

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue: Hybrid

For further information contact:

Committee Room 5 – Tŷ Hywel

Gareth Price – Committee Clerk

Meeting date: 27 June 2022

0300 200 6565

Meeting time: 14.00

Petitions@senedd.wales

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(Pages 1 – 16)

2 Evidence session – (Panel 1) P-06-1247 We call on the Welsh Government to lead the way by supporting trials of a four-day week in Wales (14.00 – 14.40) (Pages 17 – 25)

Mark Hooper, Petitioner

Shavanah Taj, acting General Secretary of Wales
Trade Union Congress

3 New Petitions (14.40 – 14.50)

3.1 P-06-1282 Create a National Poetry Library of Wales

(Pages 26 – 39)

3.2 P-06-1283 Introduce the mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales

(Pages 40 – 49)

3.3 P-06-1284 Keep schools open in Spring term 2022.

(Page 50)

3.4 P-06-1285 Immediately lift the restrictions placed on Outdoor sporting events

(Page 51)



4 Updates to previous petitions (14.50 – 15.00)

4.1 P-06-1257 Reduced Council Tax for private estate properties

(Pages 52 – 55)

4.2 P-06-1261 Invest to ensure all schools have high quality, effective internet infrastructure and connectivity

(Pages 56 – 59)

4.3 P-06-1263 Control pollution from agriculture in the parts of the Wye and Severn River located in Wales

(Pages 60 – 62)

5 Evidence session – (Panel 2) P-06-1247 We call on the Welsh Government to lead the way by supporting trials of a four-day week in Wales (15.00 – 15.30)

Joe OConnor, Chief Executive Officer, Global 4 Day Week

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting (15.30)

7 Discussion of evidence – P-06-1247 We call on the Welsh Government to lead the way by supporting trials of a four-day week in Wales

8 Key issues – P-06-1253 Ban greyhound racing in Wales

(Pages 63 – 65)

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Document is Restricted

Create a National Poetry Library of Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Mehefin 2022
Petitions Committee | 27 June 2022

Reference: SR22/2947-1

Petition Number: P-06-1282

Petition title: Create a National Poetry Library of Wales

Text of petition: Currently, England has 2 and Scotland has 1 but Cymru – “gwlad beirdd a chantorion” – has none. This lack of a National Poetry Library of Wales is a gap in our cultural, national life. Though the National Library in Aberystwyth is an excellent institution, it’s not yet a place that helps poetry blossom. Only a dedicated Poetry Library can be the archive for some of our oldest poetry, be the place of pilgrimage & growth for our poets, and be an institution that bridges our bilingual poetic traditions.



1. Background

Currently there is a National Poetry Library in the South Bank Centre in London, which is a national library for the UK¹. England also hosts the Northern Poetry Library in Morpeth, Northumberland and the Manchester Poetry Library. There is a Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh.

The National Library in Aberystwyth was established by Royal Charter in 1907, and is a registered charity and Welsh Government sponsored body. It receives £12.3 million of revenue funding annually from the Welsh Government. The National Library of Wales' purpose is to make Wales's culture and heritage accessible to all to learn, research and enjoy. It is a legal deposit library, meaning it has the right to a copy of every publication printed in Britain and Ireland.

2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government's response to this petition says that it has met with the petitioner. As the project has the potential to address a number of commitments in the Programme for Government the Welsh Government has requested a proposal for a National Library, which it has not yet received.

3. Welsh Parliament action

A proposal for a National Poetry Library has not been considered by the Senedd's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee, or the previous Senedd's Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee.

¹ Source: phone conversation with the National Library on 31 May 2022

Title:

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.

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-06-1282
Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00272/22
Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

19 May 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 May about petition P-06-1282 and the establishment of a National Poetry Library of Wales. Wales is synonymous with lyricism and verse and the Welsh Government supports every effort to continue that tradition.

I met with a delegation headed up by Mr Ben Gwalchmai to discuss this proposal earlier this year. The delegation identified poetry as a key feature of Welsh cultural life. The initiative's key driver would be community work and the library would be a way of introducing poetry, literature and narrative to people from backgrounds who wouldn't normally encounter poetry.

As the project had the potential to address a number of objectives in the Welsh Government's Programme for Government, I asked Mr Gwalchmai and his delegation to work up a proposal for a National Library of Wales and submit to officials for further discussions. My officials have not yet received the proposal.

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.

P-06-1282 Create a National Poetry Library of Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21 June 2022

Annwyl Pwyllgor Deisebau,

Diolch am eich ateb.

Thanks also for the Minister's response. The letter is correct and we had indeed met; since then, the campaign has been talking with stakeholders more and more to see what are the best steps to take so that all of Cymru's literary community can be on board. Attached is the result of those consultations - a presentation that will be given on the evening of the 28th of June, 2022, in the Senedd Neuadd, 6-8p.m. We hope you can join us for a chance to chat further.

We have spoken with many publishers, poets, libraries, universities, & institutions here and I'd like to draw your attention to the 'Next steps' slide in the attachment: after discussions with the National Library, it became clear that they don't know the full extent of their collection and this needs a Poetry Librarian (perhaps even a team of researchers under her) to make clear; after that, it shows that this campaign must continue through an Arts Council Wales application (that is being put together as I write), preferably with Welsh Government support, so that we can 'Find the building and stack the shelves', i.e. find the most accessible location for the majority of the population and source from all (many already engaged) publishers & stakeholders, the necessary books; once the research is started, we believe we can begin building a team in late 2023 with a view to open in 2025.

The Minister's letter is supportive and so we hope that the Government's will be, with adequate funding, in due time. I hope the Petitions Committee will support our work, too.

Diolch am eich amser a dymuniadau gorau.

- Dr. Ben Gwalchmai.



LLYFRGELL FARDDONIAETH CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU /
NATIONAL POETRY LIBRARY OF WALES



Pack Page 32

Why? And why now?

(Why not?!

England has many, Scotland has 1 but we have none.)

Case study - Scottish Poetry Library



The **Scottish Poetry Library** started its life with Tessa Ransford.

In January 1984, the first iteration opened its doors.

That was just 2 rooms, 300 books, and 2 part-time staff.

Today the Scottish Poetry Library employs 9 staff members, offers 30,000 books, and works with the Scottish Government.

"The elements remained constant: free access to lending and reference collections, a national core but an international outlook, and the pleasures of poetry shared in schools and through an events programme."

Case study - Manchester Poetry Library



The Manchester Poetry Library (MPL) opened in 2021.

MPL is England's second poetry library in northern-England. Opened amid the pandemic, MPL had to attract national & international backers.

A UNESCO City of Literature, Manchester institutions leveraged their position to create this new library.

The Director of MPL, Dr Becky Swain, is a part of the team behind the Campaign for a National Poetry Library of Wales.

"In this extraordinary year, we have seen how poetry, more than ever, has been a powerful way of connecting our common humanity across the world" - Dr Becky Swain.



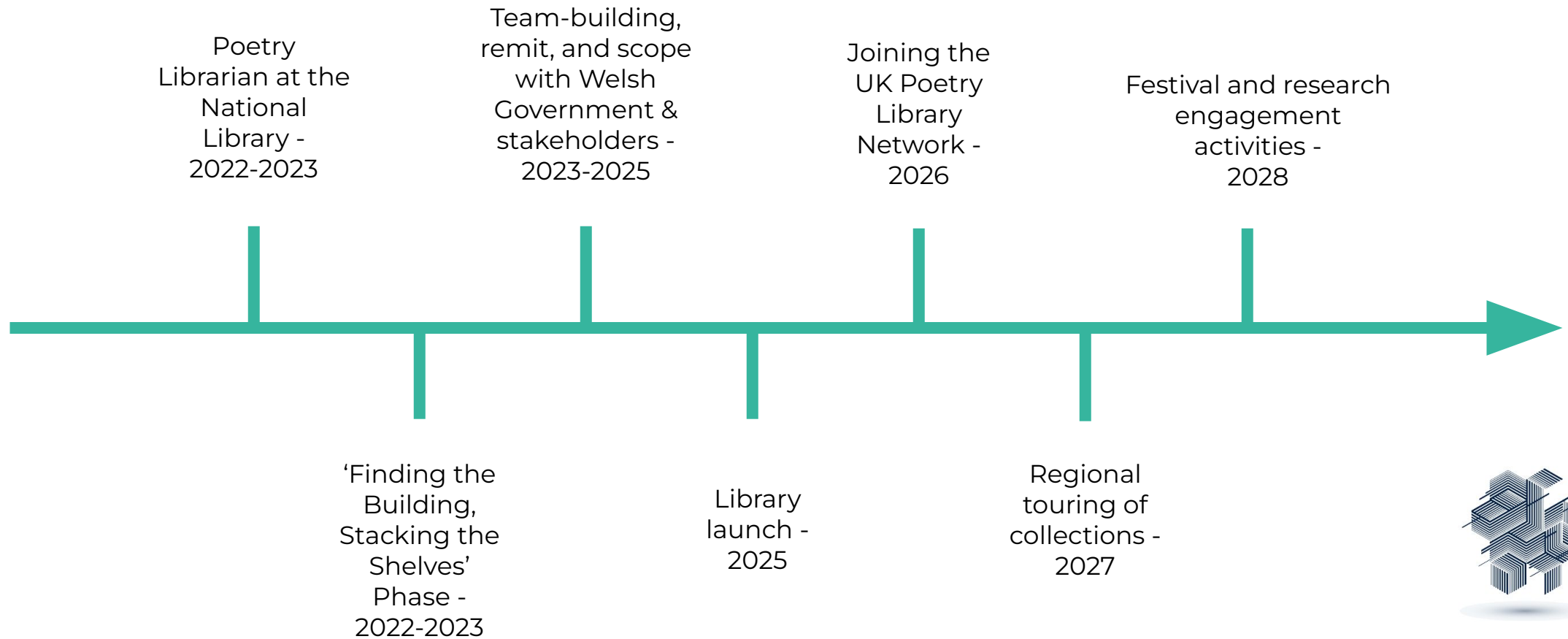
How?

Pack Page 35

And with who?



Next steps



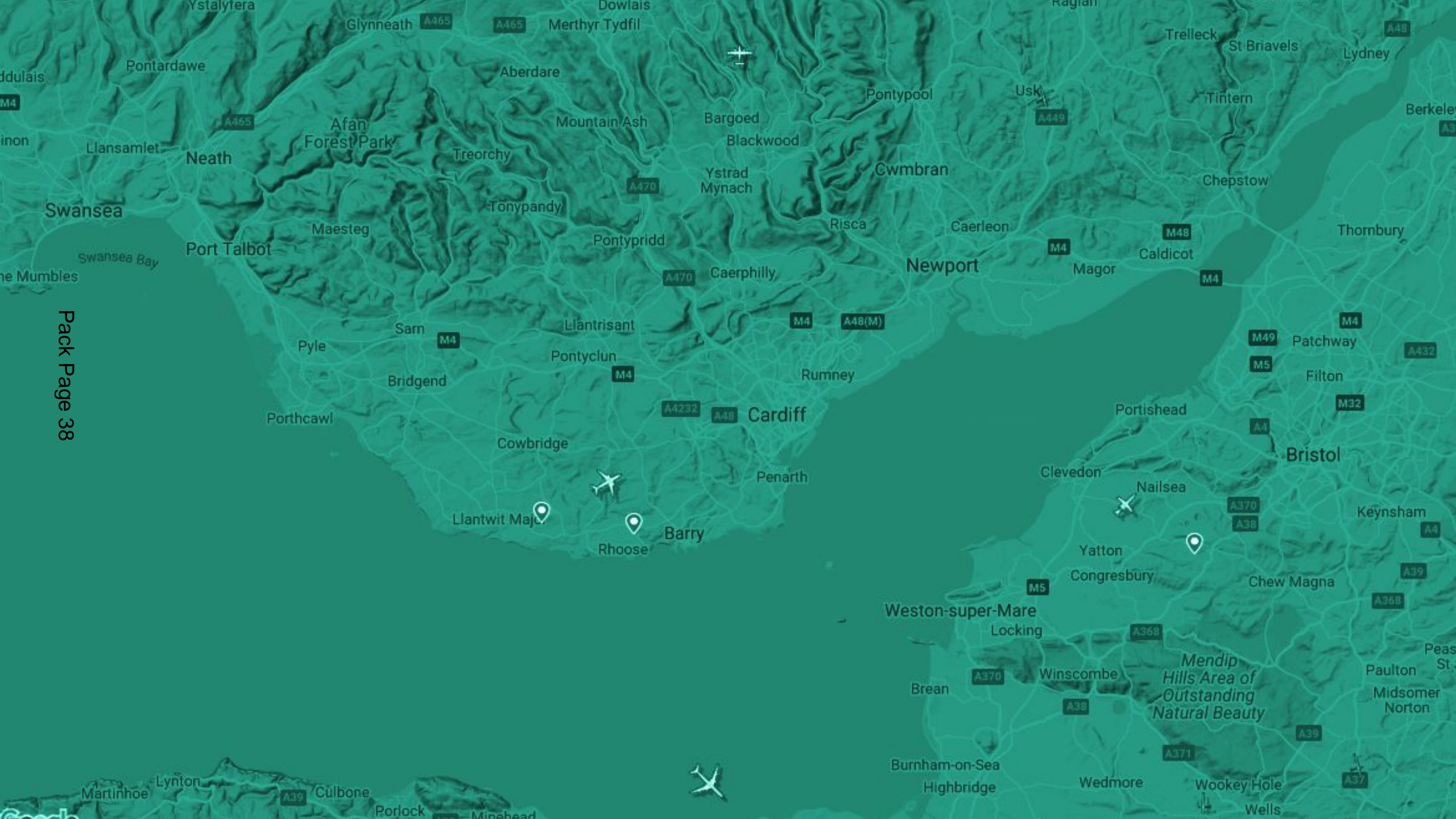


Where?

Pack Page 37

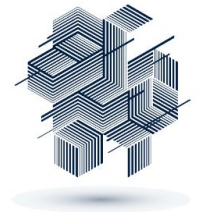
And for who?





Dr Ben Gwalchmai, Founder

b.gwalchmai@mmu.ac.uk | [campaign team contacts on request]



Introduce the mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Mehefin 2022
Petitions Committee | 27 June 2022

Reference: SR22/2947/2

Petition Number: P-06-1283

Petition title: Introduce the mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales

Text of petition: Microchipping is part of responsible pet ownership and has countless benefits for both cat and owner. If a persons cat becomes lost, stolen or gets injured, a microchip is the best chance for reunification. Microchips are not just beneficial for the cat and owners who love them, but also eases strain on the organisations who have to handle and treat unidentifiable cats.

Cats Protection estimates more than a fifth of cats are not microchipped in Wales, regardless of relentless campaigning.

We were involved in the UK Bill which ultimately led to the upcoming 2022 England regulations, and continue to work with DEFRA on this as stakeholders yet, due to animal welfare being a devolved issue, unfortunately this will not apply to Wales. The UK Government have now published their response and results of the public consultations, and we would like to see this extended to Wales to help benefit the cats and owners.

Also, a previous successful Senedd petition (P-05-779) of ours saw Wales become the first all scanning nation in the world as all Welsh local authorities opted to scan cats collected. However, this was voluntary action which, since 2017, has since slipped in some areas. We would appreciate the issue of scanning to be re-looked at my the committee.



1. Background

Cats Protection estimates there are over 600,000 cats in Wales, and 24% of those are not microchipped - similar to the UK average of 26%.

In October 2019, the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) launched a Call for Evidence on the mandatory microchipping of cats in England. Of the 3,140 responses, 99% supported mandatory microchipping of cats.

The respondents who supported mandatory microchipping stated the following advantages:

- Increased chance of successful reunification of pet and owner if the cat gets lost or stolen;
- Peace of mind for the owner and closure for owners whose cats are found injured/dead;
- Quicker reunification means less time spent by rehoming centres trying to trace keepers; and
- Enables a distinction to be made between a feral cat and a suspected stray that has an owner.

Respondents opposed to mandatory microchipping cited the following disadvantages:

- Elderly or people with disabilities may be disadvantaged in terms of accessing information about compulsory microchipping of cats;
- Local authorities do not have the resources to enforce requirements;
- The rationale for microchipping dogs was to ensure public safety and prevent nuisance, this does not apply to cats to the same degree; and
- Operation of microchip database systems should be improved before compulsory microchipping is introduced.

In December 2021, DEFRA announced the UK Government will introduce mandatory microchipping of cats in England as part of its Action Plan for Animal Welfare. The UK Environment Secretary says the new policy will be monitored by vets and enforced in the same way as the requirement for microchipping of dogs.

In most cases, the Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015 requires owners to microchip their dogs if they are older than eight weeks. In the year following the regulations, the percentage of dogs microchipped in Wales rose from 69% to 94%.

RSPCA Cymru says:

Compulsory microchipping is a further example of where legislation between cats and dogs currently differs in Wales. While the compulsory microchipping of dogs has been in force in Wales since 2015, there are no firm commitments relevant to cat microchipping in place as of yet.

The cost of microchipping a cat is between £20 and £30. Local rescue centres, cat organisations and charities may encourage pet owners to microchip their pets by offering the service for free or at a reduced rate.

2. Welsh Government action

In November 2021, the Welsh Government published its Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26. The plan includes a commitment to consider mandatory microchipping of cats. The Welsh Government commissioned research to investigate the effectiveness of existing dog microchipping regulations in partnership with the UK and Scottish Governments. The report will outline any potential benefits of extending the regulations to include cats.

The Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cats, first published in 2008, explains what owners must do to meet the standards of care set out in the Animal Welfare Act 2006. In 2018, the Welsh Government launched a consultation to consider whether the Code of Practice needed to be updated. The consultation expressly asked for comments and advice on microchipping.

Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales (CAWWG) supported the strong recommendation from the Welsh Government for cat owners to microchip their cats but believes legislation is required. The group highlighted that many charities operate schemes across Wales to help with the cost of microchipping, especially for those on low incomes.

Battersea Dogs & Cats Home urged caution on legislating for mandatory microchipping of cats. The charity said that although microchipping dogs is a legal requirement in Wales, there have been “significant issues with the implementation”. These issues must be understood before mandatory microchipping of cats can be effectively introduced.

A 2019 Review of the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014 by the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework group found compliance with microchipping legislation is poor. One of their

recommendations to increase compliance is for a single integrated database of microchip registrations to be created, accessible to police and local authorities, and implemented at either a country or UK level. In response to this recommendation, the Welsh Government said, “There are no immediate plans to propose amendments to the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014”.

The Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cats was updated in 2019. The Code of Practice does not expressly advise the microchipping of cats. Instead, it informs owners that microchipping is “the preferred method of identification” as this will “speed [the cats] return to you”.

3. Welsh Parliament action

The issue of mandatory microchipping of cats has been raised several times in Plenary during the Sixth Senedd.

In answer to a written question in March regarding extending mandatory microchipping to cats the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths, (‘the Minister’) said:

Our Animal Welfare Plan for Wales (AWPW) includes a commitment to consider extending compulsory microchipping to include kittens and cats in Wales. Proposals in this area will draw upon research published in 2021 which was joint-funded with other GB administrations. Following completion of our analysis of the research, we will consider whether any amendments are required on the current microchipping regulations for dogs and possible new measures for kittens and cats. Any proposed changes would be subject to a full public consultation process.

We cannot commit to a specific timeline at this point but the AWPW covers the period from 2021-26.

In response to a written question in March regarding ensuring all dog and cat microchipping databases will be accessible through a single point of entry, the Minster said:

There have been two recent research reports published – about microchipping and responsible dog ownership. Additionally, a policy paper about pet theft, published by Defra, the Home Office and the

Ministry of Justice was published in 2021. All of these make reference to microchipping, database ownership and ease of access.

The Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer is working with colleagues in other administrations to ensure any future changes to the collection and use of microchipping data meets the needs of the public and the enforcement agents alike.

We will continue to work with Defra to consider future changes in relation to microchipping databases for both cats and dogs. These discussions will include matters around accessibility and a single point of entry.

The Minister reiterated the answers to the two written questions in her response to this petition.

The [Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee held](#) an evidence session on animal welfare in November 2021 during which regulating cat breeding was discussed with animal welfare organisations. CAWGW welcomed the progress on introducing mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales.

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/00247/22

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee

27th May 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 6 May, regarding Petition P-06-1283 to introduce the mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales.

Our Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26 includes a commitment to consider extending compulsory microchipping to include kittens and cats. Proposals in this area will draw upon research published in 2021 which was joint-funded with other GB administrations. Following completion of our analysis of the research, we will consider whether amendments are required to the current microchipping regulations for dogs, along with possible new measures for kittens and cats. Any proposed changes would be subject to a full public consultation process.

I am aware the UK Government intends to pursue this policy issue following its own public consultation. My officials will continue to liaise with their counterparts in Defra on this matter. However, due to other committed priorities within our ambitious animal welfare policy agenda, we will not be progressing alongside the UK Government's proposed legislative process.

With reference to the issue of microchip scanning and databases, work in this area has been informed by two recent research reports, on microchipping and responsible dog ownership, commissioned jointly by UK administrations. Additionally, a policy paper on pet theft published by Defra, the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice was published in 2021. Each of these papers make reference to microchipping, database ownership and ease of access.

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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 will continue to work in partnership with the UK Government to consider future changes in relation to microchipping databases for both cats and dogs, including matters around accessibility and a single point of entry. Officials will endeavour to align our policies wherever possible to ensure enforcement requirements are not compromised, especially on the border between England and Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 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-06-1283 Introduce the mandatory microchipping of cats in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioners to the Committee, 15 June 2022

We thank the Minister for Rural Affairs for her positive response and are satisfied that this adequately addresses the issue of mandatory microchipping in cats. We very much look forward to the completion of the analysis of the research, as well as any future public consultation.

We are thrilled at the success of this petition which presents the high level of support in Wales for the consideration of introducing mandatory microchipping in cats. This was further highlighted following the Ross Gazettes' reader poll for Wales;



The Ross Gazette
@RossGazette

...

This year will see England bring in legislation for all cats to be microchipped.

Do you support or oppose the mandatory microchipping of household cats?



The recent PDSA paw report shown that 46% of UK cats were not microchipped, rising to 68% in 2018 and 71% in 2019. Regardless of relentless campaigning by many organisations, including our own, unfortunately there is now an evident stagnation on cats being microchipped. It is estimated that more than a fifth of cats are not microchipped in Wales. Cats that are owned, but are not microchipped, place strain on charity resources, veterinary practices, local authorities and, most importantly, the cats lives are at stake and owners risk a lifetime of heartache not knowing where their cat is and never being afforded closure for a lost/deceased beloved pet. Vets are only obliged to administer pain relief, and we have heard of many cases where cats have sadly been euthanized following a road accident with minor cuts and bruises, simply because no owner could be traced/come forward. As highlighted in the Codes of Practice Summary for the Welfare of Cats, owners have a legal responsibility to make sure that their cats welfare needs are met, whatever the circumstances. Owners can not ensure this if they are untraceable in the event of an emergency. Also, at a time when shelters have gone far beyond breaking point, some having hundreds of cats on waiting lists to enter the rescue, strain would taken off by introducing mandatory microchipping. During our meetings as stakeholders for the England legislation, we learnt that many rescues feel a large chunk of cats in their care do have homes with owners searching for them. Without being identifiable, space has been taken leaving rescues unable to help genuine strays and ferals.

In terms of scanning, our previous successful petition, P-05-779 Compulsory scanning of domestic pets for microchips by councils, saw Wales become the first all-scanning nation in the world in 2017. However, this was voluntary and, although almost all local authorities have continued to maintain a good system whereby cats are routinely scanned and, where a microchip is present, owners are notified, there are those where standards fall below what is expected of residents. We receive numerous complaints about Cardiff council in particular, and would urge further work with this council in this area.

To scan cats found actually saves locally authorities money, which we would have thought would be much appreciated in the current climate. During our research for DEFRA, data revealed that local authorities pay between £6.71 - £30 per cat for the uplift and disposal of. Our research working with official council data swiftly became clear that there is a financial burden on councils when a cat is not microchipped. Although this was a small scale study for the benefit of the microchipping research for DEFRA, we were able to combine these findings with previous findings from a larger scale study in partnership with the London Assembly which focused on 4312 cats collected from 28 councils. Being able to combine both sets of solid data, we were able to conclude that London councils alone spend around £129,390.00 on the disposal of cats that are not microchipped. Applying this to all councils in England shown that a little over £44 million could be saved in a 3 year period. DEFRA are in receipt of the details of this, and we are happy to disclose further detail to yourselves if you require. We acknowledge that scanning, and potential updates to the database system, is ongoing with DEFRA and, at the time of writing this, DEFRA have not yet published proposals on new policies in this area. However, regardless of whether Wales ultimately decides to align policies on this with England at a later date, we would urge work to be done in the meantime to aid cat owners and local residents' concerns. The reasons for standards falling short in some areas is not necessarily due to a lack of will to have an effective system, but a lack of resources and understanding on the process. Issues, we have found, tend to fall into the areas of reporting, storing and equipment. We have come across many cases where refuse workers have a lack of understand of how to use the scanning equipment and no training has been given. One example would be that, one council believed that the number that appears on the microchip scanner indicated that no chip had been found. What this actually means is there is a chip and that is the identifying number. That particular council did not understand that they required vet codes to access owner details to notify owners. A very simple and honest mistake which greatly upset cat owners and the staff themselves. There is currently no official guidance for councils to adhere to, and at very least we urge Wales to introduce this to help guide councils on the correct and right thing to do. We are happy to send further details on this while all await DEFRA's conclusion on mandatory scanning.

CatsMatter

Agenda Item 3.3

P-06-1284 Keep schools open in Spring term 2022. Enough is enough

This petition was submitted by Bianca Simpson Lepore, having collected a total of 909 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Children have suffered enough during the pandemic and really do need their school life to remain as normal as possible. Reasonable adaptations are fine but closing schools down has so many clearly documented harmful effects that it surely just can't be justified further.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

Agenda Item 3.4

P-06-1285 Immediately lift the restrictions placed on Outdoor sporting events

This petition was submitted by Ryan Jewell, having collected a total of XXX signatures.

Text of Petition:

On the 21st of December 2021, the Welsh government again made the decision to ban people attending outdoor sporting events. Not only will this negatively impact the mental well-being of thousands it will also destroy sports clubs across the country which play such a vital role in their respected communities. Please use your democratic voice and show those in power your opposition to these restrictions which will do more harm than good.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Islwyn
- South Wales East

Agenda Item 4.1

P-06-1257 Reduced Council Tax for private estate properties

This petition was submitted by Mark Henson, having collected a total of 578 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Councils should be required to reduce the council tax for the properties that are within "private" estates as all the maintenance costs for communal areas are paid by the homeowners, both leaseholders and freeholders.

Additional Information:

The local councils do not accept responsibility for covering costs of maintenance in common areas on new housing estates. This leads Developer to appoint a Management company to do it at costs that cannot be disputed or challenged by the freeholder. So, increasingly the cost of maintaining these communal areas on newer housing estates is pushed onto homeowners. However, these homeowners do not receive any corresponding reduction in their council tax bills.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Ogmore
- South Wales West

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00815/22

Jack Sargeant MS

08 June 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 5 April regarding petition P-06-1257 Reduced Council Tax for private estate properties. As matters relating to charges on private estates largely fall into the Climate Change portfolio, I am replying.

As you will appreciate, it will take time to bring forward legislation on the areas outlined in my colleague's previous letter and it is important that we consider carefully our approach, undertake the necessary research and evidence gathering, and seek the views of interested parties and the public to help shape proposals on which we will then consult. We will also need to assess the impacts of the available options to ensure that we do not unintentionally make worse an already difficult situation. At this time, I am unable definitively to indicate a timescale for legislation on these matters therefore.

The UK Government has committed to bringing forward legislation to extend the rights which leaseholders currently have to challenge the reasonableness of service charges to freeholders who are subject to estate charges. I have requested that this legislation be made on an England and Wales basis. The timing for introduction of such provisions is obviously outside my control, but where UK legislation on devolved matters is extended to Wales, it will of course be subject to the LCM process.

You ask whether Local Authorities have or could be provided with the power to establish their own maintenance companies. In addition to being able to charge for discretionary services, Principal Local Authorities may undertake commercial activities related to their ordinary functions and may also use the power of general competence to undertake commercial activity. In either case this must be undertaken through a trading company and is subject to the development, approval and publication of a business case. Local Authorities would need to satisfy themselves that using these powers was appropriate in the context of their statutory duties and their overall circumstances.

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

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Powers to trade in relation to ordinary functions were originally provided through the Local Government Act 2003 and subsequent 2006 Order. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provided for a general power of competence and The General Power of Competence (Commercial Purpose) (Conditions) (Wales) Regulations 2021 provided for this to also allow relevant authorities to undertake commercial activity. For completeness, the Local Government (Relevant Authorities) (Power to Trade) (Wales) Order 2022 (due to come into effect from 5th May 2022) amends the 2006 Order to update the legal definition of relevant authorities and widen the definition to include corporate joint committees, and eligible community councils.

Yours sincerely,



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

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Back Page 54
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**P-06-1257 Reduced Council Tax for private estate properties – Correspondence
from the Petitioner to the Committee, 20 June 2022**

Good afternoon, I do fully appreciate that this need to be right for all involved but the Welsh Government survey was sent out 2 to 3 years ago, how long is it likely to take until we have some kind of progress?

Thanks very much
Mark Henson

Agenda Item 4.2

P-06-1261 Invest to ensure all schools have high quality, effective internet infrastructure and connectivity

This petition was submitted by Charles Green, having collected a total of 65 signatures.

Text of Petition:

A good broadband connection has become essential for education in the 21st century. More should and must be done to ensure our schools are equipped with the best internet connection possible to provide equality to all, wherever pupils live in Wales.

Whilst the previous Welsh Government's programme (2016-21) aimed to prioritise access to super-fast broadband, there continues to be schools where this is not the case.

Additional Information:

I call for there to be a true Gigabit (1000Mbps Service Obligation) connection to all primary and secondary schools in Wales, ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged because of poor broadband speed in school.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- 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-06-261
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/01010/22

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

26 May 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 10 May, requesting additional information on schools or local authorities experiencing slow internet connectivity speeds.

Education technology (EdTech) is a key priority area, and my officials continue to work closely with all local authorities to ensure all maintained schools have at least superfast broadband connectivity as a component of the wider digital portfolio in Education.

All local authorities have an EdTech lead, whose responsibilities include monitoring school's connectivity to ensure it is not only sufficient but remains future proofed. All schools in Wales benefit from superfast connectivity and there is a simple path to upgrade via the PSBA network as and when required. Through significant Welsh Government investment in the PSBA network, all the broadband connections are 'uncontended', meaning they are exclusively used by each school only.

To demonstrate the continuously evolving picture of connectivity within Wales, a further 12 schools, in conjunction with their local authority, have now upgraded to a 1Gbps service since our last correspondence, resulting in most secondary schools now receiving 1Gbps broadband services.

My officials will continue to monitor the speeds being received by schools, in conjunction with local authority colleagues, to ensure that all maintained schools in Wales have adequate broadband connectivity in accordance with the [connectivity strand](#) of the Education Digital Standards.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

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

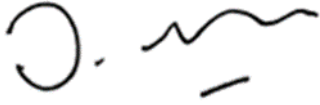
Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales

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.

It is essential that we continue to encourage schools to work with their respective local authority EdTech leads, who can help ensure digital is viewed as a priority and a fundamental aspect of school development plans and support schools to maximise the transformational benefits which digital and technology can have on education.

Yours sincerely,

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

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

P-06-1261 Invest to ensure all schools have high quality, effective internet infrastructure and connectivity – Correspondence from the petitioner, 21 June 2022

Dear Committe members,

The Petition is about equality for all schools in Wales.

Out of 189 secondary schools in Wales, that now have a Gigabit connection, there are lots that still do not have this connection. Again, where is the detail, the break down by local authority, to demonstrate that all schools and authorities are taking advantage of this technology?

Jeremy Miles acknowledges its importance, unfortunately the lack of detail within the latest response is as expected.

Why is it down to schools and local authorities set the standards, again, this should be lead and delivered by Welsh Government to all schools in Wales, ensuring all pupils have the same opportunities.

I fear the lack of a detailed response and any meaningful break down of schools within each local authority, paints a picture to unpalatable to bare. The youth of Wales deserve better!

Agenda Item 4.3

P-06-1263 Control pollution from agriculture in the parts of the Wye and Severn River located in Wales

This petition was submitted by Keith Clarke, having collected a total of 118 signatures.

Text of Petition:

1. Introduce an immediate moratorium of any new intensive poultry units in the Wye and Severn catchment areas located in Wales.
2. Strictly control manure spreading according to the phosphate load in the ground
3. Monitor phosphate levels
4. Take legal action against any breaches of pollution legislation.

Additional Information:

Water quality and biodiversity has declined in both rivers in recent years because of high levels of nitrates and phosphates leading algae blooms. This has led to a significant loss in biodiversity. Pollution from agricultural run off in particular that from intensive poultry units (IPUs) is the single most important cause of the increased pollution in these river systems. Stringent control of pollution from farms is urgently needed to prevent an ecological catastrophe.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales

**Pwyllgor yr Economi,
Masnach a Materion Gwledig**

**Economy, Trade and
Rural Affairs Committee**

Senedd Cymru

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Jack Sargeant MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

1 June 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition P-06-1263 Control pollution from agriculture in the parts of the Wye and Severn River located in Wales.

Unfortunately, the Committee has already concluded its work on the Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021. Members signed off the final report at our meeting on the 26th of May. It is currently going through the final checks before publishing. We are hoping to publish on the 8th of June.

As you will know, the motion in Plenary asked us to 'urgently' review the Regulations. However, this work was delayed as a result of a legal challenge to the Regulations by NFU Cymru but Members of my committee are now keen to conclude this work with immediate effect.

Kind regards,



Paul Davies MS
Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

P-06-1263 Control pollution from agriculture in the parts of the Wye and Severn River located in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 20 June 2022

I have read the attachments. It appears to go some way to stop the pollution entering the water ways and killing them, but it doesn't address the problem of poultry farming and the high density within Powys and phosphates and ammonia from the waste entering the rivers.

They appears to be detailed and a positive step to cleaning up the rivers from agriculture waste. One factor is missing and that in the dense poultry farming especially here in Powys. It would be good to see a limit to the amount of chickens in a county. The avian flu hotspots are also In the areas of high poultry farming. The waste from poultry has a huge impact on the death of the rivers.

Many Thanks

Melissa Compton

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