

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

For further information contact:

Video Conference via Zoom

Gareth Price

Meeting date: 20 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 – 24)
- 2 New Petitions**
(10.00–10.15)
 - 2.1 P-06-1171 Publish clear evidence that COVID 19 is spread by pubs and restaurants practising social distancing**
(Pages 25 – 31)
 - 2.2 P-06-1181 Sea bottom trawling is killing our marine wildlife...Stop bulldozing our seas!**
(Pages 32 – 42)
 - 2.3 P-06-1182 Only shut businesses that have previously had a COVID-19 case linked to them**
(Pages 43 – 45)
 - 2.4 P-06-1184 Immediately ban the use of toxic lead in all ammunition in Wales... lead is killing our wildlife!**
(Pages 46 – 51)
 - 2.5 P-06-1208 New laws to protect rare red squirrels from habitat loss which causes population decline**
(Pages 52 – 53)
- 3 Updates to previous petitions**
(10.15–11.00)

Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



3.1 P-05-1040 Introduce a moratorium on the approval any new large scale waste incinerators in Wales

(Pages 54 – 61)

Health and Social Services

3.2 P-05-1041 A clear policy and funding for hospitals and care homes for virtual visiting during times of lockdown

(Pages 62 – 65)

3.3 P-05-1132 Instigate an Independent Judicial Inquiry into Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

(Pages 66 – 69)

Local Government

3.4 P-05-1112 Help Welsh Communities Buy Community Assets: Implement Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011

(Pages 70 – 72)

Education

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

(Pages 73 – 76)

3.6 P-06-1160 Require local Welsh exam centres to accept home-educated students for public exams

(Pages 77 – 79)

3.7 P-06-1163 Extend the postgraduate STEMM bursary to all MSc students in Wales

(Pages 80 – 84)

Equality

3.8 P-06-1158 The Welsh Government to put in place a dedicated disability Minister within the next term of Government

(Pages 85 – 89)

Culture, Sport and Tourism

3.9 P-06-1166 Provide tax free grants to people working in the arts and to provide grant funding to arts venues

(Pages 90 – 91)

3.10 P-06-1170 An immediate independent review of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 selection process in the WPWL

(Pages 92 – 106)

The following two items are grouped together for consideration

3.11 P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum

(Page 107)

[Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group: final report](#)

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

(Page 108)

[Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group: final report](#)

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

(11.00)

5 Forward work programme

(11.00-11.15)

Document is Restricted

Scientific evidence on the spread of the virus in hospitality settings

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 20 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 20 September 2021

Reference: SR21/0497-1

Petition Number: P-06-1171

Petition title: Publish clear evidence that COVID 19 is spread by pubs and restaurants practising social distancing.

Text of petition: Many people are disgusted that the Welsh Government enforce the ongoing Covid restrictions. Many argue it is an affront to human rights in a civilised democratic society.

The restrictions should be advisory only with the consequences for individuals clearly communicated. I.E risk of infection, illness, passing infection to others and possible death.

Many people are concerned about the ongoing collapse of the economy, people's livelihoods, suspended hospital treatments for non-covid related illness, severe travel restrictions etc.

Unable to get tested without displaying any symptoms, unable to have an antibody test.

All of this with no real tangible evidence demonstrated by Welsh Government health statistics.



1. Background

There have been a number of periods during the pandemic where Welsh Government regulations have impacted on pubs and restaurants. Senedd Research has published a [coronavirus timeline](#), which highlights key developments in Wales during the pandemic.

The [National fire-break](#) in Wales from 23 October to 9 November 2020 was in response to a sharp rise of coronavirus cases across Wales, and meant that:

All non-food retail, hospitality businesses, including cafes, restaurants and pubs (unless they provide take-away or delivery services), close contact services, such as hairdressers and beauticians, and events and tourism businesses, such as hotels must close.

On 30 November 2020 the First Minister of Wales, [Mark Drakeford](#), announced that further new measures were being introduced “as cases of coronavirus accelerate in Wales”. From 4 December 2020 pubs, bars, restaurants and cafes were not able to serve alcohol and were required to close by 6pm and only provide takeaways after that time.

On 1 December the First Minister made a statement in Plenary on the [December restrictions](#). He said that the Welsh Government recognised “the enormous effort made by the [hospitality] sector to comply with the regulations” but that “similar restrictions have had to be introduced in all other parts of the United Kingdom and, indeed, across the world”. The First Minister stated that:

The consumption of alcohol has been identified by health officials and policy makers internationally as increasing the risk of transmission, as social distancing can break down as people have an altered perception of risk.

The regulations were to be reviewed by the Welsh Ministers by Thursday 17 December, and at least once in every three week period after that date.

In response to the First Minister’s statement the then Leader of the Opposition, Paul Davies MS, voiced his concerns for areas in Wales “where there’s no evidence that hospitality interaction is leading to an increase in transmission rates”. The First Minister said that “the evidence is there” and referred to two

papers published by the UK Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) in November which, he said, reviewed "the measures that have succeeded across the United Kingdom". These papers are cited below.

There were subsequent lifting of restrictions. On 23 April 2021, the **First Minister announced** that from 26 April outdoor hospitality could reopen. On 14 May 2021, the First Minister **confirmed** that from Monday 17 May the whole of Wales would move into **alert level 2**, which would include the re-opening of indoor hospitality.

2. Publications from scientific advisory groups

There are two main bodies that provide scientific advice used by the Welsh Government.

The **Technical Advisory Cell (TAC)** is an advisory body of the Welsh Government. It provides "scientific and technical advice to support Welsh Government decision makers during emergencies". This includes providing regular updates from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to senior Welsh Government officials about outputs from SAGE. **TAC regularly publishes** summaries of the advice it provides to the Welsh Government along with more subject specific research.

The UK Government's **SAGE is responsible** for ensuring "timely and coordinated scientific advice is made available to decision makers to support UK cross-government decisions". It relies on external science and advice from expert groups including its own sub-groups such as the **Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M)** and the **Independent Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Behaviours (SPI-B)**. **Publications from SAGE** are also available on the UK Government's website.

2.1. SAGE papers referred to the by First Minister

The evidence informing decision-making is continually developing and updating. On 12 November SAGE considered a paper from its modelling sub-group (SPI-M) on **tiers in England and other measures in the devolved nations**. This is one of the SAGE papers that the **First Minister referred to in Plenary in December 2020**. The second paper that the First Minister referred to was from the **Impact of Interventions Task and Finish Group** dated 19 November on the **four nations' autumn interventions**. This paper was **updated on 26 November**.

2.2. Hospitality settings and transmission

SAGE and TAC have published other papers which refer to the hospitality sector and the transmission of COVID-19. These include, but are not limited to:

- [Non-pharmaceutical interventions table](#), 21 September 2020 (SAGE);
- [Technical Advisory Group: fire breaks](#), 19 October 2020;
- [SARS-COV-2: Transmission Routes and Environments](#), 22 October 2020 (SAGE);
- [SAGE 63 minutes: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) response](#), 22 October 2020;
- [Summary of evidence on costs and benefits and potential mitigations for measures to address COVID-19 in Wales](#), 25 November 2020 (TAC);
- [Transmission risk in the hospitality sector](#), 27 November 2020 (SAGE). Provides an overview of SAGE papers on the issue;
- [Environmental Modelling Group \(EMG\) Transmission Group: Insights on transmission of COVID-19 with a focus on the hospitality, retail and leisure sector](#), 8 April 2021 (SAGE).

3. Welsh Government response

The Minister for Health and Social Services has provided correspondence dated 8 September 2021 to the Committee. This sets out that the regulations in Wales are formally reviewed every 21 days, taking account of the latest scientific evidence:

When restrictions are no longer proportionate, Welsh Ministers are committed to amending or withdrawing them. The reviews consider the most recent public health situations as well as wider financial and well-being implications, with evidence from the Technical Advisory Cell (TAC) which includes, weekly summaries of advice, surveillance data (including the R value) and reports about specific issues. Welsh Government officials are also regular contributors at the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), and their outputs are published here.

The response notes that, whilst Wales is currently at [Alert Level Zero](#), there will be a continuing legal requirement for businesses, employers and event organisers to carry out a coronavirus risk assessment, and to put in place “reasonable measures to manage the risk of coronavirus”.

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.



Ein cyf/Our ref EM/11569/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

08 September 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 22 July about Petition P-06-1171 Publish clear evidence that Covid 19 is spread by pubs and restaurants practising social distancing.

The period that this petition covers is for the National fire-break which started at 6pm on Friday 23 October and ended on Monday 9 November.

The coronavirus regulations in Wales are kept under constant review to ensure they are proportionate to the public health situation. They are formally reviewed every 21 days, taking account of the latest scientific evidence, with all major decisions in relation to the coronavirus emergency being taken or approved by the First Minister, in consultation with the Welsh Government Cabinet.

When restrictions are no longer proportionate, Welsh Ministers are committed to amending or withdrawing them. The reviews consider the most recent public health situations as well as wider financial and well-being implications, with evidence from the [Technical Advisory Cell \(TAC\)](#) which includes, weekly summaries of advice, surveillance data (including the R value) and reports about specific issues. Welsh Government officials are also regular contributors at the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), and their outputs are published [here](#).

Looking forward, we have published a summer 2021 update of our Coronavirus Control Plan, it sets out how we can move to a new alert level zero, which will see us gradually move away from complex legal restrictions.

The Cabinet's intention was that Wales should move to [alert level zero](#) on 7 August, which we have now done. The First Minister has been very clear that coronavirus has not gone away. Here in Wales we will not abandon all the simple measures which have done so much to keep us all safe.

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

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

At alert level zero, carrying out a coronavirus risk assessment will continue to be a legal requirement for businesses, employers and event organisers. There will also still be a requirement to put in place reasonable measures to manage the risk of coronavirus but they will be for each organisation to determine based on the outcome of the risk assessment.

Each business or organisation will need to consider what measures are reasonable to put in place, which should include a combination of measures. These will determine what reasonable measures are needed to be put in place to keep workers and customers and visitors safe.

As we enter a new phase of the pandemic, the First Minister has set out a new longer-term plan for the summer which will help to enhance what is already looking to be a successful and busy summer for the visitor economy in Wales. However, we still all need to take steps to protect ourselves, and to work together to keep Wales safe. This will include making sure that our visitors are aware that Welsh Covid rules will apply in Wales and that in some ways these will differ from rules in place in other parts of the UK.

We all have a really important part to play to keep Wales, our visitors, workers and communities safe as we head into the summer. Visit Wales' Addo campaign has been running since restrictions were lifted in March to encourage the people of Wales and visitors to look after each other and to remain respectful of the countryside and the communities we visit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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

P-06-1181 Sea bottom trawling is killing our marine wildlife...Stop bulldozing our seas

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 20 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 20 September 2021

Reference: RS21/0634-1

Petition Number: P-06-1181

Petition title: Sea bottom trawling is killing our marine wildlife...Stop bulldozing our seas

Text of petition: It is shocking that more than 97% of our marine protected areas (MPA), created to safeguard ocean habitats, are being destroyed by being dredged and bottom trawled. Analysis of fishing vessel data found that bottom trawling, the most destructive type of fishing on sea-floor habitats, is happening in 71 out of 73 offshore MPA's around the UK.

We call on the Welsh Government to ban all forms of bottom trawling by both foreign and UK vessels in Welsh waters. We are in an ecological emergency and need action now.

If we do not take action now, we will have no chance of stopping the shocking loss of biodiversity or mitigate the impacts of climate change.

A recent report "Protecting the Global Ocean for Biodiversity, Food and Climate", is the first study to show the climate impact of bottom trawling globally. This widespread fishing practice involves dragging heavy metal nets along the seabed, effectively bulldozing all sea life before it!

New research has revealed that this system of fishing pumps out one gigaton of carbon every year. This carbon is released from the seabed sediment into the water, and can increase ocean acidification, as well as adversely affecting productivity and biodiversity. Marine sediments are the



largest pool of carbon storage in the world. In fact fishing boats that trawl the ocean floor release as much carbon dioxide as the entire aviation industry!

There can be no place for bottom trawling in a modern nature friendly Wales!

1. Background

Bottom trawling is a method of fishing that targets species living on the sea floor. It's a type of 'active fishing', whereby the gear follows the target species (as opposed to passive methods where gear remains in place and allows the species to come to it). This type of active fishing includes:

- *Beam trawlers* which target fish on the seabed by towing a net from either side of the boat;
- *Demersal trawlers* which fish along or just above the seafloor to catch demersal (bottom-dwelling) fish. A funnel-shaped net is towed behind one or two boats; and
- *Dredges*, which are rigid structures towed along the seabed by a boat. They are used to target shellfish species such as scallops and oysters.

Bottom-trawling activities can cause physical loss or disturbance of seabed habitats, including through abrasion and smothering.

The carbon sequestered by vegetated coastal and marine ecosystems, in particular seagrass, saltmarsh, mangrove and seaweed habitats, is referred to as '**blue carbon**'. The vegetation in blue carbon habitats removes carbon dioxide (CO²) from the atmosphere and surrounding seawater, then stores carbon within plants and underlying sediments.

A July 2020 report **Estimating the Carbon Sink Potential of the Welsh Marine Environment**, prepared on behalf of Natural Resources Wales (NRW), found that:

... a lot of carbon is already stored away in Welsh marine sediments, at least 113 Million tonnes (Mt) in the top 10 cm. This represents almost 170 % of the carbon held in Welsh forests.

Welsh seas contain carbon sequestering (long term storage) habitats such as seagrass, saltmarsh and kelp, which encompass more than 99km² of the Welsh **Marine Protected Area (MPA)** network.

MPA is a collective term for all forms of protected nature conservation sites in the marine environment. They are geographically defined and formally recognised through legal or other effective means, such as voluntary approaches. MPAs may be designated for a variety of reasons, including marine conservation and fisheries management.

There are a **total of 139 MPAs in Wales** covering 69% of the Welsh inshore waters (the mean high water mark to 12 nautical mile territorial seas limit) and 50% of all Welsh waters. All Welsh MPAs are multi-use sites. However, some activities may be managed or restricted to reduce the likelihood of an adverse impact on the wildlife and habitats for which the site has been designated.

For example **Skomer**, Wales' only **Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)**, has **specific fishery byelaws** and codes of conduct. These prohibit the use of mobile fishing gear (dredges and beam trawls) and the removal of the King Scallops species "by any means", which has been prohibited since July 1990, upon designation of the, then, Marine Nature Reserve. As a result the density of King Scallops has **increased seven fold** in the 16 year monitoring period.

In response to this petition, the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths MS ('the Minister') states that:

... where there is evidence to demonstrate potential harm to a feature, it is possible to manage impacts within sites using mechanisms such as Fishing Orders

The Minister highlights the Scallop Fishing (Wales) (No 2) Order 2010/269 which restricts dredging of the King Scallop species in Pembrokeshire Marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) (which includes Skomer MCZ) and “a small area where the designated feature is absent” in Cardigan Bay SAC. The Minister says that “no other towed gears are known to be used”.

NRW has produced indicative feature condition assessments for features in Wales’ European Marine Sites (EMS), which include all marine SACs and Special Protected Areas (SPAs), types of MPAs. These assessments considered the conservation status of the features (species and habitats), and found that 45% of all designated features are in favourable condition, whilst 45% are in unfavourable condition.

In her response to this petition, the Minister draws attention to Wales’ only wholly offshore MPA which has been designated for benthic habitats – the Croker Carbonate Slabs SAC, which is considered to be in favourable condition. She states that (emphasis added):

No towed gears are being used in this site **which would harm the feature for which the site is designated**.

In October 2020 the Guardian reported that 97% of UK offshore MPAs were subject to bottom-trawling in 2019, including all of Wales’ offshore MPAs. This analysis was undertaken by environmental NGO Oceana, using data from vessel tracking platform Global Fishing Watch. Further analysis by Oceana of the 2020 data found the same number of UK MPAs were being trawled, and that the number of hours spent fishing with bottom-towed gear in these areas had increased by 10% from 2019.

Protecting the Global Ocean for Biodiversity, Food and Climate was published in March 2021. It states that marine sediments are the “largest pool of organic carbon on the planet and a crucial reservoir for long-term storage” of organic carbon, however:

...disturbance of these carbon stores can re-mineralize sedimentary carbon to CO², which is likely to increase ocean acidification, reduce the buffering capacity of the ocean and potentially add to the build-up of atmospheric CO². Thus, protecting the carbon-rich seabed is a potentially important nature-based solution to climate change

It finds that:

MPAs - especially highly protected areas in which extractive and destructive activities are banned - can be effective management tools to safeguard and restore ocean biodiversity and associated services complement conventional fisheries management and contribute to the mitigation of climate change by protecting marine carbon stocks

In response to this petition, the Minister states that “MPAs cannot currently be designated for a resource such as carbon potential”.

A recent report by environmental NGOs WWF, RSPB and the Marine Conservation Society calls for a ‘climate-smart’ strategy for the fishing sector, including a recommendation to:

Limit bottom towed fishing gear to protect and support the recovery of blue carbon within current MPAs and in key areas outside of MPAs.

2. Welsh Government action

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires the Welsh Government to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in Wales by at least 80% for the year 2050 with a system of interim emissions targets and carbon budgets. The Welsh Government has since committed to a net-zero by 2050 emissions reduction target. In 2017, the Welsh Government published its Natural Resources Policy as part of the implementation of the *Environment (Wales) Act 2016*, it states that the Welsh Government has committed to (emphasis added):

...the development of tools to measure the benefits of integrated approaches to climate change (including ecosystem services, safeguarding biological diversity, **carbon sequestration**, and wider co-benefits that support increased resilience).

NRW is working in partnership with the Welsh Government on the Assessing Welsh Fishing Activities project. In response to a written question in 2017, the then Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs described the project as:

...a comprehensive approach to evaluating all commercial fishing activity in Welsh waters and its interaction with MPA features. Its purpose is to identify where there is a risk the interaction between fishing gear and a MPA feature could have a potential negative affect.

As part of this project, a [principles and prioritisation report](#) was published in 2016 and states that the impacts of fishing activities in EMS will be considered under [Article 6\(2\) of the Habitats Directive \(92/43/EEC\)](#), which:

... requires Welsh Government to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbances of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance by fishing activities could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats and Birds Directives. Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive has an emphasis on preventative measures, it is broad in scope and it is applicable to the all activities within a SAC.

Assessments have been completed on 40 high-risk ('purple-rated') interactions. These assess possible impact pathways of five different gear types; beam trawl, beam trawl (shrimp), light otter trawl, multi-rig trawl and scallop (queen) dredge, and eight different site features.

A [consultation is expected](#) on the high risk aspects identified in the project. There has been no public consultation launched at the time of writing this briefing.

In September 2018, the Welsh Government published an [MPA Network Management Framework for Wales 2018-2023](#), which sets out information on MPAs, how they are managed and by whom, and plans for improvement. It also publishes annual [MPA network action plans](#) which sit alongside the framework and detail the actions identified by the [Wales MPA Management Steering Group](#) as priorities to improve MPA management and condition.

In September 2019, the Welsh Government published the [Welsh Marine Evidence Strategy](#) in partnership with NRW. The strategy provides an overview of the high level marine evidence priorities in Wales and a framework to meet those evidence challenges. It states (emphasis added):

[...] the marine environment [provides] a wealth of benefits supporting the well-being of coastal communities and wider society. These include, but are not limited to: a range of habitats and species that make up the wider marine ecosystem and provide 'ecosystem services' such as **sequestering carbon**, recycling nutrients and mitigating coastal erosion [...].

In November 2019, the Welsh Government published its first [Welsh National Marine Plan](#), which includes a commitment to 'improve the understanding and

enable action supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation'. Although the plan doesn't refer to blue carbon directly, it states (emphasis added):

Welsh marine natural resources are important assets and Welsh seas support a diverse range of activities across many sectors which make an important contribution to the economy, including through direct tangible benefits like food, oil and building materials, as well as provision of less obvious services like **carbon sequestration** and climate regulation.

In her response to this petition, the Minister states that she recognises "the importance of carbon sequestration and storage within our marine environment" and that the:

Welsh Government will be supporting further research into the stocks and fluxes of carbon in marine habitats.

3. Welsh Parliament action

In August 2017, the previous Senedd's Climate Change Environment and Rural Affairs Committee published its report, Turning the tide? Report of the inquiry into the Welsh Government's approach to Marine Protected Area management.

In June 2019, the same Committee undertook follow up work on MPA management in Wales, assessing the progress made by the Welsh Government in taking forward the recommendations in the Committee report, and in delivering the MPA Network Management Action Plan 2018-19.

In relation to the Assessing Welsh Fishing Activities Project the Committee recommended that:

The Welsh Government should explain why management has not yet been implemented as a result of the AWFA [Assessing Welsh Fishing Activities] assessments for high-risk activities, which were published in 2017. It should bring forward a consultation on management options for those activities as a matter of urgency

In response the Welsh Government said that the results of the assessments will:

... be used to inform the management proposals for high-risk mobile gear fishing activities. These proposals will form part of a public consultation which, depending on the impact of Brexit-related work,

should begin in early 2020. I would like to convey to the Committee that I am committed to protecting designated features, in line with the EU Birds and Habitats Directives.

In response to a written question in August 2020 regarding the Assessing Welsh Fishing Activities Project, the then Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs said that they were “unable to provide a set timeline for consultation” due to the “twin challenges of EU Exit and Covid-19”.

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.



Ein cyf/Our ref LG/10186/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru

27 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 28 July, regarding a petition which calls on the Welsh Government to ban all forms of bottom trawling in Welsh Waters.

I recognise the importance of having a healthy, productive, biologically diverse and resilient marine ecosystem. Our network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) plays a key role in achieving this and there are currently 139 MPAs covering 50% of the Welsh marine area.

Our MPAs are designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (inshore) and Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Management of these sites are designed to provide sufficient protection for the species and habitats for which they are designated (their features). This approach enables site features to achieve or maintain 'favourable condition'.

The sites are not intended to be 'no go' areas and many non-damaging activities are allowed, including some forms of fishing. All features within sites are assessed against potential harm from these activities and management provisions are proposed where necessary. For fisheries, in scenarios where there is evidence to demonstrate potential harm to a feature, it is possible to manage impacts within sites using mechanisms such as Fishing Orders.

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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.

Pembrokeshire Marine SAC and Cardigan Bay SAC are two inshore sites designated for benthic habitats that have a small proportion of their area spanning into the offshore. Scallop (king) dredging is restricted by the Scallop Fishing (Wales) (No 2) Order 2010/269 in Pembrokeshire Marine SAC and no other towed gears are known to be used. Similarly, scallop (king) dredging is restricted by the same Order in all but a small area where the designated feature is absent in Cardigan Bay SAC and no other towed gears are known to be used.

Currently Wales only has one wholly offshore MPA which has been designated for benthic habitats – the Croker Carbonate Slabs Special Area of Conservation (SAC), in the Irish Sea, West of Anglesey. No towed gears are being used in this site which would harm the feature for which the site is designated (Methane Derived Authigenic Carbonate; MDAC). This is largely because the physical nature of the designated benthic habitat would pose a serious hazard to any vessels using towed gears. Supporting this, a recent 'Feature Condition Assessment' undertaken by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) assessed the features within this site as in a 'Favourable' condition.

<https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/9e4ea87b-2c3a-4b2e-9442-ff50d6fa64d1/Croker-4-ConservationStatements-V1.0.pdf>

MPAs cannot currently be designated for a resource such as carbon potential, but can protect habitats with high carbon capture potential, known as 'blue carbon habitats'. These habitats where designated can subsequently be managed using management measures outlined above. I recognise the importance of carbon sequestration and storage within our marine environment and Welsh Government will be supporting further research into the stocks and fluxes of carbon in marine habitats.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

P-05-1181 Sea bottom trawling is killing our marine wildlife...Stop bulldozing our seas!, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 13.09.21

Dear Committee Members,

I thank the Minister for her comments but I am disappointed that she could not be more proactive in her role of protecting our marine environment. We desperately need new initiatives which will strengthen our current MPA's and commitment to creating more MPA's so our fragile marine wildlife may be better protected.

Kind Regards

Agenda Item 2.3

P-06-1182 Only shut businesses that have previously had a COVID-19 case linked to them

This petition was submitted by Chris Morgan, having collected a total of 111 signatures.

Text of Petition:

For me and many others who work in the leisure and hospitality industry it is frustrating when we are getting shut down and punished for selfish behaviour from a small minority. I am proposing that businesses who have not had any COVID-19 cases linked to them and are complying with all COVID-19 safety regulations and more should not have to suffer and be allowed to remain open as we are providing a safe, controlled environment for people to meet in.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Islwyn
- South Wales East



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1182
Ein cyf/Our ref FM -/10178/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
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16 August 2021

Dear Jack,

I am writing in response to your letter on 28 July about the petition your committee has received concerning only closing businesses which have had a Covid-19 case linked to them (P-06-1182).

Wales moved to alert level zero on 7 August. At this new level all businesses and premises can open, including nightclubs. Indoor hospitality and leisure, which are referenced in the petition, have been allowed to reopen since 17 May.

It is the role of local authorities to enforce requirements for businesses to take preventative measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus (including undertaking risk assessments and putting in place reasonable measures). This is achieved through the issuing of premises improvement and/or closure notices. This has been an important tool in responding to the pandemic and should remain in place.

It is already the case that if an individual business does not have any cases linked to them and if they are complying with the statutory requirements, then they would not be required to close by means of a premises closure notice.

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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 all hope there will not be a need for restrictions in the future which require businesses to close. I have however been very clear that 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 Wales safe.

Best wishes,

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

MARK DRAKEFORD

P-06-1184: Immediately ban the use of toxic lead in all ammunition in Wales... lead is killing our wildlife!

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 20 Medi 2021
Petitions Committee | 20 September 2021

Reference: SR21/0634-3

Petition Number: P-06-1184

Petition title: Immediately ban the use of toxic lead in all ammunition in Wales...lead is killing our wildlife!

Text of petition: Lead is a toxic metal and a very strong poison yet more than 6,000 tonnes are fired at game birds each year in the UK. If any citizen deliberately dumped thousands of tonnes of poison into the Welsh countryside they would rightly find themselves facing prosecution in a Court of Law!

Birds often mistake tiny shot pellets for grit or seeds, and ingest them, and so suffer painful deaths. Dying birds are usually taken quickly by predators - making their deaths unseen and invisible to the public.

Most ammunition -bullets, shotgun pellets and airgun pellets have traditionally been made with lead.

Lead affects most body systems in animals, including the nervous and circulatory systems, and low levels of exposure can affect a birds immune system and behaviour. In some circumstances, swallowing even a single lead pellet can kill a bird.

A consortium of shooting organisations now support a switch to ammunition that is free of lead by everyone taking live quarry with shotguns in the next five years.



We welcome this recognition of the damage lead is doing to our environment but believe the ecological emergency demands that we impose an immediate ban on lead ammunition of all kinds. We also believe that the ban must include clay shoots and not just "live quarry" as the wasted lead shot still ends up in the environment.

Barry Action is a small volunteer conservation group based in the South Wales coastal town of Barry.

1. Background

The UK, Welsh and Scottish governments have initiated work to further restrict the use of lead under the UK Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation & Restriction of Chemicals (UK REACH).

UK REACH is the UK's new chemical regulation system which aims to allow decisions to be made on the regulation of chemicals based on the best available scientific evidence, ensuring chemicals remain safely used and managed. It replaces the EU REACH system.

In March 2021, the UK Government requested the Environment Agency, together with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), to start a two-year process to: review the evidence; launch a public consultation; and propose options for restrictions of lead.

The UK Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow, said:

Addressing the impacts of lead ammunition will mark a significant step forward in helping to protect wildlife, people, and the environment.

This is a welcome development for our new chemicals framework, and will help ensure a sustainable relationship between shooting and conservation.

There are currently some restrictions in Wales under *The Environmental Protection (Restriction on Use of Lead Shot) (Wales) Regulations 2002* on the use of lead shot for shooting with a shotgun.

The petition text refers to a campaign by shooting and rural organisations (launched February 2020) which calls for a voluntary ban on all single use plastics, (including cartridge wads and cases), as well as a voluntary ban on lead shot, all within 5 years.

Four major shotgun cartridge manufacturers responded to say an end to lead and plastics in ammunition would be 'impossible' within five years.

At an EU level, a regulation amending EU REACH was introduced on 25 January 2021 banning lead shot around wetlands. This will come into effect from 15 February 2023. The amendment bans a list of activities involving the use of lead shot in or within 100m of wetlands.

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) has described the EU's restriction as 'utterly unenforceable' and a risk to the voluntary transition to sustainable ammunition taken forward by the shooting organisations described in the petition text.

The UKShooting website sets out lead shot bans that exist in other countries.

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) reports that lead can be poisonous to animals and between 50,000 to 100,000 wildfowl die every year from ingesting lead from used pellets.

The Food Standards Agency has warned that consumption of lead is harmful to humans and that anyone who eats lead-shot game should be aware of the risks posed by consuming large amounts of lead, especially for children and pregnant women.

The National Game Dealers Association (England) committed (March 2020) to sourcing all feather and fur game as well as venison and wild boar from lead-free supply chains from July 2022.

Some supermarkets, such as Waitrose, have committed to no longer sell game meat contaminated with lead ammunition.

There are currently four main alternatives to lead shot:

- Steel;
- Bismuth;
- Tungsten Matrix; and
- 'Mixes' such as Bioammo.

The briefing '[Steel shot and the alternatives to lead](#)' provides further details.

2. Welsh Government action

[In answer to a written question](#) in March 2021 the then Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, said:

The Welsh Government is concerned by the harm being done through the deposition of lead ammunition over both land and water, both to wild animals and to humans ingesting meat contaminated with lead shot. We are, therefore, working with the other GB administrations to initiate a restriction on the use of lead shot in the first work programme of the new UK Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation & restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regime, which replaces EU REACH.

The Climate Change Minister's letter relating to this petition (September 2021) reiterates this position and highlights the lead shot restriction process initiated through this year's [UK REACH work programme](#).

3. Welsh Parliament action

There hasn't been any significant Senedd action in this area.

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.

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1184
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/11138/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
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petitions@senedd.wales

1 September 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 6 August, regarding the petition you have received from Robert Curtis who is asking for a ban on the use of lead ammunition in Wales.

I share the concerns about the harm being done through the deposition of lead ammunition over both land and water, both to wild animals and to humans ingesting meat contaminated with lead shot. This is a view shared by the other GB administrations. The Welsh, UK and Scottish Governments have therefore initiated the lead shot restriction process, and it forms part of this year's UK's Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (UK REACH) work programme, which can be viewed at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/reach/work-programme.htm>.

Yours sincerely,

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

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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-05-1184 Immediately ban the use of toxic lead in all ammunition in Wales...
lead is killing our wildlife!, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 13.09.21**

Dear Committee Members,

I welcome the comments by the Minister in support of my petition and look forward to her actively pushing for the phasing out of lead in ammunition which is long overdue.

Regards

Agenda Item 2.5

P-06-1208 New laws to protect rare red squirrels from habitat loss which causes population decline

This petition was submitted by Craig Shuttleworth, having collected a total of 10,555 signatures.

Text of Petition:

It's illegal to kill or injure a red squirrel. Yet a forest containing them is not protected and can be cut down.

Although a felling licence is required to fell woodland, these licences cannot be refused even if they cause habitat loss and red squirrel population decline.

State owned forests do not require a licence but are managed under Plans which last 10 years or more. They don't have to annually assess the cumulative impact of felling on red squirrel populations.

This must change.

Additional Information:

Rare red squirrels are threatened by outdated 1960s tree felling law:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/red-squirrels-rare-woodland-wildlife-british-outdated-tree-felling-a8665491.html>

<https://nation.cymru/opinion/wales-should-follow-scotlands-lead-in-protecting-the-red-squirrels-habitat/>

Even in Welsh Government owned forests managed by Natural Resources Wales, the agency clear-fells habitat without assessing the impact on squirrel populations. On Anglesey, NRW has spent £0 in 10 years to monitor red squirrels. They have no idea of the effect of repeated tree felling on populations and are continuing to fell habitat regardless:

<https://www.thenational.wales/news/19304998.expert-raps-nrw-felling-red-squirrel-habitat/>

Welsh Government say tackling global deforestation is 'vital' to prevent 'decline of our biodiversity' yet their forest regulator destroys forest habitat here without assessing impact on red squirrels.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-56185205>.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Arfon
- North Wales

Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-1040 Introduce a moratorium on the approval any new large scale waste incinerators in Wales

This petition was submitted by Amanda Jenner having collected 891 signatures online, and 47 on paper, a total of 938 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Given the effort to become a circular, zero waste economy, Welsh Government should introduce a moratorium on the development of any new waste incinerators, (including energy from waste) & halt the progression of any incinerator planning applications which are at the pre-application/pre-approval stages. Burning waste results in emissions, including Co2 which is not currently restricted under incinerator regs.

Additional Information:

In developing its Circular Waste strategy, it is clear from the consultation responses that respondents to the Welsh Gov consultation felt strongly against incineration:

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2020-09/beyond-recycling-summary-of-responses_1.pdf

As is stated in the above link: "Whilst stakeholders agreed with disincentivising incineration and recognised that an incineration tax may lessen the market for the nonrecycling of waste, it was frequently stated that a tax does not go far enough. In moving towards a circular economy, respondents viewed less waste would be generated and, therefore, the presence of incinerators would be incompatible with the concept."

Given that there are new incinerators in Wales at the pre-application & pre-approval stage, the Welsh Gov should halt the progression of any new incinerator developments, particularly whilst it develops its Circular Waste Strategy which should include consideration of its current incineration capacity.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE Taking action to make the circular economy a reality

DATE 24 March 2021

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

Beyond Recycling – a strategy to make the circular economy a reality was published earlier this month. It commits to taking ambitious and bold action to become a zero waste, low carbon economy and a nation which uses our fair share of the earth's resources. This is a key part of both our response to the climate and nature emergency and our commitment to a fairer and greener Wales as we look to recover from the pandemic.

In updating Members today, I wanted to set out some of the immediate actions we are already taking as a Government to drive practical changes in our communities in implementing the strategy.

As we set out in *Beyond Recycling*, there is a critical link between the circular economy and our ability to improve resilience whilst delivering improved environmental, economic and social outcomes. We have already supported 180 innovative projects in every part of Wales through our Circular Economy Fund, bringing communities together, protecting and creating jobs and improving the environment. In the next financial year, further support is being made available to meet the exceptional demand we have seen. This means over £80m will have been made available to businesses, social enterprises and public bodies in Wales to support the transition to a circular economy.

Citizens too will start to see a visible difference in how their waste and recycling is collected from this month, as the first ultra-low emission vehicles have been delivered and begin household collections in Newport, Cardiff and Powys. As well as lower emissions and improvements in air quality, the vehicles generate lower running costs and less noise. They can also help create opportunities to develop local renewable energy generation and represent an important milestone in our efforts to decarbonise the public sector by 2030 ahead of achieving a net zero Wales. Following the investment in three vehicles last year, we are now jointly investing with Local Authorities in a further fifteen, thereby increasing our funding to an action which will make a real difference on our pathway to net zero carbon.

As well as taking immediate action by investing in new areas like electric vehicles, we are also planning for the longer-term by laying the foundations for Wales' transition in response to the climate emergency.

Over the last 20 years, our ultimate aim of zero waste and using a fair share of our planet's resources has been unflinching, clear and consistent. As we now look to, build on our solid foundation as a world leader in recycling, this means taking the next steps on our journey to becoming a zero waste nation.

In 2010, our strategy, *Towards Zero Waste* set out there will be “*far less need for residual waste treatment facilities such as energy from waste plants with the number and/ or capacity required progressively reducing from 2025 to 2050.*” Evidence from our recycling journey as a nation, as well as the accompanying reduction in waste, means we have now reached the point where we will not need any new large scale energy from waste infrastructure to deal with the residual waste generated in Wales.

With the publication of *Beyond Recycling*, we have therefore brought forward an immediate moratorium on any future large scale energy from waste developments. As well as keeping to our long term commitments, this moratorium also recognises the views we received from citizens and stakeholders during the consultation on *Beyond Recycling* and the advice from the UK Committee on Climate Change on the pathway needed for Wales to decarbonise. This will be accompanied by the publishing of an updated strategic assessment which shows, apart from a modest potential need for smaller scale energy from waste capacity for non-recyclable waste and to properly dispose of dangerous wastes such as clinical waste, the success of our recycling and the decrease in waste generated in Wales means no further large scale energy from waste plants are required.

The moratorium on new large scale energy from waste plants will cover those of 10MW or greater and comes into effect immediately. Small scale energy from waste plants of less than 10MW will also only be allowable if the applicant can demonstrate the need for such a facility for the non-recyclable wastes produced in the region. Any new small scale facilities must also supply heat, and where feasible, be carbon capture and storage enabled or ready. This will therefore mean a small scale plant would not be allowable if waste is to be imported from outside of the proposed region (unless in close proximity to a region), in order to also avoid locking in transport emissions and associated pollution. This moratorium is being given effect through the planning system. Planning Policy Wales states that the extent to which a proposal demonstrates a contribution to waste management objectives, policy, targets and assessments contained in national waste policy will be a material consideration.

Taking action on the generation of energy from waste is one important part of a wider suite of work we are taking forward. This includes action to produce less waste by tackling those items which end up as non-recycled waste.

Members of the Senedd have regularly raised the need to tackle plastic pollution and we have been working in partnership with the other administrations across the UK on key reforms in this area. The next major milestone will be the publication of our upcoming joint consultation on introducing Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging waste and on the preferred design for a Deposit Return Scheme for drink containers.

Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging will be a game-changing measure that will incentivise better design and better recyclability. We are already seeing businesses in Wales innovating in how they make better packaging materials. Our Circular Economy Fund has already supported many packaging businesses such as Sarpak in Port Talbot to use more recycled content in its production of packaging.

In terms of the Deposit Return Scheme, the consultation will take forward our work to boost the recycling of bottles, cans, and packaging materials, but will also tackle the way in which we currently consume materials on a single use basis. As we recover from the pandemic, we are also working to bring forward a digital deposit scheme trial in Conwy later this Spring, which will look at the potential benefits of bringing together our comprehensive collection regimes with digital technology.

The work and engagement on Extended Producer Responsibility and a Deposit Return Scheme take forward our commitment in *Beyond Recycling* to keep resources in use and avoid waste. They will place a clear emphasis on re-use and recycling and incentivise improvements in the design of packaging and better inform consumers on what can and cannot be recycled. Both schemes will build on the significant progress we have already made in Wales, with our Local Authority recycling efforts having saved 403,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions in 2019/20 alone. They will also help us to capture more value from the material we recycle, supporting a more productive and competitive economy.

Our recent consultation on Reducing Single Use Plastic, attracted 3,580 responses. However, since then, the UK Internal Market Act 2020 has been passed into law by the UK Parliament. The Act has created uncertainty about our ability to introduce legislation for the bans and consequently delayed our plans to progress work in this area. The Welsh Government has therefore issued formal proceedings in the Administrative Court seeking permission for judicial review of elements of the Act.

It is, therefore, the intention to publish the Summary of Responses for this consultation in the next Senedd term, with further details on next steps being published during the latter part of 2021, or as the outcome of the legal proceedings allow. During this period, work will be undertaken to strengthen the evidence and reflect on the views submitted, developing our policies in accordance with the phased approach set out in our consultation document. This includes undertaking further work on over 60 additional items identified during the consultation and we envisage using the expertise of the Welsh Government's Litter Advisory Group to help with this work.

Collectively, these actions show how we are already delivering against the *Beyond Recycling* strategy to build resilience in our economy and our communities, as well as tackling the

environmental challenge of a climate emergency and biodiversity crisis. The delivery of a circular economy being fundamental to delivering on our commitment to a fairer, more resilient and greener Wales, as we recover from the pandemic.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1040
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00326/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Chair, Petitions Committee

31 March 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your further letter 16 February, regarding Petition “P-05-1040 Introduce a moratorium on the approval any new large scale waste incinerators in Wales”. I apologise for the delay in this reply.

I would draw your attention to the inclusion in *Beyond Recycling*, our circular economy strategy published on 2 March, to the commitment to “place a moratorium on any future large scale energy from waste developments, as the increase in recycling and reduction in waste we have delivered in Wales means we will not need any new infrastructure of this type to deal with the quantity of residual waste we generate”.

Further information on the moratorium and an updated strategic impact assessment are included in my written statement ‘*Taking action to make the circular economy a reality*’ published on 24 March which is available at: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-taking-action-make-circular-economy-reality>.

This is a further development of the commitments we outlined in the consultation on a new circular economy strategy last year and accompanying oral statements, which clearly set out the incineration of waste for heat and power is a transitional step.

Whilst we continue to generate waste which cannot be recycled, having the infrastructure in place to dispose of this material safely, to the highest environmental standards whilst generating electricity and heat, remains an important part of our transition up the waste hierarchy. In particular, as a responsible nation, it is vital we deal effectively with our non-recyclable waste in a way which prevents it from either polluting our own environment, or which sees the problem being exported elsewhere. The long term solution being to move away from those non-recyclable materials like single use plastics. This of course links to the range of action included in the strategy such as the steps we are also taking to ensure the responsibility for the end of life costs of materials is placed on the producers through Extended Producer Responsibility.

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Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

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

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

A copy of the full strategy can be found at: <https://gov.wales/beyond-recycling-0>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

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

P-05-1040 Introduce a moratorium on the approval any new large scale waste incinerators in Wales, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 03.09.21

Thank you for this and sorry for the delayed comment. My query for the committee to consider is this:

There are large scale incinerators currently being considered through the Planning Inspectorate DNS process. How will the moratorium be put in place in practise? Will there be direction/legislation to prevent the submission of further large scale incinerator planning applications to the Planning Inspectorate? Or will applications, no matter their size, all still be considered on their merits – in which case how is this a moratorium?

Kind regards,

Agenda Item 3.2

P-05-1041 A clear policy and funding for hospitals and care homes for virtual visiting during times of lockdown

This petition was submitted by Kate Perry having collected a total of 187 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Sadly, were not alone being cut off from loved ones in hospital and care homes. My mum has alzheimers she isn't able to pick up a phone or use video chat to keep in touch. During the initial lockdown we didn't see what she looked like for 9 weeks, which was horrendous. Welsh Government guidelines are not clear enough and not all settings have the funds for equipment. This has to change. Everywhere should have a clear plan and ability to keep families in touch.

Additional Information:

Whilst I understand the safety needs around keeping vulnerable people safe from covid I don't understand the disregard for people's overall mental health. I know many people in the same situation with a loved one and not one hospital or care home are doing the same thing. Surely facilities and hospitals should have funding available and clear guidance on keeping families in touch as part of that person's holistic care. Welsh Government guidance states that people with learning disabilities or dementia should have visitors if not doing so would cause distress. You try proving that lack of contact is the cause of distress to someone who sometimes doesn't know who you are. Guidance states end of life is a reason for visits, but who decides at what point in that case you can visit? when the person isn't aware of you being there? It is not clear enough. Time is precious and we need clear guidance and funding so everywhere is following the same thing and families know there is hope in keeping in touch with their loved one.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

P-05-1041 A clear policy and funding for hospitals and care homes for virtual visiting during times of lockdown, Correspondence – Care Forum Wales to Committee, 24.08.21

My apologies for the delay in response

As you will appreciate the issue of visiting care homes has been a developing one during the period of the pandemic. As you note in your research document <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s500005730/Research%20brief.pdf> many care homes chose to close their doors to non-essential visitors before being officially advised to do so. This was proved to have been the right decision given the devastation wreaked by covid in care homes. Obviously care homes entered the pandemic with varying abilities to facilitate online contact, both in terms of equipment and staff expertise, and had many other new issues to deal with in terms of infection control to try to keep residents safe. Some care homes were able to get up and running very quickly in facilitating online contact between residents and loved ones whilst others had more challenges. Again as you note funding was announced in April 2020 and then made available with varying degrees of speed through local authorities. The first tranche of funding which ran until July was made available in a way that allowed care homes to justify covid-related expenditure without a specific limit or pot for them so that it was not the case that spending on digital connectivity meant they could not also spend on infection control. However, it is fair to say that in the administration through local authorities, some showed more flexibility than others and some made it harder to claim than others. We did our best to assist our members across Wales in navigating this system by sharing information, providing advice and taking up individual cases. There was also the provision of tablets through Digital Communities Wales to facilitate online communication with those who would normally have visited. However, some care homes also needed greater investment in infrastructure such as wifi or wifi extenders which took time (as well as money) to organise safely. And some care homes had staff cohorts that were more able to facilitate such access than others.

Obviously, things have now developed considerably and we are now on version 10 of the visiting guidance <https://gov.wales/visits-care-homes-guidance-providers-html>. Care Forum Wales has been pleased to have been involved in discussions with CIW and Welsh Government officials around the ongoing development of this guidance. We note that the petitioner is concerned about difference in visiting practice. However, we need to recognise each care home is different in its physical layout and ability to accommodate visiting and whether or not it had access one of the Welsh Government provided visiting pods. Each care home also has a different clientele: facilitating safe visiting for a mobile resident with dementia presents different challenges to visiting for someone who is being nursed in bed.

We would also point out that it is not just care home residents who have had their freedom to associate in person limited during this time: we all have. There are two added issues when managing contact with people who live in care homes to the general population: firstly the risk is not just to them but to others who live in the same place and the balancing of individual and collective rights has proved challenging; secondly those who live in care homes are likely to be more vulnerable to covid-19 by virtue of age and / or other frailties. This was recognised by prioritising care home residents for vaccination. However, it remains the case that a vaccinated 80 year old has roughly the same risk from covid of an unvaccinated 50 year old - i.e. not a negligible one – even before taking into account other comorbidities.

I hope this is helpful to the committee's deliberations

With all best wishes

Mary

Mary Wimbury

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

Care Forum Wales / Fforwm Gofal Cymru

Agenda Item 3.3

P-05-1132 Instigate an Independent Judicial Inquiry into Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

This petition was submitted by Cllr. Mike Powell, having collected a total of 126 signatures.

Text of Petition:

On the 15-17 January 2019 a report from both the Royal College of Midwives and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists led to the bringing to light of serious and distressing incidences in the maternity provision under the control of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.

We request a Judicial Inquiry as to how the major failure in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board maternity services occurred.

We request this Judicial Inquiry as it is not within the remit of the Welsh Parliament requested review by the Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel to find out what brought about this failure.

Additional Information:

"The assessors found a service working under extreme pressure and under sub-optimal clinical and managerial leadership. The identification by the Health Board of the under-reporting of SIs had resulted in increased internal and external scrutiny, highlighting that basic governance processes were not yet properly in place. The service was also expected to imminently merge two separate consultant led units onto one site with a freestanding midwifery led unit on the other site, with no evidence that clinical teams were engaged and supportive of this decision and process. This was compounded by a shortfall in the midwifery establishment, sub-optimal senior clinical leadership, a significant use of locum medical staff at both junior and consultant level and a lack of established standards of practice."

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/review-of-maternity-services-at-cwm-taf-health-board_0.pdf

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref Petition P-05-1132
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/01585/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee

10 February 2021

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 20 January.

While the report from the independent review from the Royal College of Midwives and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists into maternity services at the former Cwm Taf University Health Board published in April 2019 identified wide ranging concerns about the quality of care, it also raised significant concerns and questions about the effectiveness of wider board leadership and governance.

I took very seriously the broader concerns about governance highlighted within the report and considered these to be a significant factor in contributing to the failures that had come to light in maternity services. These include concerns in respect of quality governance, data accuracy, serious incident reporting and critically leadership and organisational governance. A similar level of concern was expressed through the tripartite escalation and intervention group, comprising my officials, Audit Wales (AW) and Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), in relation to the Board's governance arrangements for quality. This included matters highlighted through serious incident reporting and regulator visits. Consequently, I accepted the advice of the tripartite group to increase the organisation's overall escalation to targeted intervention in April 2019, whilst also placing maternity services into special measures.

It is also important to note that prior to this, the then health board was placed into enhanced monitoring (level 2) of the escalation framework in January 2019, following advice from an exceptional meeting of the tripartite group. This was due to a number of issues, including maternity services, but also other emerging areas of concern in respect of organisational governance.

In addition to the specific actions I took following the publication of the Royal Colleges report to seek immediate improvements and assurance about the quality of maternity services and Board governance, the regulators, HIW and AW, confirmed that they would undertake a joint review of quality governance arrangements in place within the health board. This reported in November 2019 and confirmed there were a number of fundamental weaknesses in governance around patient safety and the quality of care. They expressed

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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.

concern that the weaknesses were compromising the health board's ability to identify and respond to quality of care and patient safety problems.

They found that whilst there has been a strong focus on financial balance and meeting key targets, less attention had been paid to the overall quality and safety of its services. They highlighted the need for stronger and broader leadership in respect of quality and patient safety and worryingly, pointed to a culture of fear and blame in some parts of the organisation that had prevented staff from speaking out and raising concerns. This was similar to that identified in maternity services.

More broadly, the review found gaps in key governance arrangements associated with the management and identification of risk, and the provision of information to support effective scrutiny by the board and its committees. The need for improvements in the way incidents were classified and reported was also highlighted.

Whilst the review highlighted a significant number of concerns, it did note that the health board has started to take actions to address them. It also highlighted the impact that the new leadership was starting to have in tackling what was a considerable set of challenges. AW and HIW are currently undertaking a follow up review to assess progress.

All of these issues point to underpinning weaknesses in the governance of the organisation and which in turn enabled problems in maternity services to go unnoticed by the Board and sadly, therefore not addressed before significant concerns in the quality of care had arisen. Our focus now must be on ensuring that sustainable improvements are made to ensure the Board can never again be unsighted on such a level of concern amongst any of its services.

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 3.4

P-05-1112 Help Welsh Communities Buy Community Assets: Implement Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011

This petition was submitted by Daniel Evans having collected a total of 655 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Welsh communities continue to lose community assets such as pubs and sports grounds at an alarming rate. Unlike England & Scotland, Welsh communities still do not have the statutory right to bid for assets.

We urgently require new legislation relating specifically to Assets of Community Value. We call on the next Welsh Government to immediately introduce the provisions of Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 to ensure groups in Wales have the legal right to buy & manage community assets.

Additional Information:

Community assets build social capital, health and wellbeing. Losing community assets leads to weaker, more disconnected & unhappier communities

Part 5, Ch. 3 of The Localism Act 2011 granted the legal right for community groups to bid for & run assets of community value (ACV) under threat/for sale. It also requires local authorities to keep lists of such community assets. In Scotland, community groups have first refusal on these assets (<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06366/>).

In Wales, however, the Welsh Government decided to not apply the relevant parts of the act that would facilitate this. Our communities are therefore being placed in a hugely disadvantaged position relative to England & Scotland.

In 2015, the minister stated that action would be taken on ACV during the 2016-21 Welsh Government, but nothing happened.

Implementing the relevant provisos of the Localism Act would hugely benefit Welsh communities desperate to save valuable local assets.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1112
Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/10334/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN
Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

12 August 21

Dear Jack,

I am writing to you in relation to petition P-05-1112 Help Welsh Communities buy Assets of Community Value.

I wrote to the then Chair of the Petitions Committee, Janet Finch-Saunders MS in January with my response to this petition. In my response I referred to research on Community Asset Transfer which was due to be published shortly.

I can confirm that this research was published in March and it can be found [here](#)
[Community Asset Transfer | GOV.WALES](#)

Yours sincerely,

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

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

Pack 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.

Agenda Item 3.5

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

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

Text of Petition:

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

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

Additional Information:

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

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

The Child Poverty Action Group outline why cash first:

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

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1140
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/02174/21

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

8 April 2021

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition P-05-1140, requesting that I revise guidance on free school meal provision to clearly specify that local authorities should operate a number of systems in parallel, including cash or voucher payments.

The Welsh Government's policy on free school meal provision continues to be that local authorities should be allowed the flexibility to decide which means of provision works best in their area. As I stated in my letter of 11 February to the Petitions Committee, local authorities have considered the means of free school meal provision they have adopted very seriously and I understand that at least one has both considered this issue and made a decision at Council level. Specifying that the systems local authorities operate should include cash or voucher payments will undermine decisions made locally but, it could also be impractical.

The guidance already encourages local authorities to run a number of systems in parallel but does not specify which system a local authority should adopt. This flexibility is important because it is possible that a local authority might not have in place the appropriate systems to provide vouchers or payments or may consider that vouchers or payments will not meet the needs of their resident populations. As I have said previously there will also be occasions when vouchers or payments will not meet the needs of vulnerable children.

With the third phase of our planned return to school enabling all learners across all schools and settings to access education provision on site from 12 April, my expectation is that the need for local authorities to make alternative provision for free school meals will be greatly diminished and that eligible children will soon be able to receive a healthy, nourishing lunch at school.

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

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

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 3.6

P-06-1160 Require local Welsh exam centres to accept home-educated students for public exams

This petition was submitted by Claire Woolley, having collected a total of 393 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Home-educated students need guaranteed access to suitable local examination centres at affordable prices, enabling them to have the same rights and access to qualifications as every other child in Wales.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1160
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10850/21

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

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 3 August in respect of home educated students, drawing my attention to a petition submitted to the Petition Committee in respect of home educated students' access to local examination centres.

As you will be aware, learner well-being whilst balancing the need to ensure progression routes are available for all learners has been at the forefront of Wales' decision making throughout the pandemic.

Working closely with Qualifications Wales and the WJEC we ensured that as part of the development of the Centre Determined Grade model, equitable and accessible arrangements were developed to support private candidates. This was a key consideration to ensure appropriate progression opportunities for these learners given the centre based nature of the approach to determining grades and recognising that not all private candidates were able to gain their qualifications in 2020 when centre assessment grades were awarded.

On 17 May, Qualification Wales published their updated [Guidance](#) for centres entering private candidates alongside their [Guidance](#) on alternative arrangements for approved GCSE, AS and A level qualifications 2021. This guidance provided details of the two routes which were made available to private candidates to access their qualifications in 2021. Where a private candidate already had a relationship with a school or college and that centre was prepared to enter the learner for qualifications, their Centre Determined Grade(s) were produced in the same way as for other learners who attended that school or college.

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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.

For private candidates without an existing relationship with a centre, we worked closely with local authorities to ensure at least one centre was designated per local authority area to host private candidates. A [list](#) of contact details of centres in Wales, by local authority, was published so that candidates could find a centre to arrange assessment of their work. Qualifications Wales also ran a marketing campaign to raise awareness to ensure that private candidates were aware of the support that had been put in place to ensure they were able to access their qualifications.

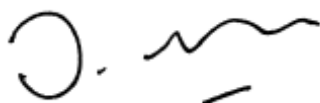
To support and enable implementation, we provided additional funding to centres to cover the cost of hosting the private candidates and the respective additional work for centres. In addition to this arrangements were also made with the Department for Education for private candidates from Wales taking qualifications with English awarding bodies to be eligible via the private candidate support grant for centres that was established. This was to ensure that these learners were not disadvantaged in comparison to private candidates in England – particularly in relation to learners taking community language qualifications which are predominantly only offered by English awarding bodies. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) published [Interim Guidance for Private Candidate Centres](#) along with a [list of centres](#) for entries for private candidates to sit exams.

You may be aware that, prior to the pandemic policy development was underway in respect of home educated children. This was centred on the 2019 consultation on draft statutory guidance to assist local authorities to identify children of compulsory school age who are not known to them to ensure these children receive an appropriate level of education. Although there is no requirement for home educators to follow a particular curriculum, or adopt school-based approaches, nor will their children be required to take any national exams or assessments, a parent is required by law to ensure that their child receives a full-time education suitable to the child's age, aptitude, ability and aligned to any special educational needs they may have. Home educating parents are responsible for their child's education, including the costs of exams which have to be taken at an approved exam centre and local authorities should where possible help inform parents where their child can sit exams.

Unfortunately as a result of Covid19 and the necessity to respond to the pandemic including the prioritisation of new 2020 and 2021 qualification arrangements for all learners, this longer term policy development work was temporarily paused. However, we are now in a position to resume this work and will draw on our experiences of providing education during the pandemic, including supporting learner entry to qualifications.

I hope you find the above overview of how private candidates have been and continue to be supported during what remains uncertain times helpful, as well as the confirmation that further policy development will be undertaken to strengthen the support available to home educators and learners.

Yours sincerely,



Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg

Minister for Education and Welsh Language

Agenda Item 3.7

P-06-1163 Extend the postgraduate STEMM bursary to all MSc students in Wales

This petition was submitted by Rachel Wrathall, having collected a total of 88 signatures.

Text of Petition:

In June 2019 Welsh Government announced a bursary scheme to increase the number of Welsh graduates who remained or returned to Wales to undertake a master's degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics or Medicine (also known as 'STEMM' subjects). This funding currently only extends to traditional Universities, excluding students who choose a STEMM Masters through alternative providers. This excludes some students, who need more flexibility in STEMM subject matter or course delivery.

Additional Information:

The Diamond review recommended that efforts are made "to enable students to study in the mode that best supports their circumstances". (The Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales, 2016).

Currently students studying for STEMM Masters at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) School of the Environment in Machynlleth are excluded from Welsh Government's STEMM bursary funding. The courses provided at CAT have a specific sustainability focus, which aligns with Welsh Government efforts to change the course of Wales onto a more sustainable path (e.g. through principles outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015).

Teaching at CAT is flexible, and unlike traditional universities, enables students to study a taught Masters whilst continuing work/caring responsibilities.

We believe that the exclusion of STEMM students at organisations like CAT from STEMM bursary funding is counter to the STEMM bursary policy aims.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central



Jack Sargent MS
Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

6th August 2021

Dear Sir

Re: Petition P-06-1163 Extend the postgraduate STEMM bursary to all MSc students in Wales

In response to your question regarding designation. As an alternative provider, one of just four in Wales, the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) does not receive automatic designation and applies for specific designation on an annual basis through HEFCW. The final decision on designation is formally taken by Welsh Government.

As part of our external Quality Review in 2017 CAT participated in a Higher Education Review for Alternative Providers (HERAP). This requires Alternative Providers to meet Higher Education Quality requirements and allows to operate Higher Education Courses but does not provide the basis to apply for full designation or a 'fee and access plan.' CAT is currently preparing for its next external quality review under the Gateway Quality Review scheme. If the outcome of this Gateway review is successful, this would allow CAT to apply for full designation as part of its future plans.

When the consultation on Postgraduate Taught Masters Incentivisation Bursaries W19-24HE was circulated in July 2019 we responded at the time on behalf of the students at CAT. The consultation throughout referred to Higher Education *Providers* rather than Higher Education *Institutions*, and so our response included statements that Welsh students studying STEMM subjects at Masters level at CAT would welcome the opportunity to apply for the bursary on the same basis as their peers at Welsh Universities. Furthermore, as our courses have a clear sustainability focus they align closely with Welsh Government objectives in meeting the environmental aims of the Well-being of



Future Generations (Wales Act, 2015), which was one of the key principles of the original policy consultation.

Although CAT has recruited well to its STEMM courses since 2019 and operates a waiting list of places due to meeting its targets, we still have many Welsh applicants for our courses who are unable to accept a place due to financial barriers. CAT's typical STEMM Masters students are in their mid-30's on enrolment and so unlike many Masters students often have additional financial commitments they have to meet when returning to higher education. Consequently, as the proposals would benefit Welsh CAT students rather than CAT itself, then CAT was happy to administer the distribution of any bursaries as applicable.

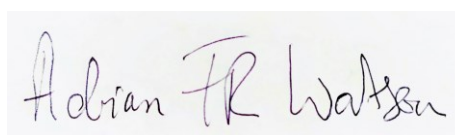
We did not receive any reply to our consultation response, until the bursary was formally implemented, and noted CAT students were not included in the eligibility. At which point we raised a query with HEFCW about the lack of bursary availability for CAT students but were told that it was too late to reverse the criteria in that first year of operation. They agreed the principle that as a student focussed bursary, that Welsh CAT students were not treated the same as their peers, but the scheme has continued in the same manner since.

Whilst the petition made to the Welsh Government was an initiative led by one of our students rather than CAT itself, we wholeheartedly support the principles of an equal consideration for all Welsh STEMM students returning or continuing with higher education, in keeping with the principles behind the original policy aims of the bursary scheme.

Yours sincerely



Peter Tyldesley
CEO
Centre for Alternative Technology



Adrian Watson
Head of Graduate School
Centre for Alternative Technology

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1163
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/10848/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
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Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

20 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 3rd August regarding the petition to extend the postgraduate STEMM bursary to all MSc students in Wales. HEFCW has worked with our universities to implement the STEMM incentives bursary scheme to support as many students as possible. HEFCW's [guidance circular](#) explains that they should be allocated to Master's students who fit the eligibility criteria for postgraduate student finance and are enrolled on eligible Master's programmes as defined in the Education (Student Support) (Postgraduate Master's Degrees) (Wales) Regulations 2019 (the PM Regulations 2019), as amended. Unfortunately, the current legislation does not allow HEFCW to extend the scheme to alternative providers.

Although the bursary is not available for students studying at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), alternative providers, such as CAT can apply via HEFCW to have their courses specifically designated to enable eligible students living in Wales to apply for our generous postgraduate support package from Student Finance Wales. Eligible students commencing a course in 2021/22 can apply for master's finance up to £18,025, a mixture of grant and loan is provided to students as a contribution towards costs for the duration of their course.

I appreciate this may not be the response the petitions committee were hoping for, but I hope it provides some clarity on the student finance available to Welsh students.

Yours sincerely,

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

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

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

Agenda Item 3.8

P-06-1158 The Welsh Government to put in place a dedicated disability Minister within the next term of Government

This petition was submitted by Alex Chung, having collected a total of 315 signatures.

Text of Petition:

With one in five people here in Wales living with a disability according to ONS. It has never been more important for Wales to become a truly inclusive nation for all its citizens. We want Wales to become the first devolved nation to have its own dedicated disability Minister. With a dedicated minister focusing on disability can we make bigger strides towards, a fairer employment system, more opportunities for disabled students and greater support for mental health.

Additional Information:

Examples of statistics of disability in Wales.

(1) Over one in five people of working age in Wales have a disability.

(2) 21 per cent of rail stations in Wales do not have step-free access, and at the current rate stations will not be accessible till 2070.

(3) 1 in 4 people have a mental health problem.

(4) 330,000 unemployed disabled people last year. Last year 81.8% Non-disabled people were employed compared to 53.2% of disabled people at the same time from ONS (U.K)

These are just a few examples of why having a dedicated disability minister within the Welsh Government can sort these matters surrounding disability within Wales.

(1) <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Disability/summaryofeconomicactivityinwales-by-yeardisabledstatus-fromapril2013>

(2) Leonard Cheshire. Trains for All Campaign, 2019

(3) ONS, Psychiatric Morbidity, 2007

(4) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/bulletins/disabilityandemploymentuk/2019>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
- South Wales East



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1158
Ein cyf/Our ref FM -/10190/21

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
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Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

27 August 2021

Dear Jack,

I am writing in response to your letter of 3 August, in which you enclosed the Petitions Committee Report on petition P-06-1158, for the Welsh Government to put in place a dedicated Disability Minister within the next term of Government. The Welsh Government welcomes the initial petition submitted by Alex Chung.

In June 2020 the Welsh Government's Disability Equality Forum undertook to do some in-depth work looking into the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on disabled people. The resulting ['Locked Out: Liberating disabled people's lives and rights in Wales beyond Covid-19' Report](#) with its 70 Recommendations, published on 2 July, brought into focus the continuing existence of deep-rooted inequalities in our society. The call for a dedicated Minister for Disabled People is one of the recommendations.

I met with the authors on 18 March to discuss the Report and consider the next steps. It was a very powerful meeting, where each member of the steering group outlined how COVID had impacted them personally. I committed, if Welsh Labour formed the next Government, to establish a Ministerial-led Disability Rights Taskforce to consider the findings in more detail. This Taskforce is now being established and is due to meet in October. The recommendations will be taken forward as part of the remit of the Taskforce, involving everyone across all Welsh Government Departments together with external partners and delivery organisations. Such a conversation will put the perspective of disabled people at its

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CF99 1SN

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

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

centre ensuring the Welsh Government's ambition to make the Social Model of Disability the central organising principle for action, is visibly applied and continually re-affirmed.

The Disability Rights Taskforce will be co-chaired by the Minister for Social Justice and they will be tasked to build on the actions already taken by the Welsh Government to mitigate the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on disabled people in the development of a Disability Rights Action Plan.

The petition highlights the importance of accessible travel, mental health services and employment and the need for action. Locked Out: Liberating disabled people's lives and rights in Wales beyond Covid-19 also echoed those calls. I am pleased to say that the Welsh Government has already put in place many of the key building blocks to address inequalities in these areas.

The need for accessible travel, became even more apparent during the pandemic, and Llwybr Newydd – the new [Wales Transport Strategy 2021](#) has been developed with a view to putting accessibility front and centre alongside sustainability. As a result of the strategy work is underway to develop an equality pathway which will set out the milestones and actions needed to deliver a more accessible transport system. Passenger Assist services for train travel were enhanced through the work of the Transport for Wales Accessibility and Inclusion Panel which continued to operate virtually and by post. A number of improvements were made to staff guidance, briefings and risk assessments with an emphasis on proactive support for anyone in need of support.

The Welsh Government is aware of the ongoing impact the pandemic is having on the mental health and well-being of disabled people and their families and carers and will work with the Loneliness and Isolation Advisory Group to consider what more can be done. We continue to monitor the evidence to understand the impact of Covid-19 and the restrictions on mental health and well-being. Levels of anxiety are higher now than pre-pandemic levels and we also know that some groups have been disproportionately affected. For some, the easing of the restrictions and the ability to see loved ones and do the things they enjoy will improve their mental health, but we recognise that some people will need access to more specialist support. We are committed to ensuring that this support is equitable and accessible, and that services are delivered in line with the all Wales standard for communication and information for people with sensory loss. Please find attached link to the Welsh Government's [Together for Mental Health delivery plan 2019-2022](#) which provides further detail on our current priority areas

The Programme for Government identifies a commitment to our Disabled People's Employment Champions as a mechanism to help close the employment gap between disabled people and the rest of the working population. The Champions are working with employers across Wales, utilising their lived experience to advocate for employment of disabled people, encouraging employers to take action to create the conditions where disabled people can gain and thrive in employment. The Champions are, in partnership with Business Wales, promoting awareness of the support available to employers, including providing practical advice and help on issues such as inclusive HR policies, recruitment, and retraining and staff retention.

While I recognise and understand the call for a dedicated Minister for Disabled People, I believe if we are to address inequalities in Wales, we need to provide an intersectional approach to understanding how inequalities can combine to compound disadvantage. The Minister for Social Justice champions the rights of disabled people and alongside a diverse portfolio of social justice issues. All Welsh Ministers continue to advocate for equality and human rights in all they do and seek to embed equalities effectively into their work. They will also continue to show leadership and pro-actively drive action on addressing all inequality to make our vision for a fairer Wales a reality.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Social Justice

Yours sincerely,

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

MARK DRAKEFORD

Agenda Item 3.9

P-06-1166 Provide tax free grants to people working in the arts and to provide grant funding to arts venues

This petition was submitted by Natalie Bowen, having collected a total of 50 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Right now, the UK government is encouraging people who work in the arts to retrain. We think this is wrong and that people who work in the arts should be given grants to enable them to keep entertaining people. The arts are the life blood of our community and we should support them financially.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Rhondda
- South Wales Central

Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref DB/10322/21
Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
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Cardiff
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Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

10 August 2021

Dear Jack

Thank you for your correspondence of 4 August as Chair of the Petitions Committee asking for people in the arts to be given grants to continue their work in light of the continuing difficulties they face following the Covid pandemic. This has been a particularly difficult period for the arts sector in Wales.

The Welsh Government is wholly committed to a publicly-funded arts sector in Wales which is why we put a package of support in place to ensure its survival. The first phase of the Cultural Recovery Fund, supported 646 businesses and 3,500 individuals with funding of £63million. The Welsh Government allocated £30million for a second phase of funding to continue to support the sector. This second phase was put in place to support the sector until the end of September.

The Welsh Government is in the process of exploring the options for future support and we will consider the need based on engagement and feedback from stakeholders.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip

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

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

Agenda Item 3.10

P-06-1170 An immediate independent review of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 selection process in the WPWL

This petition was submitted Mali Beatrice Summers, having collected a total of 2,526 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Abergavenny WFC, Briton Ferry Llansawel Ladies and Cascade YC Ladies have been forcibly relegated from the Welsh Premier Women's League, the top women's league in Wales, despite all finishing above the relegation zone. We are calling for a fully independent review of the FAW selection process for the new Tier 1 and Tier 2 leagues to ensure transparency, equality and fairness. Promotion or relegation should be decided on the pitch, and not be driven by money or the size of your men's team.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales

04 August 2021

Dear Jack Sargeant MS,

RE: Petition P-06-1170 An immediate independent review of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 selection process in the WPWL

Thank you for your email regarding the women's restructure. Please note that Noel Mooney begins his role as CEO on 31 August.

Developing women's football is an area of high strategic importance for the FAW and we have embarked on a transformative programme aimed at strengthening the player pathway, national league as well as raising awareness and visibility of the female game in Wales.

Our successful planning, investment and support mechanisms have led to a 50% increase in female participation over the last 4 years and significantly increased media coverage for the female game.

Strengthening the Domestic Structure

Since 2019, we have been working with the clubs in Wales to develop and implement a plan to enhance the competitiveness of our national league. There were a number of key challenges:

- **Elite pathway:** at present, only a very limited number of our clubs can provide a high-performance environment. Our national team players play outside of Wales and the domestic game in the past hasn't fully supported elite player development.
- **Retaining Youth Players:** Players reported that the gap between junior and senior football was too big, with many dropping out at 16 because of this.
- **Fragile structure:** the long-term competitiveness of a number of clubs has been inconsistent, with few prepared for long-term success in the current Premier League
- **International competitiveness:** the current system has not been successful in terms of the UEFA Women's Champions League with no club going past the first round, with the new financial model it is critical for clubs to progress to access further investment for the women's game.



We therefore began a transition at the beginning of 2020 to strengthen our domestic women's football pyramid in terms of playing standards as well as off-field criteria such as partnerships, financial support, staffing levels and qualifications, facilities, governance, and club structure.

Working with all the clubs, our new strategic leads and with reference to international comparisons and external, independent advice and support, we undertook a Women's Domestic Game Review in 2019, which included feedback by 400 players. The clear conclusion of the Review was to reform the domestic league with a competitive pyramid structure and a focus on development and resources across the clubs. The proposals were supported at all levels of the game.

The FAW have been supporting the Tier 1 clubs over the last two years to prepare for the re-structure through club development grants and club support workshops and introducing club licensing in 2020/21 for the first time.

We embarked on a thorough process, with an independent appeals provision. The core criteria included sporting, financial sustainability, and human resources, with additional criteria for facilities, partnership working, media and communications and overall club development. Full details of the process are attached to this email.

The new league pyramid will have a new league and cup format and an exciting new brand and name for the 21/22 season and will be based on a national Tier 1, and for the first time incorporate a Tier 2 level in North and South Wales and U19s league for the first time. The structure will have a promotion and relegation opportunities, with a play off between the winners of Tier 2, so that all clubs can have a potential pathway to Tier 1.

New Pyramid Development Process

Following extensive research, we agreed on a robust, thorough and clear decision-making process to determine which clubs should be allocated to which tier and launched the process in April 2020. We have shared the process with other national government bodies, football experts and partners. We liaised with FIFA, who provided additional advice, supported our proposal, and provided a technical expert for the phase 2 panel.

The successful clubs needed to demonstrate not just success at a national level, but that they had a club development plan and the resources in place to support a successful, competitive team and contribute to the wider development of the women's game.

The decision-making process, the make-up of the expert panel (including an independent technical expert from FIFA), the scoring criteria and the independent appeals provision were published **and agreed with the clubs**.

A **thorough communications and consultation programme** was put in place to ensure that the clubs understood that their final league position in 2020/21 would not be a direct entry to the higher tier, that 'sporting' would make up 20% of the available score, and that clubs needed to demonstrate their strengths across multiple areas. It was also highlighted in the league rules for 2020/21 season that there would be no promotion or relegation for the 2020/21 season as the 2020/21 season was a transitional season and that teams would be selected for the new Tier 1 and Tier 2 leagues based on the application process attached to this email.

Alongside the many presentations and direct communications, webinars for clubs were held in December 2020 and April 2021 to help prepare applications and all clubs received additional funding in 2020 to support their plans and to invest in areas required including developing U19s teams, Medical, and Coach Education.

During this time, all clubs agreed with the process, the criteria and decision-making. No clubs raised concerns about the scoring for sporting merit, and a number of clubs used the process to make positive changes to grow and develop both their club and women's football in their area.

We have provided feedback to clubs on their own applications, though the full scoring matrix for all clubs will not be shared, following legal advice and as agreed with the clubs during the process. Unsuccessful clubs were able to take up the option of an independent appeals process.

2021/22 Season

We are working with all Tier 1 and Tier 2 clubs to develop their structures, programmes and workforce with a holistic club development support programme for 2021/22 season including a place for each club on the FIFA Capacity Building programme. We are also providing direct feedback to the affected clubs.

There is a promotion and relegation system so that all clubs have a pathway to Tier 1 for the 2022/23 season, where promoted clubs will need to meet license criteria for the relevant leagues. Any changes to the license criteria for the 2022/23 season will be communicated to all clubs before the start of the 2021/22 season on the 5th September to ensure clubs are fully aware of what criteria they need to meet should they secure promotion.

The FAW has also established a player leadership group for Tier 1 and Tier 2 to improve the communication with players moving forward and we look forward to working with the players as to help shape the future of the women's game.



Kind regards,



Paul Evans
Interim CEO
Football Association of Wales



2021/22 Open Licence Application Process

Overview

For the 2021/22 season the FAW is holding an open application for Tiers 1 and 2 in the women's pyramid, meaning that any Club at any level of football has the opportunity to become part of the new league structures that are being created.

There will be a total of 24 places available in the three leagues: eight in Tier 1 and 16 shall make up Tier 2 (eight North, eight South).

The application process will consist of two phases, the first will be the initial licence award, which was introduced in Tier One for 2020/21 and will continue for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 into the future; this element involves Clubs providing evidence to show that they meet the set criteria for each level. Phase Two will help us to determine the final 24 Clubs and will be based on a presentation by the Club on their development plans.

Phase One

In order to become part of the process Clubs first need to apply and pay for the relevant licence via COMET.

The deadline for entry is the 1st January 2021, we cannot accept any applications after this date.

To apply for a Tier One licence [click here](#) – the fee for Tier 1 is £100.

To apply for a Tier Two licence [click here](#) – the fee for Tier 2 is £50.

****There is no need to apply for both licences, if you are not awarded a Tier One licence, you will automatically be assessed for Tier 2****

Phase One involves Clubs showing that they fulfil the A Criteria in the relevant licence ([link to Tier 1/ Tier 2 license criteria](#)) and as applicable any B criteria. This evidence shall be entered onto COMET.

A link for your COMET licence profile will be sent in the New Year and progress will be able to be tracked in real time by the Club and FAW, so we will see when documents are uploaded and you'll know if they've been accepted or rejected.

The FAW will provide clubs with templates, also in the New Year, including job descriptions, financial frameworks and codes of practice – there is no requirement for you to use some of these, however, any substitute must provide the same or equivalent information.



The deadline to provide all the relevant information for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 is 26th March 2021. Anything added after this date will not be considered by the First Instance Body.

The evidence provided shall be presented to the First Instance Body for Tier 1 and 2 on 9th April.

Should you wish to appeal a decision you will have 10 days to inform us and provide any further evidence for the Appeals Panel to consider. The Appeals Body shall sit on 22nd April for Tier 1 and Tier 2. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

Only Clubs being awarded a licence shall move forward to Phase Two of the process.

Phase Two

Phase Two will be the stage at which decisions are made on who shall be offered one of the eight places available in each league and Clubs will be asked to present their Club Development Plans, to help panellists understand how the Club will be, and continue to be, competitive in the relevant league and how they will contribute to the continued growth of female football in Wales.

Each Club will be invited to present to a panel of FAW staff and independent experts, presentations will be judged according to a set framework.

Assessment Framework

There are seven key assessment areas that shall be assessed on a scale of 1-5:

- 1 – not fulfilled
- 2 – to some extent fulfilled
- 3 – to a large extent fulfilled
- 4 – completely fulfilled
- 5 – over and above

Key Assessment Areas:

Overall Club development presentation (5)

Sporting (Core area - 10)

Partnerships (5)

Financial sustainability (Core area - 10)

Human resources (Core area - 10)

Facilities (5)

Media and communications (5)

TOTAL: 50



There are three 'core' assessment areas, which are the most important of the criteria and therefore the scores for these areas shall be doubled. The maximum number of points available to each Club is 50.

Each panel member will mark separately, these scores will then be combined to create an average, which will be the final mark for each area. If the average is a decimalised figure, this will be rounded up/down to the nearest whole number (.4 and below will be rounded down, .5 and above rounded up).

To be considered for a place in the league Clubs must achieve at least 50% in the individual core areas.

The final mark out of 50 shall be used as a guide to the Panel to award the League places. The Clubs with the four highest marks shall be automatically awarded a place; where there is a tie, the Panel will refer to the guiding principles to make a decision. For the remaining four places, the final decision on the award of the licenses is to the absolute discretion of the panel. In addition to the scores, other key relevant factors may be taken into account, in line with our guiding principles.

FAW GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED TO DECISION MAKING:

- *AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY: To Increase visibility, awareness and challenge perceptions around the women's game in Wales*
- *WOMEN IN FOOTBALL: Support women and girls to fulfill their potential on and off the field*
- *PATHWAYS: An effective player pathway and recruitment plan to the senior team.*
- *SUSTAINABLE CLUBS: Sustainable clubs planning for future growth and not over reliant on one or two individuals*
- *GROWING THE GAME: Increasing opportunities for women and girls to play and work within the sport.*
- *PLAYER DEVELOPMENT: Ensure female players in Wales have access to a high quality training programme and performance support to reach their potential*

Scores shall be for internal use only, however feedback shall be provided to each Club.

Club guidance for development plan

What should you consider including in your presentation?

Overall Club development presentation

Please give an overview of your Club vision and how you intend to develop over the next three years:

- Introduce your key objectives, goals and targets to grow your Club
- How does it support the growth of Women's football?
- Ensure your implementation plan across the various areas align to your club's objectives and vision



Sporting (Core area)

Can you demonstrate how/when you've previously been successful and explain how you intend on building on this success?

- Detail how you will field a competitive team and your ability to be competitive in the league.
- What steps are you taking to develop a high-performance environment (Tier 1 only)?
- How are you supporting player development on and off the pitch?
- Describe your pathway and recruitment plan into the senior team

Partnerships

Please explain how you work together with partners to deliver on your vision:

- Give details of your current internal and external partnerships and how they deliver against your objectives. (Please provide details such as length of agreement, VIK, any other benefits)
- Please describe business partnerships and football partnerships (e.g local leagues and grassroots clubs)
- What further partnerships could benefit the Club and what actions do you propose to put these in place?

Financial sustainability (Core area)

- Using this current 2020/21 season budget as a foundation, please provide a detailed one year budget forecast for 21/22
- What actions are you undertaking to ensure the Club is financially stable for the long term?
- What plans do you have in place to increase income and reduce costs in order to support your objectives over the next three years
- In Tier 1: The FAW is offering £6k per season to each Club to support their development plan – how will you match fund this grant and utilise it?
- In Tier 2: The FAW is offering £3k as an introductory grant into Tier 2 to support their development plan, how will you match fund this grant and utilise it?

Human resources (Core area)

Having the right people, with the right skills, in the right positions is essential for any organisation; can you please describe:

- Your organisation and governance structure
- Describe the responsibilities of the key roles within your club



- Describe the experience and qualifications (where relevant) of key roles within your club
- For key positions, demonstrate their commitment to the team and vice-versa e.g. what is their level of qualification, how much time do they offer per week, what do you offer in return, how are you supporting their personal development etc?

Facilities

How well do your facilities aid the growth and development of women's football?

- What experience do users have when they access your training and match day facilities? Do they effectively meet their/ your needs?
- What facilities do you utilise and when?
- Tier 1 only: How do they contribute towards creating a high-performance environment?

Media and communications

Please provide an overview of your marketing plan. Can you demonstrate:

- How will the Club drive awareness and raise the profile of the women's game in Wales
- Have you defined clear target audiences and plans to drive attendances, online following and engagement? (Please outline clear engagement targets)
- Evidence of activities that support this plan.

We also encourage Clubs to consider the following:

This information is provided as a guide to indicate we will be looking for in your answers. Please give as much detail as you can, but make sure it is appropriate – also be aware that some answers may fall into two categories, so avoid repeating yourself at length.

Remember that you are applying to be in one of the two top tiers of women's football in Wales, we are looking for Clubs that can demonstrate excellence, ambition and commitment to building the women's game and showcasing the best talent in the country.

Use the Licence B criteria as a guide for where we may look to grow the game next. If B criteria became A how prepared are you to meet the new conditions? For Clubs applying for Tier 2 licences, how prepared are you should you achieve promotion into Tier 1?

Don't be afraid to talk about challenges you might face, recognising weaknesses and having strategies in place to overcome them will suggest a much more considered and realistic plan than one that only lists positives.



Appeals Process

Should you wish to appeal a decision you will have five days from notification to inform the FAW that you wish to do so. There is a fee of £100 which must be paid on notification of appeal; this may be returned should your appeal be successful.

The Appeals Body will be entirely independent of the FAW and the prior licencing process. They shall only have the authority to review the process by which the original decision was made and ensure that all Clubs were given equal and fair opportunity to present their case and were judged appropriately based on this. Should it be found that the process was not adhered to the Appeals Body shall recommend a remedy for the application(s) affected.

The decision of the Appeals Body shall be final.

Please note that by signing up to the licensing process you are accepting the application process as outlined in this document.



Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1170
Ein cyf/Our ref DB/10324/21
Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN
Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

26 August 2021

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter regarding a petition for an independent review on the Football Association of Wales (FAW) tier 1 and tier 2 process in the Welsh Women's Leagues.

The restructure of the women's game is a matter for the FAW as the National Governing Body for football in Wales. Given that the FAW is an independent stand-alone body and is not funded by the Welsh Government or our sponsored body Sport Wales, it is not within our remit to have an independent review.

Whilst the Welsh Government works with all Sporting National Bodies in Wales to ensure our ambition is met for inclusive access to sport in Wales, we are unable to get involved in the governance of an independent body, but we are able to offer advice and guidance if needed. With that in mind, I have met with the FAW since the announcement of the restructure to get a better understanding of their plans and if any decisions will impact female participation within the sport.

In that meeting with the FAW, we discussed the process of the restructure, and how they came to determine which clubs would take their place in these new leagues, the FAW oversaw an open application process that involved two stages.

The first stage was an initial licence award where clubs provided evidence to show that they met the minimum criteria for each level; The second stage saw those successful clubs present their development plans to a panel made up of representatives from of the FAW, FAW Trust and an independent panellist from FIFA (Sue Ronan who is a technical expert, former international manager and head of women's football at FAI), who assessed clubs across seven key areas. Three of these were 'core' (attracting double marks) - Sporting (factoring in previous performance in the League), Financial Sustainability and Human Resources. During this process all clubs did not raise any concerns to the FAW.

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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.

Additionally the FAW set up an internal working group who met multiple times across the duration of the review and involved FAW and FAW Trust staff from across the following departments: Domestic, International, Football Development, Coach Education and Compliance. The FAW also worked closely with UEFA to look at best practice models from across Europe to help inform their decision making process. Externally, the FAW met with a number of clubs from various levels of the domestic game in Wales, and created an online player survey that was completed by 419 female players who currently play women's football in Wales or play in an U16s team. The survey provided key insight that helped shape the new structure.

I fully support the FAW's ambition and focus on developing and improving the women's game in Wales. However, when we met I made it clear my expectations are that the FAW should communicate more effectively in future, and should discuss the matter further with those clubs who feel that they have been adversely affected by the restructure, to discuss concerns and ensure that support is put in place.

The FAW has given me a commitment that it will do everything it can to support the clubs and players affected by the changes, and to engage more closely and proactively with Members of the Senedd and the Welsh Government in future. I have also asked officials to continue to have dialogue with the FAW to update me going forward. Following my meeting with the FAW I released a written statement on this matter which has been published on the Welsh Government website [here](#).

I hope this answers your questions but I would be happy to provide you with any further information if required.

Yours sincerely

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

Dawn Bowden AS/MS

Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip

P-06-1170 An immediate independent review of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 selection process in the WPWL, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 15.09.21

Thank you for asking for a response, I really hope we can get a resolution to this. I appreciate everyone's hard work. However, I am really disappointed to find out that the Welsh Government can offer no support to its constituents. It seems the FAW can behave how they like and have no consequences. The statement does not address any of my concerns.

I just want to reiterate that we are all volunteers and work full time jobs. We play because we love football. We have a huge history in the top league in Wales for 10 years, therefore we are financially stable. We have established seniors, U19s and U16s sides. We are incredibly competitive being statistically fourth in the league. It seems the FAW has handpicked teams based on the success of their men's side which I find is back handed sexism. We out perform our men's side, shouldn't that be celebrated? Now, Gwent and Monmouth despite have a high population have no representation in the top league in Wales which I find scandalous. We met all the criteria, yet they chose to not to include us. It is bias and it is unfair.

What they have done is broken all the trust and respect we had for their organisation. How can we believe anything they say ever again? They preach about supporting women's football but they tear us down. Women's sides are loosing my large margins this year making the league less competitive. I genuinely believe that without fairness and equality, what is sport? I feel we are being discriminated against because we are not as wealthy as other clubs, I believe this to be poorest. Now that the government has chosen to do nothing, the FAW will continue to hand pick what they want and who they want with no consequences ruining football in our area. I encourage you to reach out to our county council in Monmouth who desperately wanted to speak to the FAW but refused them. I believe in Wales we must strive to do better, and be better.

Lastly, I just wanted to explain again that this process was not open. To this day they will not release the scoring to us despite many requests. I do not understand how a public body cannot release that information? To be it reeks of corruption. Like I said before Lowri sat head on the decisions board but equally is head of women's football in Wales, making it difficult to approach her. She claims to know our league but she has only been involved for two years and one year was spent on maternity. TNS , a side loosing heavily each week in the top flight, their coach is the son of a FAW CEO and that is a conflict of interest. Once again this has been ignored.

I feel that the government response did not answer any of my concerns or address them. All they have done is accepted that the FAW will do better moving forward... it's an empty promise and it will be broken again. If we don't stand up now, things

will just get worse and worse. We must protect women's football in Wales properly.
That's what we all want to do.

Thank you,

Agenda Item 3.11

P-05-1000 Make it compulsory for Black and POC UK histories to be taught in the Welsh education curriculum

This petition was submitted by Angharad Owen having collected a total of 34,736 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Britain –including Wales– benefited from colonialism and slavery for centuries. This needs to be represented in the curriculum.

The British Empire has often been glamorised and the global impact of Britain’s colonialism downplayed. This has been reflected in the content taught.

There needs to be real and significant change. The legacies of slavery and colonialism have very real impacts on BAME communities across Britain today, and the Welsh education system needs to recognise this.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Clwyd South
- North Wales

Agenda Item 3.12

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

This petition was submitted by Fatima Altaiy having collected a total of 4,053 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Children need to be educated on how to be anti-racist. Although introducing POC and black history into the curriculum will be extremely beneficial, children need to have direct conversations about racism and how to be anti-racist. This will reduce bullying in schools and allow children to grow up in a multi-cultural environment, regardless of whether that have been surrounded by other cultures or not. This way, children will understand other cultures, and defeat stereotypes and discrimination.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central