

## Agenda – Petitions Committee

---

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Hybrid

Meeting date: 27 November 2023

Meeting time: 14.00

For further information contact:

Gareth Price – Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

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

---

### 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

Evidence session on the following petitions:

### 2 P-06-1264 For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children

(Pages 1 – 4)

### 3 P-06-1343 Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils

(Pages 5 – 9)

### 4 P-06-1346 Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth

(Pages 10 – 13)

Witness panel:

- Elin Hargrave – Senedd Education and Youth Engagement Officer
- Bethan Roberts – Senedd Education and Youth Engagement Officer
- Ffion Fairclough WYPM – Member of the Senedd's Welsh Youth Parliament for Pontypridd



- Kasia Tomsa WYPM – Member of the Senedd's Welsh Youth Parliament for Blaenau Gwent

## 5 New Petitions

- 5.1 P-06-1361 Protect agency workers in the NHS  
(Pages 14 – 17)
- 5.2 P-06-1371 Re-open the railway stop in Nant-y-Derry Goytre Fawr to include us in the South Wales Metro  
(Pages 18 – 23)
- 5.3 P-06-1372 Save our fflecsi bwcabus service  
(Pages 24 – 29)
- 5.4 P-06-1374 Bring Wales in line with England by allowing landowners 60 days tent and campervan camping a year  
(Pages 30 – 38)
- 5.5 P-06-1376 Welsh Government to stop basic income pilot payments to unaccompanied asylum-seekers  
(Pages 39 – 46)

## 6 Updates to previous petitions

- 6.1 P-06-1184 Immediately ban the use of toxic lead in all ammunition in Wales... lead is killing our wildlife!  
(Page 47)
- 6.2 P-06-1209 Create a national list of all unpaid carers in Wales  
(Pages 48 – 51)
- 6.3 P-06-1337 Sycharth, the home of Owain Glyndwr, should be bought to safeguard the site for future generations  
(Pages 52 – 53)

- 7 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting
  
- 8 Discussion of evidence – P-06-1264 For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children / P-06-1343 Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils / P-06-1346 Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth

Document is Restricted

# Free school transport

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 25 Ebrill 2022  
Petitions Committee | 25 April 2022

Reference: SR22/2498-4

**Petition Number:** P-06-1264

**Petition title:** For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children

**Text of petition:** There are at least 27 children ages 11-12 that have been refused transport to their local comprehensive school. Some of these young children have medical illnesses like asthma, autism and at least 1 child has epilepsy and is expected to walk to school in all weather. These children have been separated from friends who have been able to get a bus pass, and there are only a limited number of children that have been left out. It's disgraceful.

There is only a limited number of children that have been excluded from receiving a bus pass due to laws that were brought in by the Welsh government, a government that is supposed to put child welfare at the forefront. There are 16-year-old young adults getting a pass because they were in the school before this law was changed, so while they are mature enough to find alternative transport 11- and 12-year-old children are walking in appalling weather along dangerous roads. Education is compulsory in this country and so should transport be if the comprehensive is not in the village you live. We all pay taxes, including community payments and there should not have been cuts in education provision.

Children getting to school safely, securely and dry should be a must. It is sheer cruelty making young children walk 3 miles in all kinds of weather getting soaked and sitting all day long in lessons.



---

# 1. Background

## 1.1. Current entitlement to free home to school transport

Under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, local authorities are required to provide free home to school transport to learners of **compulsory school age** if they live certain distances from their nearest suitable school. The distances, known as walking distances, are set out in the Measure. The statutory distances are two miles for primary school pupils and three miles for secondary school pupils.

The entitlement to free school transport and statutory walking distances originate in the Education Act 1944 which set out walking distances as two miles for compulsory school age pupils aged 8 years old and younger, and three miles for older pupils. The Education Act 1993 restated these distances.

## 1.2. Assessing learner's needs

Under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, local authorities are required to assess the travel needs of learners who are aged under 19 in their area. This includes those who they are legally required to provide transport for and those for whom they may wish to provide discretionary transport. An authority is also required to have regard to:

- The needs of disabled learners and learners with learning difficulties;
- Any particular needs of learners who are 'looked after' or learners who have formerly been looked after by a local authority;
- The age of a learner;
- The nature of the route that the learner is expected to take between home and the places where they receive education or training.

## 1.3. Available routes

The Measure states that the walking distance should be measured by the 'shortest available route'. It sets out that a route is considered to be available if it is safe (as far as reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learner's age and levels of understanding requires this.

If a route is not 'available' and there is no alternative 'available' walking route within the distance threshold, the learner cannot be expected to walk to their nearest suitable school, even though the distance from home to school is less than the distance limit that applies to the learner's age. In such cases the local authority has a duty to provide the learner with free transport to and from their nearest suitable school.

## 1.4. Discretionary provisions

As well as statutory provision, local authorities have discretionary powers to provide home to school transport for other learners living or studying in the authority's area. However, if a local authority does make use of their discretionary powers, the authority must ensure that the policy applies to all learners in similar circumstances living in that authority's area. While local authorities are not required to offer free transport, examples of where discretionary transport provision might be used include:

- Children under the age of five;
- Welsh medium schools that are not the nearest suitable schools;
- Faith schools that are not the nearest suitable schools;
- Post-16 learners who continue their studies in mainstream further education or training.

## 2. Welsh Government action

In November 2019, the previous Welsh Government undertook to review the Learner Travel legislation in relation to post-16 learners. In the joint [Cabinet Written Statement](#), the Ministers for Education; International Relations and Welsh Language; Housing and Local Government and the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, said:

We agree that the current legislation that places duties on local authorities to make transport arrangements for learners of statutory school age based on distance, aptitude and safety are generally working well. However, we are aware of increasing concerns for post 16 learners where local authorities have discretion over travel arrangements.

A [Cabinet Statement in August 2020](#) said that the review was being extended to include the 4 - 16 year-old age group and the current mileage threshold for free

---

transport. The review was expected to be concluded by the end of March 2021, but the review was not published due to the pre-election period leading to the Senedd 2021 elections that took place in May 2021. The [Welsh Government's response to the Children's Commissioner's Annual Report 2020-21](#) (November 2021) said:

From discussions and engagement with stakeholders as a part of the initial review, it became apparent that there are other issues with the Learner Travel Measure's current provisions that necessitate a further more detailed review. The interim report will now be published and officials will consider how best to progress the further work required to review learner travel in Wales.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

In 2017. The Petitions Committee in the Fifth Senedd considered a petition, [Free School Transport for All Children in Wales](#). The Committee received correspondence from Ken Skates, then Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and sought the views of the Petitioner, but following an inability to contact them, the Petition was closed.

The [Children, Young People and Education Committee has written](#) to the Deputy Minister for Climate Change seeking an update on the review the Welsh Government initiated in November 2019.

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.



# Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 3 Gorffennaf 2023  
Petitions Committee | 3 July 2023

Reference: SR23/5997-5

**Petition Number:** P-06-1343

**Petition title:** Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils

**Text of petition:** I believe that all children in secondary schools in Wales should have the right to free public transport so that they can travel to their catchment area secondary school\* safely.

We live 2.4 miles from our children's secondary school but our council states that free transport is only available to those who live 3 miles (or further) from their catchment secondary school. Walking to school would take between 50 minutes and an hour from our house along busy and congested roads. There is no safe cycle path.

As a family we spend over £80 a month on bus tickets for our 2 children. It's money we really can't afford but for some parents finding £40 a month (per child) is impossible and so their children are forced to walk along dark, busy, dangerous and polluted roads to get to the school. This is unfair and discriminates against the poorest children in society.



The Welsh Government published a review (March 2022) of the 'Learner Travel Measure (Wales)' and in June 2022 Mark Drakeford said there will be a 'comprehensive engagement programme which will ensure that all of our stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to the subsequent wider review'.

\*A catchment area secondary school refers to the KS3/4 education location of the child/young person including the Welsh-medium Schools, English-medium Schools, Bilingual Schools, Faith Schools, Special Schools, Pupil Referral Units, EOTAS provision (Education Other than School ) and so forth.

## 1. Background

### 1.1. Current entitlement to free home to school transport

Under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, local authorities are required to provide free home to school transport to learners of **compulsory school age** if they live certain distances from their nearest suitable school. The distances, known as walking distances, are set out in the Measure. The statutory distances are two miles for primary school pupils and three miles for secondary school pupils.

The entitlement to free school transport and statutory walking distances originate in the Education Act 1944 which set out walking distances as two miles for compulsory school age pupils aged 8 years old and younger, and three miles for older pupils.

### 1.2. Assessing learner's needs

Under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, local authorities are required to assess the travel needs of learners who are aged under 19 in their area. This includes those who they are legally required to provide transport for and those for whom they may wish to provide discretionary transport. An authority is also required to have regard to:

- The needs of disabled learners and learners with learning difficulties;

- Any particular needs of learners who are 'looked after' or learners who have formerly been looked after by a local authority;
- The age of a learner;
- The nature of the route that the learner is expected to take between home and the places where they receive education or training.

### 1.3. Available routes

The Measure states that the walking distance should be measured by the 'shortest available route'. It sets out that a route is considered to be available if it is safe (as far as reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learner's age and levels of understanding requires this.

If a route is not 'available' and there is no alternative 'available' walking route within the distance threshold, the learner cannot be expected to walk to their nearest suitable school, even though the distance from home to school is less than the distance limit that applies to the learner's age. In such cases the local authority has a duty to provide the learner with free transport to and from their nearest suitable school.

### 1.4. Discretionary provisions

As well as statutory provision, local authorities have discretionary powers to provide home to school transport for other learners living or studying in the authority's area. However, if a local authority does make use of its discretionary powers, the authority must ensure that the policy applies to all learners in similar circumstances living in that authority's area. While local authorities are not required to offer free transport, examples of where discretionary transport provision might be used include:

- Children under the age of five;
- Welsh medium schools that are not the nearest suitable schools;
- Faith schools that are not the nearest suitable schools;
- Post-16 learners who continue their studies in mainstream further education or training.

## 2. Welsh Government action

In November 2019, the previous Welsh Government undertook to review the Learner Travel legislation in relation to post-16 learners. In a joint Cabinet Written Statement, the Ministers for Education; International Relations and Welsh Language; Housing and Local Government and the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, said that the transport arrangements for those of statutory school age were 'generally working well'.

A Cabinet Statement in August 2020 said that the review was being extended to include the 4 - 16 year-old age group and the current mileage threshold for free transport. The review was expected to be concluded by the end of March 2021, but the review was not published due to the pre-election period leading to the Senedd elections that took place in May 2021.

The interim report of the review from March 2021 was published on 31 March 2022. The interim report, which is written in a format from Welsh Government officials to Ministers, presents two options for consideration:

- option 1: to take forward changes to the Measure in the next Legislative Programme as outlined in the original scope of the review.
- option 2: to take forward a wider programme of work that encompasses consideration of a complete revision of the Measure alongside work to;
  - improve operator provision and the environment in which it can deliver greater provision under the measure; and
  - consider better integration with related policies, such as the needs of ALN pupils and provision to Further Education establishments.

Officials recommended option 2 and suggested it could be combined with other policy work in the area of public transport.

In a Written Cabinet Statement (31 March 2022), the Deputy Minister for Climate Change said that the Welsh Government would, that year, take forward a wider programme of work that encompasses consideration of a complete revision of the Learner Travel Measure. He also said:

In taking forward this work we will be engaging with stakeholders to develop the evidence base to support any proposed changes to ensure that they are fair, proportionate, and affordable. We will be consulting on this work later this year.

In answer to a [Written Question \(12 April 2023\)](#), the Deputy Minister for Climate Change:

An initial review of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure took place in 2020/2021. From the initial review it was clear that a more detailed review of the Measure was required due to the complex nature of learner's travel needs.

Work has now commenced on this wider review of the Measure which, working in partnership with local authorities, the industry as well as children and young people, will identify the barriers as well as opportunities and innovative approaches to learner travel. Key findings, learnings and examples of innovative good practice from local, national and international research will inform advice due to be submitted for me to review this summer.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

In 2017, the Petitions Committee in the Fifth Senedd considered a petition, [Free School Transport for All Children in Wales](#). The Committee received correspondence from Ken Skates, then Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and sought the views of the Petitioner, but following an inability to contact them, the petition was closed.

A further petition, [For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children](#) was considered by the Committee on 25 April 2022. In light of the Welsh Government's review, the Committee agreed to 'keep a watching brief' on the petition.

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.

# P-06-1346 Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 11 Medi 2023  
Petitions Committee | 11 September 2023

Reference: SR23/6132-2

**Petition Number:** P-06-1346

**Petition title:** Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth

**Text of petition:** Public transport plays a pivotal role in linking Welsh children to educational, social and work opportunities.

However, in light of the cost of living crisis, as well as the climate crisis, it is imperative that the Welsh Government incentivises public transport in order to lower carbon emissions and improve economic growth.

The ENYA conference in 2022, at which 2 young Welsh representatives were present, called on the Welsh Government to 'provide reliable and affordable public transport'.



# 1. Background

According to the [RAC foundation](#) UK rail fares are 35% higher, and coach and bus fares about 54% higher, than a decade ago while average wages have grown by just under 40%. It also indicates that the cost of motoring is about 43% higher.

A 2022 report from [Sustrans Cymru](#) found that the increasing costs of bus travel disproportionately affect young people, who are more reliant on public transport for accessing education, training, and employment opportunities.

In [2021 15% of Welsh greenhouse emissions](#) were from transport. The Welsh Government's second [Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget](#) aims to reduce this by 22% by 2025. It also aims increase the proportion of journeys made by public transport from approximately 5% to 13% by 2040.

Accordingly, the [2021 Transport Strategy](#) focuses on encouraging public transport uptake by improving infrastructure, reliability and traveller experience. However, the importance of affordability is also acknowledged. The Welsh Government's [National Transport Delivery Plan 2022-2027](#) commits to explore public transport concessionary schemes for young people, whilst its [2021-2026 programme for government](#) stated it would:

Explore extensions of the MyTravelPass for reduced-cost travel for young people.

The [16-21 MyTravelPass](#) gives holders a 30% discount on buses in Wales. For rail, TfW offers [free off-peak train travel for under 16s](#) accompanied by a paying adult, which extends to anytime travel for under 11s. Young people's rail discounts available across Great Britain include National Rail's [16-17 Saver](#) and [railcards](#), which offer 50% and 33% discounts respectively.

A range of other schemes are in place across Great Britain offering free or discounted travel for young people. These include TfL offering [free bus and tram travel for under 18s](#) living in London and free rail travel for under 10s. Notably, Scotland introduced [free bus travel for 5 to 21-year-olds](#) on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. [According to Transport Scotland](#), in May 2023 uptake was around two thirds of eligible users, and additional patronage has allowed some bus companies to increase service provision. However, some [media reports](#) blamed the scheme for increasing disorder on buses.

Means-tested help with education-related transport costs for under 16s is also available in England and Wales from local education authorities, whilst 16-18 years olds can apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

## 2. Welsh Government action

In a letter to the Petitions Committee Chair on 25 May 2023, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS, acknowledged low bus fares can encourage more bus travel. He cited recent discounted travel initiatives such as a March 2022 free bus trial in Newport and the summer free bus scheme in Swansea. He also outlined measures being considered to make public transport more affordable in Wales, including:

...capped single fares, zonal fares, integrated bus and rail ticketing and enhanced young person's ticketing.

The Deputy Minister also pointed to proposed bus reforms. The Welsh Government's 'One network, one timetable, one ticket' white paper and accompanying 2022 Bus Strategy include proposals for franchising which, it says, could improve affordability by making transport operators:

... put people before profit and make buses as easy and attractive to use as we can.

Plans also included proposals to simplify the bus network and fares, so:

... all buses run on the same ticketing system, and people's tickets are based on their journey rather than the operator on whose route they happen to be.

The Deputy Minister stated that whilst the Welsh Government was keen to improve bus fare initiatives, funding is being prioritised for maintaining essential community bus services.

## 3. Welsh Parliament action

Following its 2022 inquiry into bus and rail transport, the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure (CCEI) Committee's October 2022 report cited concerns from Professor Mark Barry that current bus concessions were not fair for young people. He advocated:



...providing a bit more support for younger people in a very uncertain work environment where travel costs make up a disproportionately high proportion of what people actually earn.

As a result, the report recommended that:

The Welsh Government should bring forward proposals as soon as possible to address transport poverty in Wales arising from the cost-of-living crisis, including subsidised fare pricing and other financial support.

The Welsh Government's response accepted this recommendation in principle. It reiterated its interest in building on the MyTravelPass scheme, but cited budget constraints as a limiting factor.

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.

# Protect agency workers in the NHS

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Tachwedd 2023  
Petitions Committee | 27 November 2023

Reference: SR23/6916-3

Petition Number: P-06-1361

Petition title: Protect agency workers in the NHS

Text of petition:

At present agency workers are not afforded the same safeguards and support from health boards as other NHS employees. As an agency healthcare support worker, I've had personal experience of being subject to untrue and unfounded allegations which went on for months, and I did not have any recourse or opportunity to challenge these. I would have had remedies or recourse in a court of law had I been directly employed by the NHS.

The NHS relies on agency workers to provide essential services. They should be treated fairly. I therefore urge the Welsh Government to review the policies governing the employment and treatment of workers recruited through agencies in its oversight function.



---

## 1. Background

Agency workers in the NHS are typically employed by an external agency who are responsible for staff terms and conditions and for dealing with staff grievances.

There is an [NHS Service handbook](#) which sets out the terms and conditions for NHS staff who are employed directly by NHS Wales.

Agency staff do have certain employment rights which are [set out here on the UK Government website](#). This [Welsh Government Code of Practice on ethical employment for the Welsh public sector](#) also notes:

Once an agency worker has been engaged by the hirer for a period of 12 weeks, provided they have been undertaking the same role for the whole period, they earn the right to the same basic working and employment conditions as direct recruits. This includes rights covering pay, duration of working time, rest breaks and annual leave.

## 2. Welsh Government response

The Minister for Health and Social Services stated in her response to the petition that agency workers and their employment terms and conditions are not a matter for the Welsh Government, as agency staff are employed by the agency, not the NHS. "It is the agency's responsibility to deal fairly with any grievances that might be raised".

The Minister noted that agency workers operate on flexible working hours and are typically remunerated outside the usual NHS pay levels. She went on to say that should agency workers wish to have the same benefits as employed members of staff, they may wish to consider applying for a contracted NHS position or working through the NHS Bank.

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.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1361  
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/02424/23

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

13 November 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 11 September on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-06-1361: 'Protect agency workers in the NHS'.

I was sorry to read about the petitioner's concerns. However, agency workers, and the terms and conditions on which they are employed are not a matter for the Welsh Government as agency staff are employed by the agency, not the NHS. It is the agency's responsibility to deal fairly with any grievances that might be raised.

Agency workers operate on flexible working hours where they are able to choose the shifts they work dependant on their needs and are typically remunerated outside the usual NHS pay levels. Should agency workers wish to have the same benefits of being an employed member of staff, including the security of regular shifts, sick pay, holiday pay and other such benefits they may wish to consider applying for a contracted NHS position or working through the NHS Bank. This could be for all or some of the hours they would wish to be employed for.

Yours sincerely,

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

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

[Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales)

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

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-06-1371 - Re-open the railway stop in Nant-y-Derry Goytre Fawr to include us in the South Wales Metro

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Tachwedd 2023  
Petitions Committee | 27 November 2023

Reference: SR23/7092

**Petition Number:** P-06-1371

**Petition title:** Re-open the railway stop in Nant-y-Derry Goytre Fawr to include us in the South Wales Metro

**Text of petition:** We have sufficient population to include this in the plan. We currently have to use the A4042 to connect with Cardiff and England with a limited bus service. Demand among residents is growing.



## 1. Background

Aside from the Core Valleys Lines (CVL), which transferred into Welsh Government ownership in 2020, rail infrastructure – including stations – is not devolved and is the responsibility of the UK Government.

Although the Welsh Government has powers to invest in rail it doesn't receive a Block Grant allocation.

Nant-y-Derry is a village in Monmouthshire. It's located on the Welsh Marches Line. The village railway station closed in 1958. As it's outside the CVL area, investment in the Marches Line is the responsibility of the UK Government.

The Welsh Government's National Transport Delivery Plan 2022-2027 highlights that it is constructing new stations on the CVL, including at Crwys and Butetown. It continues to say "we are also considering the case for further new stations and interchange improvements at a number of locations across the CVL."

On non-devolved stations, the plan draws attention to previous work to reopen stations on the non-devolved national rail network. This includes Bow St Station in Ceredigion, which opened in February 2021 with investment from both the Welsh and UK Governments following a long campaign by the local community.

The plan says the Welsh Government "will continue to work with the UK Government on future opportunities for additional stations across the network."

Transport for Wales (TfW) is currently consulting on proposals for five new stations on the South Wales Mainline. These proposals emerged from the recommendations of the South East Wales Transport Commission (the 'Burns Commission'), which made recommendations on alternatives to the M4 relief road.

Development work is being undertaken using UK Government funding announced following endorsement of the Burns Commission recommendations in the 2021 final report by the UK Government's Union Connectivity Review. However, the TfW consultation materials make clear that once the proposals are developed, "this project is dependent on lots of other things also taking place. Most importantly, we need to receive funding to develop and deliver the final works".

In the past, new Welsh stations have been part-funded through the UK Government's New Stations Fund.

The issue of whether Westminster has underfunded Welsh rail infrastructure has been discussed for some time. The Welsh Government has called for devolution of responsibility with appropriate funding.

The UK Parliament's Welsh Affairs Committee reported on rail infrastructure in Wales in July 2021. It found a strong case for additional investment in Welsh rail infrastructure. However, it didn't see benefits in devolving rail infrastructure planning and funding to Wales. Rather it highlighted significant liabilities.

## 2. Welsh Government action

The letter to the Chair from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change on this petition highlights that the Marches Line is the responsibility of Westminster. The letter says, "The UK Government has consistently rejected our request for further rail devolution and have failed to adequately invest in Wales".

It continues to say the UK Government "periodically issues a competitive bidding process" for new stations in England and Wales - a reference to the New Stations Fund - and highlights past Welsh Government support for projects in Wales. It says strong community engagement is important in this process.

The Welsh Government and TfW have worked with the UK Government and Network Rail to develop a rail infrastructure project pipeline, including new stations. The Deputy Minister says new projects can be added to this list.

## 3. Welsh Parliament action

While proposals for new stations have been discussed regularly in the Senedd, proposals for a new station at Nant-y-Derry do not seem to have been raised to date.

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.







Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1371  
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/02465/23

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

08 November 2023

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter 2 October on behalf of David Thomas regarding Petition P-06-1371 re-open the railway stop in Nant-y-Derry Goytre Fawr to include us in the South Wales Metro.

The Marches line and its infrastructure are not owned by Welsh Government. UK Government is the owner and is responsible through Network Rail for all management and development. This is the case for most of the railway in Wales, except the Core Valley lines. The UK Government has consistently rejected our request for further rail devolution and have failed to adequately invest in Wales.

In the absence of the appropriate devolution of rail infrastructure and a fair funding settlement, we need the UK Government to fulfil their responsibilities for improving the rail network in Wales, including funding the development and construction of new stations. The UK Government periodically issues a competitive bidding process for the development of new rail stations across Wales and England, the last round was in 2020.

Welsh Government has made bids to support station reopening projects across Wales. These generally do better in the UK Government's process when there is strong, organised community support with a developed business case.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lee.Waters@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.

Given the need to prioritise limited investment, Welsh Government has worked with the UK Department for Transport, Office of the Secretary of State for Wales, Transport for Wales and Network Rail to develop a prioritised pipeline for rail infrastructure enhancements. This includes the consideration of potential new stations. This pipeline will set our initial priorities for rail investment, however if other projects emerge with a strong case they may be added to this list.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered on a light gray grid background.

**Lee Waters AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

# P-06-1372 Save our fflecsi bwcabws service

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 November 2023  
Petitions Committee | 27 Tachwedd 2023

Reference: SR23/7092-5

Petition Number: P-06-1372

Petition title: Save our fflecsi bwcabws service

**Text of petition:** Fflecsi Bwcabus is a fully accessible local bus service, which operates within specific areas in Wales, providing a mixture of both fixed route services and bookable journeys. Fflecsi Bwcabus is designed to help people make local journeys and connections to main line bus services. A bus picks you up at your request, changing its route so that all passengers can get to where they need to go.

Fflecsi Bwcabus was created to replace local community bus services. People in rural communities rely on this service to get them to doctors' appointments, work places, for shopping and to meet up with friends. This service is a vital part of our rural communities and for a lot of people it is their only means of getting out and about and many elderly people would be isolated if this service does not continue.



# 1. Background

Bwcabus, now Fflecsi Bwcabus, is a demand responsive bus service which connects rural communities to mainline bus services in Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The scheme has been funded from a range of sources including the Welsh Government, local authorities, and the European Regional Development Fund.

The service was set up with input from Professor Stuart Cole in 2009. A number of other demand responsive bus services have since been developed – collectively known as the Fflecsi service.

In September it was announced that the Fflecsi Bwcabus service would be withdrawn on 31 October due to a lack of funding. This prompted concerns from regular passengers who say they rely on the service.

In announcing the service would end, Ceredigion County Council stated this was a result of the Welsh Government no longer being able to provide funding. It had previously been funded through a European Regional Development Programme (RDP) grant, however the Welsh Government has been fully funding the service since the RDP funding ended in July 2023.

Following the announcement the service would end, in response to topical questions during Plenary, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change said:

I was very sorry to hear that the Bwcabus service will be coming to an end...the UK Government has failed to replace funding for rural transport schemes previously supported by the EU. We're therefore unable to continue supporting Bwcabus, but we are working with Transport for Wales and the local authorities to explore alternative options...

...I need no persuading of its merits. All I need is cash to keep it going, and...I'm afraid I don't have any.

On 10<sup>th</sup> October it was announced that Pembrokeshire County Council had been able to procure a replacement service for Pembrokeshire from its own budget. This service will run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, however the longer term future of the service is unknown.

## Wider bus funding and reform

More generally, the Welsh Government has been providing emergency support to the bus industry following the collapse in passenger numbers as a result of the pandemic. Most recently it announced £46m to support services to March 2024. The statement announcing this funding also referred to developing “a longer-term sustainable funding model [for bus services] that bridges the gap to franchising”. The Welsh Government is expected to introduce a Wales-wide system of franchising through a new Bus Services Bill this Senedd term (i.e. 2023-24).

## 2. Welsh Government action

In his letter to the Chair the Deputy Minister outlines that Transport for Wales has evaluated the scheme, included its operational costs and passenger demand. He states:

...passenger demand for the service remains very low - typically only one passenger carried per hour per vehicle. This combined with the fact the service contracts for Bwcabus are due end imminently, the anticipated cost of replacing these on a 'like for like' basis also look prohibitively expensive

## 3. Welsh Parliament action

The situation regarding the fflecsi Bwcabus service was referenced by several Members during a Plaid Cymru debate on bus services on 4 October. Neither the motion tabled by Plaid Cymru, which included a call for the Welsh Government to reinstate the service, nor the Government's amendment was agreed.

On 13 October, Andrew R.T. Davies MS tabled a written question asking if the Welsh Government intends to repurpose any funding to ensure the service can still operate. At the time of preparing this brief a response to the question had not been provided.

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



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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1372  
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/02464/23

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

01 November 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence of 02 October regarding 'Petition P-06-1372 Save our fflecsi bwcabus service'.

The Bwcabus service has been running now for over ten years, during this time we have either directly funded the scheme or facilitated grant funding - the latest of which was from the European Union. Unfortunately, the latest package of European Union funding has now come to an end as we have left the European Union. No replacement funding has been provided by the UK Government despite their promises that Wales would not be a penny worse off after Brexit. Welsh Government budget challenges also mean that we are unable to source alternative funding from departmental budgets for the scheme.

Bwcabus was one of the first demand responsive bus schemes to be introduced in Wales, and has provided us and the local authorities with a valuable insight into the operational challenges of running these types of services. We have since funded a number of fflecsi pilot schemes in other areas.

Transport for Wales have carried out a detailed evaluation of the Bwcabus scheme, which looked in detail at operational costs and passenger demand for the service. Unfortunately, despite the Bwcabus scheme been running now for a number of years, passenger demand for the service remains very low - typically only one passenger carried per hour per vehicle. This combined with the fact the service contracts for Bwcabus are due end imminently, the anticipated cost of replacing these on a 'like for like' basis also look prohibitively expensive

We have provided additional funding to Carmarthenshire County Council to enable to them to continue the service until the end of October.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lee.Waters@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.

Pembrokeshire County Council have since confirmed that they are going to fund the parts of the Bwcabus service which operate in Pembrokeshire from the end of October onwards on weekdays, but excluding Saturdays.

We are working with Councils, TfW and Community Transport providers to see how best to serve the communities affected by the closure of the Bwcabws scheme.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

**Lee Waters AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



# P-06-1374 Bring Wales in line with England by allowing landowners 60 days tent and campervan camping a year.

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Tachwedd 2023  
Petitions Committee | 27 November 2023

Reference: SR23/7092-7

Petition Number: P-06-1374

**Petition title:** Bring Wales in line with England by allowing landowners 60 days tent and campervan camping a year.

## Text of petition:

During Covid Wales extended landowners' rights to allow tent and campervan/motor home camping from 28 days pa to 56. In 2022 it reverted to 28 days but a consultation was held around making 56 days law. A recent announcement by the Senedd put any permanent change on hold. As of July 2023 England has 60 days of permitted camping, putting Welsh landowners at a disadvantage. I urge the Senedd to look at the Town and Country Planning Order 2023 amendments and consider bringing them into Welsh law.

The new amendment passed in England in July 2023 allowing landowners 60 days of up to 50 tents and campervan/motor home camping per year, subject to some new regulations:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/747/article/3/made>



The Senedd response that the consultation in Wales had concluded and that changes to the pop-up campsite rules would be looked at in a future update of the planning permitted rights rules:

<https://record.senedd.wales/WrittenQuestion/87749>

I urge that this review is held now, and tries to be as consistent as possible with the English amendments so as not to disadvantage Welsh landowners like myself who want to diversify the use of their land in order to maintain an income in these difficult times for everyone.

## 1. Background

### Permitted development

Certain development is classed as “permitted development” meaning there is no requirement to seek planning permission because it is automatically granted. The *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995* (the GPDO) sets out what constitutes permitted development.

Class B of Part 4 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO provides for the temporary use of land (excluding buildings) for 28 days, subject to certain limitations and conditions. Under these permitted development rights, land can be used for a campsite for up to 28 days a year without the need to apply for planning permission - although this applies to tents only and excludes caravans.

If the temporary use of the land lasts for a period longer than 28 days or permanently, it would be for the local planning authority (LPA) to determine whether this constitutes ‘development’ or a ‘change of use’ in planning terms. If so, then an application for planning permission may be necessary.

This is known as the “28-day rule” that is in force in Wales.

### Changes in England

On 26 July the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) Order 2023* came into force. This allows for land in England to be used as a temporary campsite for up to 60 days of the year without the need to apply for planning permission. However there are a number of

conditions attached, **which do not apply under the Welsh 28-day rule**, including that:

- no more than 50 pitches are allowed;
- toilet and waste disposal facilities must be provided; and
- the LPA must be notified in advance every year, they must be provided with a copy of a site plan as well as the dates of operation.

While caravans are still excluded under the 60-day rule, campervans and motorhomes are permitted.

A **camping licence** is also required (in both England and Wales) to pitch tents for more than 42 consecutive days or more than 60 days total within a calendar year. Therefore, if a campsite owner in England were to use the new rules to run a campsite for 60 consecutive days, while planning permission would not be required, they would still need to apply for a licence.

## Situation in Wales

As above, the 28-day rule is still in force in Wales.

The Welsh Government introduced **new temporary permitted development rights** in April 2021 to help aid the economic recovery from Covid-19. This provided for an additional 28 days for the temporary use of land meaning, in practice, land could be used as a campsite for up to 56 days a year without the need for planning permission. However, the **relevant legislation** was only in force until January 2022.

In November 2021 the **Welsh Government consulted** on a range of matters relating to permitted development, including whether to make the additional temporary use of land changes permanent. To date, the Welsh Government has not published a full response to the consultation with a decision on whether the temporary expansion will be made permanent, nor has it stated whether it will introduce the same rule that is now in force in England.

## 2. Welsh Government action

In her letter to the Chair, dated 7 November, the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James, says the Welsh Government:

...received a number of concerns about extending the permitted development rights for temporary campsites from residents adjacent to

sites, both during the operation of the 56-day allowance following the coronavirus restrictions and in response to the consultation at the start of last year to retain the extended period.

She says the Welsh Government will consider the issues when it next makes amendments to permitted development rights. The next set of changes have yet to be scheduled.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

In March 2023 Darren Millar MS asked for an update on the Welsh Government's consultation regarding the extension of permitted development rights. The response stated that consideration of the changes "consulted on in respect of pop-up campsites is ongoing".

In June 2023 Huw Irranca-Davies MS also tabled a written question on the issue. The Welsh Government's response stated that:

...A final decision will be taken as part of the next review of permitted development rights. The review has yet to be scheduled.

More recently, in September James Evans MS asked the Welsh Government what plans it had to review the situation in Wales in light of the changes in England. The Welsh Government responded that it:

...will consider whether 60 days is appropriate, taking account of consultation responses already received on this issue, when we make the next amendments to permitted development rights. The next set of changes have yet to be scheduled.

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-06-1374  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/02798/23

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

07 November 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, regarding petition P-06-1374.

I received a number of concerns about extending the permitted development rights for temporary campsites from residents adjacent to sites, both during the operation of the 56-day allowance following the coronavirus restrictions and in response to the consultation at the start of last year to retain the extended period. Further consideration of the issue is therefore required.

We will consider whether 60 days is appropriate, taking account of consultation responses already received on this issue, when we make the next amendments to permitted development rights. The next set of changes have yet to be scheduled.

Yours sincerely,

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

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales](mailto:Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales)

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

**Back Page 52**  
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-06-1374 Bring Wales in line with England by allowing landowners 60 days tent and campervan camping a year, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 21.11.23**

Andrew Walton  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Thank you for the chance to respond to the letter from Julie James AS/MS, Minister for Climate Change.

You asked if the response addresses my questions, and the answer is no. In England a consultation was held in the Spring of this year to amend their permitted rights for camping to 60 days on a permanent basis. This was enacted in the Planning law in July of this year.

The Welsh Government held a consultation on the issue of permitted rights amendments 2 years ago now, and the consultation closed in February 2022. Almost 2 years on from the consultation closing and nothing further has happened. At the very least, rather than keep pushing the issue into the long grass by saying a date to look at this has not yet been scheduled, can you please commit today in this debate to a date by which you will hold a full debate on the matter. Also, while in your letter you refer to evidence received to the consultation, I note that at no point have the consultation results and any evidence been released. As part of today's proceedings can you please also commit to releasing, in full, the results of the consultation held around the element of permitted rights to run a pop-up campsite so that everyone can see the level of support and opposition to the change and what issues need to be overcome?

At the moment in Wales a landowner can create a pop-up camping site without any recourse to talk to neighbours or the local council so I can see how some sites may have arisen which are considered an issue to those living very near-by. But by moving to the same rules as have been enacted in England you can actually avoid some of these issues. For instance, under the English 60 day rule the land owner has to write to the council to notify them of the dates on which they will be operating. This helps with basics such as notifying the fire service in the event of an emergency but it also serves to give the council a list of the names and addresses of those operating under the permitted rights rules and therefore it is easier for the council or other authority to address any issues with the landowner directly. And of course laws around noise nuisance already exist and can be acted upon by the council if it were a problem.

Another advantage of following the England rules is that the sites which choose to operate for up to 60 days in England need to provide toilet facilities and full waste disposal facilities – in Wales this can help with the recycling rates – as a camp site we are very keen to reduce waste, reuse anything we can, and recycle everything.

I must add that most land-owners who use the permitted rights option, like myself, use a website such as Pitchup.com for bookings and these companies ensure that the campsite has full camping rules which include the need to have no noise between the hours of 11pm and 8am and to ensure that other rules around fires etc are included. As an aside we actually specify 10pm for all noise to stop on site, mainly because we live on the land as well and are closer to the camping than any of our neighbours – so from a selfish perspective we also want to be able to sleep in the summer with our windows open. I think you will find that many other pop-up campsites are in the same boat with their residence nearer to the camping than any neighbour would be. The other advantage of companies such as pitch-up.com is that they set up the listing on their site as a pop-up site so they know how many days a site is allowed to operate for in a calendar year, and once you reach that level you can not take any more bookings through them. If you allowed 60 days per year of permitted rights camping more small sites would turn to using these booking services as they would have increased revenue to pay the commission and more dates available to fill and this would increase the proportion of sites which have rules in place and therefore protect neighbours' interests.

The difference between 28 days and 60 days of permitted rights will determine how many landowners even find it viable to open a pop-up campsite. For instance, between 6th April 2021, when the extension was announced in Wales, and 3rd Jan 2022, when it ended, 97 new pop-up campsites were added to pitchup.com. The following year for the same period, only 53 new pop-ups were added. Currently only 28 pop-ups in Wales are live and taking bookings on pitchup.com as the 28-day permitted development right is unviable for many landowners. The significant cost of providing services such as mobile toilet and shower blocks and water supplies is difficult to recoup if sites can only operate for 28 days a year. Sites need to be able to make best use of the weather - bad weather plagued the sector in summer 2023 - and low mid-week occupancy and time erecting and dismantling facilities also deplete the limit.

The temporary extension of permitted rights did not have a negative impact on existing campsites as pitchup.com saw bookings for these sites rise by 97% compared to 2019, highlighting the scale of the demand for outdoor holidays which they expect to remain resilient in the coming years. Pop-ups appear to have expanded the overall camping market rather than taking share from existing formal campsites.

I don't need to tell you and your fellow Senedd members that the Welsh economy is heavily reliant on tourism, particularly in areas of west Wales which are less populous but also offer stunning locations to stay. With the cost of living crisis we are seeing more and more people plan to have staycations in the UK in 2024 and beyond, and this also helps to reduce the carbon footprint by avoiding air travel. But Wales will miss out on a large portion of this income by putting Welsh pop-up campsites at a 32 day disadvantage to their English counterparts.

I am a senior statistician for the UK Government by training, so analytical evidence is what most persuades me. Camping and caravanning is more important to Welsh

tourism than for other parts of the UK. In Wales, camping and caravanning holidays make up 34% of all holidays, compared with 20% in England and 21% in Scotland. Yet that 20% in England, because of the 60 days ruling means that spend on pop-up camping holiday sites in England this year has been 577% more than in Wales. That is a massive boost that could be given to Welsh landowners with a simple change in the rules to bring consistency with England. Speaking personally, when we have campers we tell them all about what the local area has to offer, and we find that our campers don't stay on site all day but do head out in to Aberaeron, Cardigan, New Quay and Aberystwyth to visit attractions and to eat in local pubs and restaurants. So the knock-on impact of campers staying to the local economy and local businesses is massive. A quick look back at our bookings for this year shows that over 75% of our campers came from England, so that is a significant income being brought in to Wales. In 2021, temporary campsites listed on Pitchup across the UK generated £25m for the British rural economy (estimates based on Pitching the Value figures p.23). This is broken down as:

- £9.8m in pitch fees
- £2.9m in extras like firewood and fresh produce
- £12.3m in off-site spend for local pubs, restaurants and newsagents for example

In Wales the contribution has been steadily declining since the PDRs reverted despite UK booking value increasing by 20% this year in comparison to last year, underpinned by long-term trends in sustainable living and health and wellness.

More of holidaymakers' spend is in the local rural economy than on pitch fees. Pop-up campsites have contributed £4.2m to the Welsh rural economy since the start of 2021 but now the 28 days rules are back in place the 2023 contribution is only around half the level of 2021.

The increased time for this permitted development right will have a hugely positive impact on communities by boosting GVA and employment opportunities without depriving local residents of housing stock, unlike tourism accommodation such as holiday lets. Also, with a higher footfall than holiday lets, minimal on-site facilities (and in tents themselves) and low prices meaning more money in holidaymakers' pockets, campsites deliver a much greater share of visitor spend to rural high streets and other local businesses. This spending over a short period helps to underpin the viability of local services for the benefit of local residents all year round.

I have also spoken with pitchup.com about the issue of complaints and they state "We have received fewer than a handful of complaints relating to pop up sites. In fact, we have found that, as pop-up campsites are cheaper and offer a nearly-wild experience, they can help to deter illegal 'dirty camping' by providing a regulated and managed alternative - further helping local communities and easing the need for local authority enforcement. Pitchup.com sends out a copy of the Countryside Code with every booking, encouraging customers to leave no trace."



So I urge the Senedd members to consider a timely debate on the permitted rights rules for land-owners and to consider the case study below. Ultimately all Wales landowners who run a pop-up campsite want to be able to run extended pop-up camping in a sustainable manner which boosts the Welsh economy without negative impacts on the environment or the local areas by ensuring that the right rules are in place, under a light touch council lead scheme commensurate with the number of days on offer i.e. not as burdensome as the requirements for a year round camping licence.

Thank you for the chance to put my views across.

Andrew Walton

Tynrhos Camping and Fishing Ltd.

### Case study:

The permanent introduction of the 60-day allowance will benefit hundreds of farm owners in rural communities in Wales, such as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], who own [REDACTED] in Pembrokeshire:

- [REDACTED] site is located on their family organic beef farm that has existed since 1948. When they learned of the 56-day rule, [REDACTED] invested around £1,300 in creating their site - building 3 portable showers and 3 kitchenettes for visitors. Their site went live on Pitchup on 25 June, and closed on 3 September.
- As a result of the 56-day rule, the site was able to remain open from 9th July through to 3rd September. [REDACTED] “made around £43,000 in those 56 days and after paying all of the bills (logs, campfires, toilet hire, drain digger, cleaning products)... profited a fantastic £36,000.”
- [REDACTED] added that as farmers, this extension “has made a massive difference”, explaining that the revenue provided by the pop-up campsite made them “financially able to keep the farm going that bit longer and support our family better.”
- Explaining why the pop-up sites are an excellent way to diversify income, they said: “If we were to invest into the cattle, we would have to restructure the whole business and become a herd of about 75-100 head of cattle. We would have to build more sheds to sleep all of the cattle and this would cost around about £220,000 - £270,000 and would still not make as much money as the campsite did in those 56 days. It would also put our family into a huge, constant, never ending debt which would be impossible to ever pay back.”

[REDACTED] concluded that the ease by which they generated the campsite income has been a game changer for their farm. They concluded: “To change from the 28- day rule to the 56-day rule permanently would dramatically change our income, our livelihood, our future and make less impact on our beautiful, organic fields.”

# Stop basic income pilot payments to unaccompanied asylum-seekers

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 27 Tachwedd 2023  
Petitions Committee | 27 November 2023

Reference: SR23/7092-9

Petition Number: P-06-1376

Petition title: Welsh Government to stop basic income pilot payments to unaccompanied asylum-seekers

Text of petition: The Welsh Labour Government are paying some unaccompanied asylum-seeking children £1600 a month as part of a basic income pilot scheme for young people who leave local authority care.

What about people struggling on far less who have paid their taxes and contributions all their working lives.

This must not be allowed and smacks of a hollow promise to attract votes.



# 1. Background

In July 2022, the Welsh Government launched a Basic Income for Care Leavers pilot ('the pilot'). The pilot provides eligible care-experienced young people with a basic income payment of £1,600 per month (£1,280, after-tax), for 24 months from the month after their 18th birthday.

The pilot will be delivered for a total of 36 months, with individuals entering and exiting the pilot during this timeframe according to their entry point. The Welsh Government estimated that over 500 young people will be eligible to join the scheme. As of 31 July 2023, 635 have received the basic income payment.

An overview of the scheme, published by the Welsh Government in August 2022, sets out the standard eligibility criteria for the pilot. It states that a person can take part in the pilot if they:

- Are leaving care and turning 18 years of age between 1st July 2022 and 30th June 2023.
- Have been looked after by a local authority for a period of 13 weeks, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks, which began after he or she reached 14 and ended after he or she reached 16.
- Are resident in Wales, or have been placed outside of Wales but are supported by a Welsh local authority's social services department.

Referring to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) it states that:

In line with the Welsh Government's Nation of Sanctuary approach, eligible asylum seekers and refugees are to be permitted to participate in the scheme, so long as they meet the general eligibility criteria and have access to a bank/building society/credit union account.

Therefore UASC who meet the eligibility criteria for the pilot (being a 'Category 3' care leaver who is looked after by a Welsh local authority) have been able to participate in the pilot.

As of 31 July 2023 67 or 11 per cent of recipients were UASC or former UASC at the point of enrolment.

## 1.1. Access to legal aid

The overview of the scheme highlights that in the event a recipient of the basic income payment requires legal representation, due to the level of income they receive they may not be eligible for legal aid. It sets out what should be considered in these circumstances:

One of the 4 key principles of the Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot is that taking part in the pilot should make no participant worse off. Where access to Legal Aid might be a factor this should be considered as part of the overall 'better off' calculations. We recognise that an individual's circumstances may change once they have enrolled onto the pilot and this may require further consideration to ensure that they remain better off continuing to receive the Basic Income support.

The Welsh government made a request to the UK Government for the legal aid rules to be eased for recipients of the pilot scheme. On 18 April 2023 the UK Government confirmed that it was not in a position to be able to exclude members of the Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot from the means assessments for legal aid.

## 2. Welsh Parliament action

In September 2020 the Senedd debated the introduction of a UBI trial in Wales with 28 of 51 Members voting in favour of the motion.

In November 2021 the Petitions Committee considered a petition calling for a 'Care Leavers Plus' Universal Basic Income pilot that is geographically based and includes a range of people (including children, the employed, the unemployed and pensioners) as well as care leavers. The Committee concluded that plans to target care leavers had merit, but stressed that nobody should be "worse off than if they had not participated". They also recommended that an effective pilot scheme should "include care leavers from as diverse as possible a range of backgrounds, locations and circumstances".

The Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee referred to the Basic Income Pilot in its report on Radical reform for care experienced children (May 2023). It states that while the potential of basic income to "mitigate the exposure of care leavers to poverty at a critical time in their lives" was welcomed, some stakeholders and care leavers had concerns about the pilot (including

around substance misuse and criminal exploitation). Highlighting challenges around the implementation of the scheme the Children's Commissioner's written evidence to the Committee states that:

I welcome the ambitions of the Basic Income Pilot to support care leavers, however, I have been made aware of issues with the implementation of the Basic Income Pilot, particularly for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People. I am aware that some young people's eligibility for other financial benefits have been impacted, such as with the claiming of student finance, access to housing benefit for those living in supported accommodation and access to legal aid.

The Committee didn't come to a view on the pilot, but welcomed the Welsh Government's commitments to a robust independent evaluation, which the Committee will consider when it is released.

The Leader of the Welsh Conservative Party Andrew RT Davies has voiced concerns about the pilot and has argued that giving a basic income payment to people who don't have settled status, can act as a "pull factor to line the pockets of people smugglers on the other side of the channel".

Similar concerns about the scheme have been raised by the UK Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Wales, David TC Davies.

### 3. Welsh Government action

On 25 October 2023 the Minister for Social Justice published a written statement which set out the progress of the pilot. She stated that early feedback from those taking part in the pilot was positive and the provisional uptake rate of 97 per cent was "significantly high":

We have heard fantastic feedback so far from those enrolled and are delighted with the record-breaking uptake, but we are still at the early stages of the pilot scheme and it will take years for the true impact on their lives to be assessed

Cardiff University, led by the University's Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre (CASCADE), is carrying out a four-year evaluation of the pilot (November 2022-2026). The Minister said the research will track the impact of the pilot on their lives now, as well as the next few years as they continue into

adulthood and consider how the pilot has been implemented, what the effects of it have been and what the costs of it have been.

Correspondence from the Minister for Social Justice to the Petitions Committee on 25 October 2023 states that more than 600 care leavers turning 18 between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 have participated in the scheme. The Minister states that:

[...] care experienced unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have always been included as eligible for the basic income pilot as category three care leavers. In line with our Nation of Sanctuary approach, we want to ensure that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are supported to rebuild their lives. Enabling eligible young people to participate in the Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot supports this ambition.

The Minister confirmed that some of those involved in the pilot were UASC at the point of enrolment, but a number of those have since been granted leave to remain (the right to live, work and study in the UK, and apply for benefits if eligible).

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

Jane Hutt AS/MS  
Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a'r Prif Chwip  
Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1376  
Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/00877/23

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

25 October 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 17 October regarding Petition P-06-1376 which calls on Welsh Government to stop basic income pilot payments to unaccompanied asylum-seekers.

The Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot offered more than 600 care leavers turning 18 between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 the opportunity to receive £1600 each month (before tax) for two years to support them as they make the transition to adult life. This included some individuals who were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children at the point of enrolment. Care experienced unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have always been included as eligible for the basic income pilot as category three care leavers..

In line with our Nation of Sanctuary approach, we want to ensure that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are supported to rebuild their lives. Enabling eligible young people to participate in the Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot supports this ambition.

The reason we proposed working with this cohort over any other groups who typically face poverty and other forms of disadvantage, is to understand the unique challenges care leavers themselves face and whether extending the time they are supported could have a positive impact on their entry into adulthood.

The basic income monthly payment of £1600 is taxed at source (before the young person receives it) as unearned income. As such, all participants in the pilot receive £1280 a month, subject to any changes in the basic rate of income tax.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Jane.Hutt@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Jane.Hutt@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Jane.Hutt@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Jane.Hutt@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.

Our enrolment data regarding former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children reflects their asylum status at the point of enrolment, and we know that subsequently a number of former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children participating in the pilot have been granted leave to remain since joining the pilot.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a distinct 'H'.

**Jane Hutt AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a'r Prif Chwip**  
**Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip**





# Agenda Item 6.1

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

This petition was submitted by Robert Curtis, having collected a total of 4,052 signatures.

### **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.

### **Additional Information:**

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.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Vale Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

# Agenda Item 6.2

## **P-06-1209 Create a national list of all unpaid carers in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Mike O'Brien, having collected a total of 77 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

The Welsh government have said for a long time now that identifying unpaid carers is a difficult task, so this petition is to ask for the creation of a national carers register to make identifying unpaid carers easier.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Vale Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

Julie Morgan AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1209  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMSS/00641/23

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

1 November 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence on 6 October, regarding petition P-06-1209 on a national list of all unpaid carers. I wish to provide an update to my previous letter on this subject, dated 7 September. As anticipated in this letter, I presented the exploratory work and costings involved in the creation of a national list to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Unpaid Carers on 25 September.

I outlined the GDPR restrictions on the sharing of data from lists held by third sector and statutory agencies and the limitations inherent in a scheme that would require unpaid carers to be signed up to more than one list. I left the meeting to allow open discussion by the advisory group. I was subsequently informed by Alwyn Jones, Chair, that the group did not consider that establishing a register as outlined would be of significant value or benefit to unpaid carers.

The petitioner has queried the costs of the collation of contact details for unpaid carer list holders in local authorities, health boards and carers organisations. This allows us to have Welsh Government information disseminated to all carers on lists across Wales. This was one of the ambitions of a single national list. The collation work was undertaken by officials at no additional cost.

The petitioner has queried the willingness of some list holders to disseminate Welsh Government information. We are not aware of any list holder who would not be willing to do so.

We have committed to reviewing how we are delivering against our strategic priorities for unpaid carers and establishing a working group reporting to the Ministerial Advisory Group. Promoting carer awareness and self-identification by carers is a major aspect of our current strategy, delivered by national carer organisations.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Julie.Morgan@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Julie.Morgan@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Julie.Morgan@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Julie.Morgan@gov.wales)

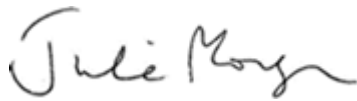
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

The petitioner mentions a carers card they think could be the basis for collaboration to achieve a national list. My officials will consider this alongside other schemes that are being looked at. Unpaid carers having a card to identify themselves and the valuable role they provide could be a positive opportunity. My officials are currently looking into these schemes in partnership with our third sector partners. There are issues to consider regarding the appropriate body to promote schemes, which may have a commercial element and verification of unpaid carer status.

This is part of our ongoing work and I will continue to work closely with the Ministerial Advisory Group to ensure we are providing the most effective and valued support to unpaid carers.

Yours sincerely

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

**Julie Morgan AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Social Services

**P-06-1209 Create a national list of all unpaid carers in Wales, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 21.11.23**

I'd like to address the Deputy Ministers point on the verification status of unpaid.

One of Welsh governments main priorities in the National Strategy for Unpaid Carers is the identification of unpaid carers and making improvements around how this happens however, if unpaid carers are going to be expected to verify their status this will in fact have the opposite effect and discourage unpaid carers from self-identifying.

At a recent Carers Wales conference held in Cardiff which the Deputy Minister herself attended, one of the two Unpaid Carer Representative on the Ministerial Advisory Group for Unpaid Carers stated that organisations need to start showing that they trust unpaid carers. By asking people to verify that they are indeed unpaid carers this shows a lack of trust, after all what is there to be gained from claiming to be an unpaid carer when you are not.

I would be interested to hear where the idea of unpaid carers having to verify their caring status has come from.

Companies like Carers Card UK don't verify whether or not a person signing up for one their cards is being truthful and trust that a person signing up is actually an unpaid carer. At the Cardiff and Vale Unpaid Carers Assembly held at Sophia Gardens Cricket Ground on Monday November 20<sup>th</sup> 2023, my colleague and fellow organiser of the event and I were proud to be able to launch a free digital version of the aforementioned Carers Card UK and we will also not be seeking that unpaid carers verify their status. In the continued event of a lack of Welsh Government supported National Unpaid Carers Register we will endeavour to seek out further funding so that we can begin to provided the Carers Card UK card at both a regional and National level

Welsh government wants to earn the trust of unpaid carers, but in this instance they are not showing that they trust us. Trust is a two way street, so if they want our trust they also need to show that they are prepared to trust us.

As an unpaid carer myself I can unequivocally state that there is nothing to gain by falsifying your status as an unpaid carer. No financial gain to be made, no personal gain to be had and no gain for the people we care for.

# Agenda Item 6.3

## **P-06-1337 Sycharth, the home of Owain Glyndŵr, should be bought to safeguard the site for future generations**

This petition was submitted by Elfed Wyn ap Elwyn, having collected a total of 10,539 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

History is such a key subject for us here in Wales. Stories from our nation show us how we have developed over the centuries to become what we are today. Notable characters have steered this interesting history, with none more prominent than Owain Glyndŵr, who has contributed so much to our identity, and for many, he is a symbol of the nation. It is very disheartening to see that Sycharth, Glyndŵr's home, is almost forgotten deep in the heart of rural Powys, and the place is not very accessible for people to visit.

### **Additional Information:**

It is time for the Government to ensure that this vital site is safeguarded for the next generation, by purchasing it and ensuring that it is more accessible to enable people to visit and appreciate this wonderful site.

It is disappointing to see that all our castles throughout Wales are protected, but that this site is hardly advertised, not to mention celebrated.

It's time to change the way we view the history of Wales, and Sycharth would be a good starting point.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales

From the office of the Executive Leader / Oddi wrth Swyddfa'r Arweinydd Gweithredol

Powys County Council  
Powys County Hall  
LLANDRINDOD WELLS  
Powys  
LD1 5LG

2 November 2023

Mr Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

Sent via e-mail: [petitions@senedd.wales](mailto:petitions@senedd.wales)

Dear Mr Sargeant

**Petition P-06-1337 Sycharth, the home of Owain Glyndŵr, should be bought to safeguard the site for future generations**

Thank you for your letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 regarding the above.

Whilst the erection of traffic signs within the highway on the county roads maybe a matter for the County Council as Highway Authority, the request for traffic signing to tourism destinations would need to be applied for, and funded, by the destination's owner/operator.

However, tourism signing is normally only considered where there is a significant number of people visiting a site and there is adequate parking at that facility to cater for those visitors.

I understand the need to have adequate signage to our prominent and important historical sites but the parking facility at Sycharth is very limited and to positively sign people to this location may encourage more visitors than can be accommodated. As the Deputy Minister for Economy commented '*huge visitor numbers might in fact be detrimental*' and '*that the narrow access roads provide a challenge*'.

I respectfully suggest that given the scale of the attraction, its parking and accessibility, it would not be considered as a destination that meets the requirement for tourism signing.

Yours sincerely



**Cynghorydd Sir James Gibson-Watt  
Arweinydd Gweithredol, Cyngor Sir Powys  
County Councillor James Gibson-Watt  
Executive Leader, Powys County Council**

[www.powys.gov.uk](http://www.powys.gov.uk)

Croeso i chi gysylltu â ni yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb oedi.  
You are welcome to contact us in Welsh. We will respond in Welsh, without delay.