd.

As such, its nature, historiography, research methodology as a Black and minority ethnic led project is an archive of monumental global significance, and offers opportunities to e.g. partner with international organisations such as the Chicago of Chicago to work exploring the work of Black anthropologist and sociologist St Clair Drake, who wrote his PhD on Racial Association of British docklands, with a pointed focus on Tiger Bay.

It was later to be housed at the Coal Exchange, but this is no longer possible. The archive has not been publicly accessible for most of my adult life. I am 27 years old and I have tried to see the archive for 11 years. I am one of millions of people who would benefit from Wales’ “richness and diversity of our cultural heritage” being protected and platformed in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, particularly around:

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

For instance, in 1891, Tiger Bay had the largest population of Welsh language speakers in Cardiff. Cardiff itself is a city that is 8.91% Welsh language speaking according to the ONS 2011 Census, and we need more opportunities to platform Welsh language history in the history of Cardiff.

My petition about Tiger Bay Archives directly concerns not only the BAME population of Wales, but specifically, the BAME population of Cardiff, which is currently 20% BAME according to StatsWales and, historically, home to the oldest continuous community of Black people in the United Kingdom. The singular focus on surviving the pandemic. 74% of the Amgueddfa Cenedleathol staff population is White, 24% chose not to self-disclose their ethnicity, and just 2% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. In Cardiff alone, there are two museums and these museums do not reflect the racial and ethnic population of Wales. The archive is not publicly accessible, while it is stored in appropriate conditions in the care of professionally qualified staff. Amgueddfa Cenedlaethol, for example, is not the owner of the archive: but Glamorgan Archive is. There is a grey area between the institutionally racist nature of state-funded organisations in the representation of BAME communities, and the organisations that contemporarily exist have not given their due regard under the Race Relations Act Amendment or the Equality Act 2010 under their Public Sector Duty to represent the communities that are in Wales, both now and historically.

While writing this letter, the petitions committee confused my petition with another petition relating to BAME topics. This, combined with the long enduring

discrimination and unequal treatment on the basis of membership to the BAME groups arising from systems like the Welsh government, structures like the museums, or expectations that have been established demonstrations of why the archive needs to retain a heterogeneity and autonomy compared to the erasure of BAME heritage in Wales. The museum and heritage organisations in Wales have, to quote the Machperson report, represented a “collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin”.

The Archive has a unique epistemology and ontology that must categorically resist amalgamation into the same systemically and systematically organisations that necessitated not only its creation, but its ongoing existence. Working with local community groups and organisations, a permanent building for the archive in the area of Tiger Bay locating the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, we can protect Wales’ heritage for future generations in working together.

Yours sincerely,

Yasmin

Agenda Item 3.13

P-05-1069 Save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston

This petition was submitted by Michael Philip Garland having collected a total of 5,272 signatures.

Text of Petition:

We call on Welsh Ministers to adhere to their environmental and climate change policies and to the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 and urge the Welsh Government to withdraw their plans for a 576 housing units development on the scenic coastal fields and farmland at Lower Cosmeston Farm, Cosmeston.

Additional Information:

These green fields lie on an area of coastline and farming landscape between the Bristol Channel, Wales Coastal Path and Cosmeston Lakes Country Park (SSSI) and any development on these fields will greatly affect the local wildlife ecology and biodiversity here and in the surrounding areas together with a loss of the areas countryside amenity and local cultural historical heritage

Such a large development will be unsustainable due to the lack of local highway and health infrastructure and will exacerbate traffic congestion and flooding in nearby areas.

The land should be kept for farming and associated businesses which together with local community amenity projects will maintain the prospects of the landscape for the well being of Future Generations.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

**P-05-1069 Save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 18.03.21**

Michael Philip Garland
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED]

Date: 18th March 2021

To, the Petitions Committee,

Re: P-05-1069 Pwyllgor Deisebau / Petitions Committee,

At the Petitions Committee Meeting of 09.02.2021, members agreed to keep a “watching brief” on the issue regarding the above petition. Would it be possible for the following to be presented to the Petitions Committee as part of this “watching brief”.

1. In regard to the Planning Application a document has recently appeared on the Vale of Glamorgan Council Planning website, being a report by the Design Commission For Wales, dated 21st January 2021, which I have attached.

Extract from the Report is as follows,

“The Commission raised a number of fundamental concerns about this project in December 2019 and has to date seen no evidence that the masterplan has been meaningfully altered to take account of and respond to those concerns.”

“The Welsh Government, as client and land-owner, has a particular responsibility to deliver exemplary development that meets the standards and ambitions set out in policy and legislation which it advocates for others and this scheme must be exemplary in every aspect. It is unclear which elements of the proposed development will make it distinctive from other residential development, and we are not currently confident that it will result in an exemplar of residential-led placemaking.”

“In consultation with the Commission in March 2019, Design Review in June 2019, and a DCFW workshop with the team in December 2019 fundamental concerns were raised regarding elements of the approach to the project. We are now a year on and based on the planning application materials available, there has been no change that would enable the scheme to meet the stated aspirations.”

“We have considered this report very carefully looking back at earlier correspondence and reports which are appended here. Based on these and the materials now submitted for review in January 2021, we are unable to support the proposals as they have been submitted for outline planning consent, which is in our view a premature step.”

2. The Report briefly highlights the concerns of DCFW over: -
 - the increasing heights of the building which appear to have been raised significantly from the original application, despite a significant number of objections received on this issue.
 - the positioning of the dwellings, “fronts to back”
 - the location of the school and suggest that alternative locations be tested, and,
 - that Active Travel and Net Zero Carbon Development aspirations cannot be achieved.

3. It would appear that the applicant has increased the heights of the building significantly from the original application, to accommodate the reduction in site area due to the set back of the coastal path and ongoing coastal erosion and the seriously contaminated land that cannot be built on, rather than the need to allow for necessary population density to sustain a community facility as stated in the report.

4. The Welsh Governments own Planning Policy states that any development on the coast should be a development that requires a coastal location, and that developments that are not appropriate to a coastal location should not be permitted. Similarly, any development which adversely affects the open nature of the landscape should also not be permitted. Both seemingly being disregarded by the Welsh Government and the Planning Authority.

5. It is very concerning and disappointing that the Vale of Glamorgan Council are not viewing this application as independently as they should, seemingly taking a proactive stance on supporting this planning application, even though it is significantly different to Local Development Plan proposal and the original submitted planning application, without allowing public consultation on these changes, in order to achieve the provision of land for a school being offered by the applicant and maintain “agreements in principles” in regard to provision land and £8.25 million funding of a further school to be built on and adjacent site owned by the applicant.

Yours Faithfully,
Michael Garland.

Design Review Report

Upper Cosmeston Farm, Penarth

DCFW Ref: N194

Meeting of 21st of January 2021



Review Status

Meeting date	21 st of January 2021
Issue date	XX February 2021
Scheme location	Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan
Scheme description	Residential/Mixed use masterplan
Scheme reference number	N194
Planning status	Outline application submitted

Declarations of Interest

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare ***in advance*** any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review and meeting Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW's central records.

Consultations to Date

DCFW was consulted by the Welsh Government during the early stages of masterplan development for the site in March 2019. The project was brought forward for Design Review in June 2019, and a DCFW workshop was held with the team in December 2019. Important and fundamental questions were raised in all sessions, given the stated ambition and Government policy and legislation. These are referred to in this report, which should be read in conjunction with previous reports and correspondence.

The Proposals

The proposal is for the predominantly residential development of an expansion site south of Penarth, situated between the Severn Estuary and Cosmeston Lakes, Vale of Glamorgan. The site is currently green fields but is identified as a potential housing site in the Local Development Plan. The site is owned by Welsh Government. It benefits from views across the estuary and back to Penarth Head and is close to Cosmeston Lakes park. It also adjoins the Wales Coastal Path. The masterplan will include up to 576 dwellings, seeking 50% affordable homes, a primary school as part of Section 106 contribution, public open space, and community facilities.

Main Points

Presentation

The design team chose to present the scheme to the panel from first principles, despite the Commission's familiarity with the proposals from previous meetings. Due to time constraints resulting from the extended presentation, significant elements of the scheme were not afforded the attention they need, not least the Vision, the Design Code and its status. The Commission would welcome further opportunities to review these critical aspects which set the foundation and key parameters for the proposals.

The material submitted for review included the entire suite of planning application documents. It would help if supporting information was kept to key summary documents to allow a focussed discussion. Further reference to DCFW's guidance on the materials which are most useful for submission to Review would be helpful. This proposal is significant and, given the role of the Welsh Government in leading by example on such development, in future more time would be beneficial for review.

Context

The Commission is supportive of the principle of development and intended uses of this site in Penarth. The linkages, paths and supporting networks identified within the proposals could be very beneficial to the broader Penarth area, and the plan to achieve 50% affordable housing on the site, as well as achieving zero operational carbon energy in use is entirely supportable.

However, there are fundamental issues with the current proposals that remain to be addressed if the aims are to be met and the proposals are to be successful.

Building height

During the review, it was stated that the local planning authority has received negative feedback regarding the height of some buildings within the proposals. If the proposal is exemplary due to its height, it is important that the reasons why are clearly communicated.

If higher buildings will allow for the population density that is deemed necessary to sustain and support a shop, or community facility, it is important that this is clearly explained.

The broad principle of a high-quality taller building or buildings is not regarded as a problem. If it were tied more clearly to potential views, use of the topography and support of site density, and if it demonstrates the necessary quality, it could be justified. Currently, the reasoning behind the inclusion of tall buildings, their design and location within the scheme are not sufficiently explained.

Any taller, visually prominent elements of the development must be of exceptional quality but, with the future developer as yet unknown, this is difficult to ensure at this stage.

Relationship to Coastal Path

The Commission is concerned about the lack of integration of the coastal path into the masterplan. The proposals seem to turn their back on the sea, and this element of the design requires further development to realise the value of the coastal asset.

Position of School

The Commission is aware that there was an unwillingness to review the position of the proposed school following the matter being raised at previous Design Reviews.

Although the team provided reasons for the location, the Commission suggests the location of the school should be reconsidered. It remains the primary opportunity for community development on the site, an opportunity which needs to be maximised. The school location is a key strategic decision and alternative locations should be tested to optimise the potential to bring existing and new communities and facilities together, providing a focus for communal activity within the development. It would also be more convenient in terms of prioritising better active travel access.

The Commission is aware of site and policy constraints that exist. However, with Welsh Government as the site owner, with the ambitions for schools and for placemaking in Wales, it is disappointing that these avenues for creative dialogue with all relevant parties to address these constraints and contribute to better placemaking, remain unexplored.

Relationships between backs and front of development

The relationships between the perceived front and backs of buildings is unresolved. The rear of some buildings face the frontages of other properties, and it is unclear as yet how this will be successfully resolved.

Future home/flexible/working

It is important to consider how people will live in the future, given considerable changes in live/work patterns and the likelihood of the need for much more flexible spaces for home working. Allied to this is the importance of easy access to outdoor green space from dwellings. How this will work is unclear in the current proposals, including how any shared/communal spaces will be managed and maintained.

Active Travel

The proposal remains a very private vehicle-focussed, and it is unclear how the proposals will become more active travel-focused as it is developed further. While a sum of money has been identified for sustainable transport the details of how this will be used effectively to encourage greater active travel and a change in travel behaviours is unclear.

Net Zero Carbon Development

The Commission is supportive of the principle that this site will be a net-zero carbon for operational energy, but embodied energy must also be considered and firm, measurable contractual targets set if this is to be an exemplary project. The narrative around the proposals signals that net zero is a commitment, but there is currently no clear set of targets to explain how it will be achieved.

Framework

The approach to disposal of the site for development by other organisations remains unclear along with details of what controls will be in place to ensure that the positive aspects of these proposals are delivered. These are important aspects in delivering the stated aspirations of the project and need to be explicit.

Fundamental Concerns

The Commission raised a number of fundamental concerns about this project in December 2019 and has to date seen no evidence that the masterplan has been meaningfully altered to take account of and respond to those concerns.

The scheme has a scale and importance that merits further debate, and there are critical parts of the proposal which were not discussed, such as the Design Code and Vision.

The Welsh Government, as client and land-owner, has a particular responsibility to deliver exemplary development that meets the standards and ambitions set out in policy and legislation which it advocates for others and this scheme must be exemplary in every aspect. It is unclear which elements of the proposed development will make it distinctive

from other residential development, and we are not currently confident that it will result in an exemplar of residential-led placemaking.

In consultation with the Commission in March 2019, Design Review in June 2019, and a DCFW workshop with the team in December 2019 fundamental concerns were raised regarding elements of the approach to the project. We are now a year on and based on the planning application materials available, there has been no change that would enable the scheme to meet the stated aspirations. A new approach is needed, ensuring that there is a clear client brief and design team that can positively address the site constraints, fully test new ideas, and find new ways to do things in order to deliver something better than the ordinary.

We have considered this report very carefully looking back at earlier correspondence and reports which are appended here. Based on these and the materials now submitted for review in January 2021, we are unable to support the proposals as they have been submitted for outline planning consent, which is in our view a premature step.

We therefore append to this report our earlier correspondence and recommend that the approach is revisited so as to take the steps needed to ensure the proposals can respond to the stated aspirations. The Commission remains willing to facilitate further discussion and to assist all parties in doing so.

Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru Design Commission for Wales is the trading name of DCFW LIMITED, a Private Limited Company established under the Companies Act 1985 and 2006, Company No: 04391072 incorporated in England and Wales as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government. Registered office: 4th Floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff CF10 5FL T: 029 2045 1964 E connect@dcfw.org. The comment recorded in this report, arising from formal Design Review through our Design Review Service, is provided in the public interest for the consideration of local planning authorities as a material consideration, and other users of the Design Review Service. It is not and should not be considered 'advice' and no third party is bound or required to act upon it. The Design Review Service is delivered in line with DCFW's published protocols, code of conduct and complaints procedure, which should be read and considered by users of the service.

A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer:	Lydia Haskey, Welsh Government Sophie Beynon Davies, Welsh Government
Architect/Design Team:	Tanya Simeonova, Austin-Smith: Lord Martin Roe, Austin-Smith: Lord Catherine Cosgrove, Austin-Smith: Lord
Planning Consultant:	Barrie Davies, Asbri Planning Emma Harding, Asbri Planning
Local Authority:	Robert Lankshear, Vale of Glamorgan Council Vicky Robinson, Vale of Glamorgan Council Ian Robinson, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Chair:

Ewan Jones

Lead Panellist:

Toby Adam

Design Review Panel:

Kedrick Davies

Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive, DCFW

Jen Heal, Design Advisor, DCFW

Efa Lois, Place Advisor, DCFW

Lambert, Fiona

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 November 2020 10:53
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Land at Upper Cosmeston Farm 2020/01170/OUT

Land at Upper Cosmeston Farm, Lavernock Road, Penarth 2020/01170/OUT

Hi [REDACTED], good to speak to you the other day

As promised I have summarised my comments below:

1. The layout / design of the Wales Coast Path interface / boundary needs to be looked at again. I think that the buffer between the developed area and coast path is too narrow and the design of the access points needs to be carefully considered. the 'Landscape and Opportunities' plan included in Appendix 7.1 of the LVIA suggests a significant 'Landscape buffer alongside the Wales Coastal footpath' which seems to have been reduced in size in the masterplan; can you please clarify this discrepancy and confirm whether this was used during the assessment of the LVIA? Also please refer to the Design in the Landscape SPG which recommends various design parameters for design next to the coast. I'm concerned that many of the buildings in the area face away from the coast and I think the development would improve if some or all were facing the coast so that the development becomes integrates naturally with the coast path to create a safe and attractive area.
2. The existing Wales Coast Path is in poor condition in this area despite attempts being made to improve the surfacing over recent years. The building of this development will result in significant additional pressure on the surface and it is likely to deteriorate even more very quickly, possibly becoming impassable for much of the year. It important that this is upgraded as part of the development. There are several paths within the development which run parallel to the coast path and appear to be only a few metres away from it and so it would make sense to combine these into single footpath within a high quality landscaped corridor.
3. I have some concerns about the visual impact of elements of the development from viewpoints in the wider countryside.
 - a. The high block of flats is intrusive when viewed from important viewpoints outside of the site, particularly the well used Wales Coastal path (see Photomontage 17), popular Cosmeston Country Park (see Photomontage 10), Penarth Pier, albeit a more distant view (Photomontage 20) and land to the west (see Photoviewpoint 12) . The height and shape of the building makes it particularly prominent being so far from the heart of the town and close to the countryside. I would encourage the developers to reduce the height of this in order for it to more visually acceptable.
 - b. The housing on the western boundary sit on a ridge and when viewed from the Wales Coastal Path they are particularly prominent and detracting for users of the path. (see Photomontage 16). The building should be move further east off the ridge or reconfigured in some way to reduce the visual impact. The soft landscape buffer could be increased along this boundary to help the development integrate with the wider countryside setting but also to provide landscape connectivity to the open spaces within the site Also the 'Landscape and Opportunities' plan included in Appendix 7.1 of the LVIA suggests a significant 'Landscape buffer alongside the ridge which seems to have been reduced in size in the masterplan; can you please clarify this discrepancy and confirm whether this was used during the assessment of the LVIA?
4. 'The Landscape and Opportunities' plan included in Appendix 7.1 of the LVIA also suggests a significant 'Landscape buffer alongside the boundary to the area which has the new school. This buffer has also been reduced in size in the masterplan; can you please clarify this discrepancy and confirm whether this was used during the assessment of the LVIA?
5. There are four LAP play areas proposed for the development and I recommend that consideration is given to replacing these with a number of equipped play areas if possible. If they are to be retained I would like to see more detail regarding how they will be designed at this stage even if the designs are conceptual.

6. Consider the setting of the LEAP play area to the south of the site / railway embankment. This is not overlooked by any house and feels isolated being set within woodland and this may deter use or promote antisocial behaviour. I recommend that the position of this is reconsidered so that it is overlooked by housing.
7. The LEAP to the north of the site is also not overlooked (but may be too close to houses). Again consider moving to a more appropriate location, possibly more centrally within the space or as part of the coastal landscape area.
8. More detailed information is required on the design of the open space in the centre of the site which contains the NEAP, allotment and attenuation features to demonstrate that this is viable and accommodate all these features. Please provide an outline of what the NEAP will include?
9. I feel that there is generally a lack of informal recreation space provided as part of the open space provision. There are lots of woodland and attenuation areas and small pockets of open space but for a development of this size there seem to be few spaces for example for children to informally play football etc. I may be misreading the plans due to the scale at which they are provided at this stage and lack of detail but it is something that should be clarified.
10. I note that some hedgerows are being lost as part of the development and some will be retained. I have seen figures for the amount of hedgerows retained or planted and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment indicates which trees and hedgerow are to be removed/ retained; can the developer provide an estimate for the amount / number of hedgerows / trees / woodland which will be retained / removed / planted so that we can be clear on the overall figures.
11. Hedgerows are important features of the landscape and I'm surprised that the hedgerow on Lavernock Road (see Photomontage16) is a) being removed as it is in good condition and provides an excellent visual boundary for the site and b) if it has to be removed why it is not being replaced with a native hedge which would help the development significantly integrate with the landscape setting. If this has to be removed it should be replaced with a new native hedge, not ornamental planting as indicated in the photomontage.
12. I'd like to see more clarity regarding new crossing / access into Cosmeston Country Park. In Section 3.5 of the Design and Access Statement Part 2 two additional entrance points have nominally been indicated. Has work been carried out to confirm that these are feasible?

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me

[REDACTED]
Principal Landscape Architect / Prif Bensaer Tirlunio
Regeneration and Planning / Gwasanaethau Cynllunio a Thrafnidiaeth
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Correspondence is welcomed in Welsh or English / Croesewir Gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg.

[REDACTED]

Date: 23rd August 2021

To, The Petitions Committee,

Re: P-05-1069 Pwyllgor Deisebau / Petitions Committee - Save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston.

I would like to thank the Petitions Committee for reviewing the Petition and keeping a “watching-brief,” as agreed at the Petitions Committee meeting held on 9th February 2021.

The Petition was raised following the submission of a Planning Application by the Welsh Government for the development of 576 housing units and the provision of land (to the Vale of Glamorgan Council) for a primary school on land at Upper Cosmeston Farm, Lavernock Road, Cosmeston, Lavernock, in the Vale of Glamorgan, with the Petition requesting the Welsh Government to withdraw their application.

Previous statements submitted to the Petitions Committee contain a significant number of concerns regarding this application. However, I feel there is need to update the Petitions Committee on some of these concerns.

- I. The application is contrary to the many Welsh Government Environmental, Biodiversity Ecological and Climate Change Policies, etc, and to the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005.

The Welsh Government has recently (June 2021) made it clear that the environment and climate change will be ‘at the heart of decision-making’, with transport, planning, housing, energy, and the environment, being brought together to help Wales reach a Net Zero target by 2050, with the benefit of quieter roads, cleaner air, less noise, and a closer connection with nature being all part of the response to climate change

The Welsh Government have proposed commemorative forests and are now asking families to plant more trees in their gardens as tree planting targets are way behind where they need to be. However, many people are aware that a typical tree can absorb around 21 kilograms of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per year, but this figure is only achieved when the tree is fully grown - saplings will absorb significantly less than this. Over a lifetime of 100 years, one tree could absorb around a tonne of CO₂. Removing mature trees and replacing with saplings will create a significant imbalance in CO₂ absorption and can only increase the effects of climate change.

The Welsh Government are acting in a contrary and painful fashion at Cosmeston by decimating the rural coastal landscape, removing mature trees and hedgerows, the natural habitats of our wildlife while exacerbating traffic movements, congestion, poor air quality, noise, etc. that will not tackle climate change, improve our health, benefit the local economy, or preserve Wales’ beautiful landscapes and nature

The proposed development would have a significant harmful effect sites of nature conservation and historic interest, and areas of landscape importance in the area which is of more than local importance due to its position adjacent to the Severn Estuary special area of conservation and designated Marine Protection Area. The site is also protected under the Ramsar Convention as this part of the coast, together with Cosmeston Lakes Country Park, is an assembly and arrival point for migrating bird. There is concern that the Environmental Statement does not fully reflect the importance of the site in terms of the importance of its varied ecology and its historic significance in terms of its relationship to Cosmeston Medieval Village, located immediately to the west of Lavernock Road. The assessments carried out by the applicant’s agents deliberately understate the importance of these features and therefore issues are not being properly addressed by the applicant.

The ever-increasing coastal erosion exacerbated by the many recent and continuing cliff falls around the development area, appears to be under dispute and would appear to be ignored by the applicant and the Local Planning Authority as any required 'buffer zone' will reduce the site area.

Recently the Vale of Glamorgan Councils have made declarations on a Climate Change Emergency and Nature Emergency but appear to be supporting the development which could be considered contrary to these declarations.

2. The application is considered contrary to Wales Planning Policy in that the proposed development on this scenic coastal and farming landscape cannot be seen as a 'coastal development' that requires a 'coastal location.'

This area of land was previously purchased some years ago by the Land Authority for Wales (LAW), who were aware that, a housing development could not be considered a "coastal development' at a 'coastal location,' and would decimate the natural landscape and wildlife and their habitats, and which would lead to the coalescence between Penarth and Sully. The LAW was also aware of the probable contamination from the landfill site.

Discussions with the Vale of Glamorgan Planning Department were favourable as they considered the golf course an appropriate "coastal development", maintaining the coastal landscape and wildlife habitats and would prevent any future coalescence between Penarth and Sully.'

The LAW discussed a proposed with the local Glamorganshire Golf Club, providing the Golf Club with a 27-hole golf course, etc, on the land to the rear of Lower Cosmeston Farm, while developing part of the Glamorganshire Golf Course for housing, and part being allocated to the adjacent Cosmeston Lakes Country Park.

However, the Glamorganshire Golf Club members opposed the scheme due to the Golf Club history and the location of the contaminated landfill site lying within the prospective golf course.

It is concerning that the Welsh Government are ignoring the reasons behind this previous development proposal.

3. Many residents and signatories to the petition consider that the application has not received and cannot receive the procedural fairness or be viewed in an independent manner that applications of this standing merit, and, that the Vale of Glamorgan may have pre-determined the application.

Further to the application being registered on the 23rd October 2020 by the Council on the same day that the Welsh Government announced the national "firebreak lockdown", which considerably affected public access to the applicants documentation and an inability to hold Public Meetings or visit residents to explain the application and documents it appears that various provisions are being made to the Council which can be perceived as inducements to approve the application and which the Council are readily accepting.

- I. Within the proposal the applicant is providing the Council land for a 2 form-entry Primary School.
- II. It has been agreed between the Welsh Government and the Council that on approval of the "housing" application the applicant will provide the Council with £8.25 million towards the £11 million cost to purchase of land (owned by Welsh Government, adjacent to the housing site) and development of a Special Needs School as an annex to Ysgol Y Deri School which is approximately 3 miles away in Penarth. Ysgol Y Deri School provides services for children from across the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff. The Council have already agreed to take an amount from S106 monies from a local housing development in Sully towards the development costs of the Special Needs School.
- III. The Vale of Glamorgan Council has recently submitted a planning application for the Special Needs School annex, with the same Planning Officer dealing with both applications.
- IV. The proposed Special Needs School is being utilised by the Council to shame objectors to the housing development by stating that they are objecting to the Special Needs School.

(Many residents are not opposed to the need to the expansion of Ysgol Y Deri and have great regard for the education needs it provides but feel that the annex should be sited in closer proximity to the school with a more appropriate site being "across the road" from the present school which will still

be encompassed within the Penarth Learning Centre located there. This would also mean that the students and staff health and safety can be maintained away from the contaminated landfill site and the flood zone that the access to the schools and housing lie within, would negate the need for increased traffic movement by staff between the separate sites, reduce traffic movements in and around the locality of Cosmeston.)

4. Comments made by the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd in a statement (dated 13 January 2021) to the Petitions Committee are found to be contentious, threatening and demeaning.

I. *“The development proposals were also subject to public consultation as part of the preparation and examination of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan and extensive pre-application consultation was undertaken well in advance of the Covid 19 pandemic and associated restrictions. There have been several opportunities for residents to make comments in respect of the proposals.”*

At each of the above events, that the Minister refers to, different proposals were made at each event:

- Preparation of LDP - 235 houses smaller site, outside the proposed Green Wedge area.
- Examination of LDP – 576 houses, larger site, Green Wedge area readjusted to accommodate site.
- Public Consultation – plans and pictures shown were stated by the applicants’ agents as “our “ideas and dreams of the development” and not “concrete” proposals.
- Planning Application – development advances outside the LDP site into the Green Wedge area, involves demolition of Farm and 17 century farm buildings.

At each of the above stages, various objections were made, and all ignored by the Council, the Planning Inspector at the Examination Stage, the applicant’s agents / Welsh Government

II. *“A failure to develop the site could cause implications to the ‘soundness’ of the LDP.”*

This could be seen as a threat to prevent objections being made against the proposal, and a threat to the Council that if the application is not approved then the Welsh Government will impose sanctions on the Council by reviewing the ‘soundness’ of the LDP and impose the development of more houses in the Cosmeston or the Council area.

III. *“The Vale of Glamorgan Council will need to consider whether the application accords with policies contained in the adopted Local Development Plan.”*

The Site Notices posted by the LPA notified the public that, “the application does not conform with the adopted Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2017”. The application is different to the proposal contained in the LDP. The applicant also indicates in the submitted documentation that parts of the development lie outside the boundaries of the LDP site proposal and therefore does not conform to the LDP.

5. Changes appear to being made to the proposed development by the Welsh Government without significant public consultation or redress by the public, or contrary to objections already raised.

I. A Report from the Design Commission for Wales, (DCfW) dated 21st January 2021 notes that changes have been made and concerns raised by DCfW are being ignored by the applicant, resulting in the DCFW being unsupportive of the scheme. The report (attached) contains extracts as follows: -

“Due to time constraints resulting from the extended presentation, significant elements of the scheme were not afforded the attention they need, not least the Vision, the Design Code and its status. The Commission would welcome further opportunities to review these critical aspects which set the foundation and key parameters for the proposals.”

“The Commission raised a number of fundamental concerns about this project in December 2019 and has to date seen no evidence that the masterplan has been meaningfully altered to take account of and respond to those concerns”.

“The Welsh Government, as client and land-owner, has a particular responsibility to deliver exemplary development that meets the standards and ambitions set out in policy and legislation which it advocates for others and this scheme must be exemplary in every aspect. It is unclear which elements of the proposed development will make it distinctive from other residential development, and we are not currently confident that it will result in an exemplar of residential led placemaking.”

“In consultation with the Commission in March 2019, Design Review in June 2019, and a DCFW workshop with the team in December 2019 fundamental concerns were raised regarding elements of the approach to the project. We are now a year on and based on the planning application materials available, there has been no change that would enable the scheme to meet the stated aspirations.”

“We have considered this report very carefully looking back at earlier correspondence and reports which are appended here. Based on these and the materials now submitted for review in January 2021, we are unable to support the proposals as they have been submitted for outline planning consent, which is in our view a premature step.”

The Report also briefly highlights the concerns of DCFW over: -

- the increasing heights of the building which appear to have been raised significantly from the original application, despite a considerable number of objections received on this issue.
- the positioning of the dwellings, “fronts to back”
- the location of the school and suggest that alternative locations be tested, and,
- that Active Travel and Net Zero Carbon Development aspirations cannot be achieved.

II. A report from the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Principal Landscape Officer (dated 25th November 2020) shows concerns over the apparent reduction in buffer zone between the Wales Coastal Path and the development, by the developer. The Officer has also indicated concerns on the visual impact of elements of the development; -

“The height of the blocks of flats (now apparently raised to seven storeys) is intrusive.”

“Housing on the western boundary are particularly prominent and detracting.”

6. A request to “call-in” the application (attached) has been made to the Wales Planning Directorate (13th November 2020, Case No 1585.), on behalf of myself (Chair of Keep Cosmeston Green), together with The Saving Sully and Lavernock Group, Sully and Lavernock Community Council and the two Sully Ward Councillors of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

As yet none of the concerns made in the call-in have been addressed by the applicant or the Local Planning Authority (LPA), with the Planning Directorate still awaiting the LPA’s report to refer the ‘call-in’ request.

In conclusion it is absurd that the Welsh Government make and promote policies on the Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity, Nature and Wildlife, Climate Change, Flooding, Active Travel, Contaminated Land Planning and the Future Generations Act, yet do not observe or follow these policies themselves and continue to decimate the rural nature of our land and its wildlife and its historic culture, increase traffic congestion and emissions, increase the flood risk in the area and yet expect local residents and other members of the public to put with their development and absolve the Welsh Government inexcusable behaviour by suggesting that Climate Change can be solved by families planting trees in their gardens, trees that will have to grow for many years before they absorb CO₂ at the same rate as the trees that they are removing. It is also concerning the inducements being made by the Welsh Government to the Vale of Glamorgan Council in order to get “their” development approved.

There is still time and opportunity for the Welsh Government to lead by example in supporting and promoting the Countryside and its Environment by following and observing their own Policies

I therefore ask on behalf of residents and the signatories of the petition, from across Wales, that the Welsh Government withdraw this application and “save the farmland and green fields at Cosmeston”.

Yours Faithfully,

Michael Philip Garland

Agenda Item 3.14

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

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021, [Plenary 23 March 2021](#)

Diolch, Llywydd. I move the motion.

I would like to briefly explain the background to today's debate on the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021. Firstly, the Pet Animals Act 1951 section 1(1) will cease to have effect in relation to Wales and will be replaced by these regulations. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, the regulations make it an offence to sell a puppy or kitten that the seller has not bred themselves on the premises. I first committed to investigate the banning of commercial third-party sales of puppies and kittens in June 2018. It has been a long journey, but along the way, we've also taken other actions to strengthen the ability of local authorities across Wales to enforce existing regulations, as well as these new regulations.

These regulations are yet another step towards ensuring the welfare of puppies and kittens currently being bred and sold onto third parties. Their welfare improves significantly by being sold only by breeders directly to the new owner. At present, commercial third parties are able to sell puppies and kittens, which means, in most cases, purchasers will not see the puppy or kitten interacting with the mother or siblings. They may also have had to endure a number of journeys before reaching their new home.

The regulations being made today will come fully into force on 10 September. During this time, statutory guidance will be co-produced to support enforcement by local authorities, and this timeline will also allow existing sellers affected to make changes and consider a different operating model to mitigate any potential impact. I would like to make it clear that statutory guidance for enforcement officers will provide local authority officers the flexibility they require to enforce the licensing regime, which steers away from a one-size-fits-all approach.

We are bringing in regulations that close loopholes, creating discretion on enforcement to work with key organisations involved in either rehoming or rescue activities. They provide local authorities with a channel to assess whether the animals are being used purely for financial gain via the business test, and aim to improve animal welfare, supporting informed decision making by the purchasing public. I commend the motion to the Senedd. Diolch.

Agenda Item 3.15

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 3.16

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

Agenda Item 3.17

P-05-1068 Allow socially distanced meets in private gardens to follow science and avoid isolation

This petition was submitted by Rachel Emma Ovett having collected a total of 273 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Many people in Wales who were shielding or in care homes with strict measures that were forced upon residents were left in isolation for months at huge cost to mental and physical wellbeing. The government promised this would not happen again. Meeting loved ones outdoors in a controlled private garden is a safe way to avoid isolation for anyone not allowed or too afraid to go to public spaces. This plunges thousands of vulnerable people back into isolation through no fault of theirs.

Additional Information:

The vast majority of compliant careful citizens would meet in private gardens without breaking the regulations. There is no evidence to suggest there have been more breaches in private homes than in public spaces. There is no evidence to suggest that those who disregard the Covid rules will behave better or be more compliant in public spaces as opposed to private gardens. The virus spreads more easily inside. The argument about going inside if we allow meets in private gardens is flawed, as the government are allowing indoor meeting in any case.

The virus spreads more easily in spaces where people have to move around and come and go, e.g. pubs. Alcohol inhibits judgment so people may not be able to effectively social distance after drinking. Public spaces, streets and parks are hard to control, with lots of people coming and going in different directions, making it hard to control keeping a distance, through no fault of your own, whereas private spaces can be controlled.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central



WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Review of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restriction) (No.5) (Wales) Regulations 2020**

DATE **14 July 2021**

BY **Mark Drakeford MS, First Minister**

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 5) (Wales) Regulations 2020 require that a review of the coronavirus restrictions is undertaken every three weeks. Today we have completed the most recent review which was due by 15 July.

Cases of coronavirus are rising in the community largely as a result of the delta variant. Our high vaccination rates mean however that hospital admissions remain low and that we are able to complete the alert level one changes. This means from 17 July:

- Up to six people can meet indoors in private homes and holiday accommodation.
- Organised indoor events for up to 1,000 seated or 200 standing can take place following a risk assessment.
- Ice rinks can re-open.

From this date we are also able to remove the limits on the number of people who can gather outdoors. Outdoor premises and events will also have more flexibility around physical distancing. This will be one of the mitigations to consider, but will not be an absolute requirement.

Other changes from 17 July include:

- Allowing up to 30 children from organisations, such as the Brownies and Scouts, to attend residential centres over the summer holidays.

- Requiring the risks and mitigations identified in the COVID risk assessment to be shared with employees.
- Remove the restrictions requiring food and drink to be consumed while seated for events only.

Today we are also publishing an updated Coronavirus Control Plan which sets out how we will move beyond alert level one to a set of baseline restrictions.

We will consider whether Wales can move to the new alert level zero on 7 August following the next review of the restrictions.

At alert level zero:

- Legal limits and caps on the number of people who can meet, including in private homes, public places or at events will be removed.
- COVID risk assessments will remain a legal requirement.
- Reasonable measures will legally be required to manage the risk of coronavirus but they will be for each organisation to determine based on the outcome of their risk assessment, including in relation to physical distancing.
- All businesses and premises can open, including nightclubs.
- People should continue to work from home wherever possible.
- Face coverings will remain a legal requirement in all indoors public places, with the exception of education settings and hospitality. We expect to gradually ease these requirements – and are beginning with hospitality settings from 7 August. Schools and colleges will use the framework announced by the Education Minister to determine use of face coverings

Coronavirus Control Plan: Alert Level 0 (July 2021):

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-level-0-zero>

Cynllun Rheoli'r Coronafeirws: Lefel Rhybudd 0 (Gorfennaf 2021):

<https://llyw.cymru/cynllun-rheolir-coronafeirws-lefel-rhybudd-0-sero>

P-05-1068 Allow socially distanced meets in private gardens to follow science and avoid isolation, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 27.08.21

It is unfortunately the case that the First Ministers' response to my petition came several months after it was first filed, and still did not address the issues I highlighted regarding vulnerable people and those connected to vulnerable people, in light of the Covid 19 restrictions. There was no response that addressed the points highlighted in my original petition.

When the committee met they agreed with the principle reflected in my petition, and there was an action to write to the First Minister to attempt to get him to address the restrictions on this section of society, but again, he failed to do this.

In short, there are two issues:

1. The responses and time taken to address has been inadequate in light of the changing circumstances the pandemic presented Wales with. The process for petitioning change is not fit for purpose when applied to regulation and change that is required for urgent matters. The fact that I am being asked to still provide comments on a petition that has been rendered superfluous by nature of time passing just supports this observation. I request to understand what other process there is to affect change for matters and policy impacting for circumstances such as Covid that required urgent, temporary and frequently changing policy. I believe there should be a fast track petition system for urgent matters, if one does not already exist.
2. Repeatedly the original points were not addressed in any response from the First Minister, and instead generic responses that merely reflected the overarching sentiment behind the restrictions at the time were offered. I believe this falls short of the expectation to seek to address the individual basis of each petition. If the First Minister simply reiterates that which is general address and not specific to the said petition, I see there is little purpose or outcome in the exercise.

Impact

As a result of the First Minister failing to address the points in my original petition, restrictions and policies remained in place which allowed for a situation whereby vulnerable persons, unpaid carers and those fearful of leaving home to go into public places, or those that could not leave their homes to go into public places had a lesser position of liberty as a result of the choices made during Covid. This impacted on the human rights and mental and physical wellbeing of a large section of society. This cannot be an acceptable position, and this cannot be allowed to be repeated. I have been personally impacted by the choices made. A close friend was kept essentially locked up in total isolation from all loved ones by his care provider, for over a year. I believe this is because the government did not do enough to introduce reasonable adjustments to protect the rights of vulnerable and disabled persons, or to introduce policies to force care providers to do more. My friend has declined significantly as a result, and has been at potential risk of harm from his care team. This is not an isolated incident, and both hospital admissions and deaths in the community for vulnerable and disabled persons that are non Covid related, have increased during the pandemic, with the overall health of this section of society thought to be declined in general.

Having worked for Carers UK in Wales as an ambassador, I am also aware that life was made unreasonably tough for the unpaid caring community, who did not have any specific policies tailored to their needs set throughout Covid. This group was left isolated in their homes, with no additional provision for dedicated supermarket slots for example, which were allocated to professional health workers, or any provision to lawfully accept visitors into their homes and gardens, as opposed to exposing themselves to public places, for those that could even leave their homes, as many could not. This section of society was not even recognised or celebrated in the same way the professional health workers were.

Unpaid carers in Wales represented over 12% of the population in Wales in the 2011 census. It is thought that this figure is now much higher, and higher still as a direct consequence of Covid, with around 370,000 unpaid carers in Wales.

There is not just a moral obligation, but a legal obligation to support unpaid carers, as their rights are enshrined in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. I am aware that there is a Strategy for Unpaid Carers coming in the Autumn, but there have been no interim proposals and the First Minister did not refer to this in his response, and this strategy does not appear to seek to embed, or stretch its' remit to Governmental policy/legal decisions, such as the ones needed during Covid.

There are around 130,000 persons recognised as extremely clinically vulnerable. More alarmingly, as much as a quarter of all Wales residents are disabled. The true figure of those living with and dependent on care systems, either paid or unpaid, NHS funded or privately, is not known, but when taken in full context and including the unpaid carers that support this section of society, this could represent as much as 30% of our population.

During the pandemic, policies, exemptions and specific compensations were made for professional health workers. In one extreme policy change, to allow for meetings with up to six persons in pubs, the First Minister was transparent in his support for the youth population, despite their lessor needs and lessor risk to themselves, but increased risk for others. There has been a continuance of policies that further support school age children. For the older population, unpaid carers, vulnerable and disabled, I have not observed an equal emphasis on measured policies or mitigations (including for example garden visits, and enforcing care homes to do all they can to end isolation where it is safe to do so), for these sections of society, which is those both most vulnerable to Covid and most vulnerable to isolation, no measures were taken.

Next steps

Whilst I appreciate that the Covid position has negated the need for this petition on at least a temporary basis, I do feel that the First Minister needs to provide sufficient answers and assurance that the Government will seek to put in place policies that will permanently protect vulnerable persons, disabled and unpaid carers from isolation or being effectively trapped in their own homes, such that this situation cannot be allowed to be repeated.

I look forward to hearing how this develops.

Agenda Item 3.18

P-06-1191 Abolish social distancing measures at all Welsh weddings this Summer following July 15th 2021

This petition was submitted by Owain Evans, having collected a total of 809 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Weddings are significant life events for many couples who are looking to begin their family lives. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, many couples have had to postpone their wedding plans several times as they do not want to lose the weddings of their dreams. This has subsequently put many lives on hold and has significantly impacted the mental health of thousands.

Could wedding guests provide negative test results, or evidence of two vaccinations in order to attend unrestricted weddings?

Additional Information:

As of 16.06.21 NHS Wales gave 88.2% of all Welsh adults a first Covid-19 vaccine, with 57.6% of adults receiving both doses. During the previous 7 days, NHS Wales had double vaccinated 4.6% of all adults. Using this as a trajectory, at least 76% of Welsh adults would receive both doses of a vaccine by July 15th. Furthermore, rollout of second doses has accelerated over recent days with 2.7% of adults receiving their second doses in the previous 3 days. This could potentially accelerate further as all adults in Wales have currently been offered their first vaccinations, allowing surplus vaccines.

With a potential figure of 76% of Welsh adults having received both vaccinations by July 15th, why should social distancing measures continue at Weddings? Especially, when all attendees would be willing to take lateral flow tests and could be easily tracked and traced if required.

All figures have been referenced from:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/vaccinations>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Review of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restriction) (No.5) (Wales) Regulations 2020**

DATE **5 August 2021**

BY **First Minister Mark Drakeford MS**

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 5) (Wales) Regulations 2020 require that a review of the coronavirus restrictions is undertaken every three weeks. The most recent review was due by 5 August.

Overall transmission of Covid-19 has decreased across Wales in the past week, and the percentage of people testing positive has started to fall steadily. Evidence continues to suggest that the link between cases, hospitalisations and deaths has been weakened by the vaccination programme. Pressures on the NHS have increased steadily over recent weeks. However, the number of people admitted daily to hospital with suspected or confirmed Covid-19 remains close to the lowest levels we have seen since the start of the pandemic.

On 16 July, we published an updated *Coronavirus Control Plan* setting out how we will move to a new alert level zero. As signalled at the last review of the coronavirus regulations, I can confirm Wales will move to alert level zero at 6am on 7 August.

At alert level zero, there will be no legal limits on the number of people who can meet, including in private homes, public places or at events. The few remaining businesses, which were required to be closed, including nightclubs, will be able to open.

In taking reasonable measures to minimise the risk of coronavirus, all those responsible for premises which are open to the public or a workplaces, will have more flexibility to tailor those measures in line with the results of their Covid-19 assessment and their specific circumstances.

Face coverings will continue to be required in most indoor public places, including on public transport, but they will not be a legal requirement in hospitality settings where food and drink is served. We will continue to encourage their use in those settings where this is practical.

We will also make some other changes:

- New core guidance has been produced which provides clear and concise advice for businesses, organisations, activity and event organisers and the public.
- The requirements in statutory guidance for specific premises to collect contact information is being removed. This will become one of a number of the reasonable measures which all businesses should consider.
- The regulations will provide clarity that there is no requirement for wearing face coverings on open air transport, such as boats.
- The (principal) Health Protection (No 5) regulations and the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Functions of Local Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2020 will be extended to Friday 26 November 2021.

With the move to alert level zero, three important rules will remain:

- Everyone must isolate for 10 days if they have symptoms of Covid-19 or if they have a positive test result.
- Adults and children aged 12 and over must still wear a face covering in most indoor public places in Wales, including on public transport, in shops and in healthcare settings.
- All those responsible for premises open to the public and workplaces must carry out a Covid-19 risk assessment and take reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus.

Coronavirus has not gone away. While we are able to take a significant step in moving away from complex legal restrictions, we must not abandon all the simple measures which have done so much to keep us all safe.

These include being fully vaccinated; getting tested and self-isolating if you have symptoms of Covid-19; meeting others outdoors wherever possible and keeping indoor areas well ventilated; keeping your distance when you can; washing your hand regularly; wearing a face covering in indoor public places and working from home whenever possible.

Taking responsibility means we can get back to doing the things we've missed the most. We all have a reason to keep Wales safe.

As the Minister for Health and Social Services set out in a Written Statement on 29 July, the regulations will also be changed on 7 August to remove the requirement for people who have been fully vaccinated (after 14 days has elapsed) to isolate if they are identified as a close contact. We will also remove the requirement for under 18s to self-isolate if they are identified as contacts.

To ensure those on lower incomes do not suffer financially, the Minister for Finance and Local Government announced in a Written Statement today an enhanced Protect offer to those asked to self-isolate on or after 7 August. Any applicant will be eligible for a payment of £750, increased from £500, over the ten day isolation period.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.