

## Agenda – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 16 September 2024

Meeting time: 14.00

For further information contact:

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0300 200 6565

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### 1 Motion to elect a temporary Chair under Standing Order 17.22

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

### 3 New Petitions

3.1 P-06-1425 We ask the Welsh Government to reverse its decision to stop T2 buses calling at Garndolbenmaen

(Pages 1 – 10)

3.2 P-06-1429 Install a roundabout, not traffic lights, at fatal Nash Junction, Pembrokeshire

(Pages 11 – 17)

3.3 P-06-1431 A Beacon of Hope at Risk: Please Support Bronllys Well-Being Community Hub!

(Pages 18 – 28)

3.4 P-06-1432 Hold a Wales-wide Public Poll to establish the true level of public support for the 20mph limit

(Pages 29 – 37)

3.5 P-06-1438 Start a public enquiry into to the reasons, justification and evidence for 20mph

(Pages 38 – 39)



- 3.6 P-06-1439 Improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South West Wales  
(Pages 40 – 46)
- 3.7 P-06-1441 Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead, should be given statutory protection by Cadw, as an ancient tree  
(Pages 47 – 54)
- 3.8 P-06-1444 Women of North Wales have the right to have a Menopause Services/Clinic in Ysbyty Gwynedd  
(Pages 55 – 63)
- 3.9 P-06-1446 Abolish the name 'Wales' and make 'CYMRU' the only name for our country  
(Pages 64 – 93)
- 3.10 P-06-1451 Keep the name 'Wales' and not waste any more taxpayers money on pointless exercises  
(Pages 94 – 95)
- 3.11 P-06-1449 Designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)  
(Pages 96 – 102)
- 3.12 P-06-1453 Provide funding and support for the adequate provision of accessible and clean public toilets  
(Pages 103 – 109)
- 3.13 P-06-1452 Meat-free Monday in every school in Wales  
(Pages 110 – 118)
- 3.14 P-06-1454 Calling Welsh Government to provide urgent mental health support for New Dads  
(Pages 119 – 125)
- 3.15 P-06-1474 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres  
(Pages 126 – 133)

#### **4 Updates to previous petitions**

- 4.1 P-05-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve  
(Pages 134 – 141)
- 4.2 P-06-1344 Moderate quality agricultural land (grade 3b) should be used for food security not solar farms  
(Pages 142 – 146)
- 4.3 P-06-1378 We want farm subsidies to be extended to small scale and market gardeners  
(Pages 147 – 149)
- 4.4 P-06-1389 Introduce a 30mph limit on the trunk road through the villages of Eglwys Fach and Ffwrnais  
(Pages 150 – 152)
- 4.5 P-06-1400 Fair and Adequate Resourcing of General Practice in Wales  
(Pages 153 – 156)
- 4.6 P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend  
(Pages 157 – 159)
- 4.7 P-06-1404 Increase clarity and rights for people on direct payments or WILG to live independently  
(Pages 160 – 165)

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## P-06-1425 - Reverse the decision to stop T2 buses calling at Garndolbenmaen

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8621 - 2

**Petition Number:** P-06-1425

**Petition title:** We ask the Welsh Government to reverse its decision to stop T2 buses calling at Garndolbenmaen

**Text of petition:** On 5th November 2023 a new bus timetable was introduced by the Welsh Government and all the T2 buses which pass through Garndolbenmaen were withdrawn and T2 buses are by-passing the village.

The ability of people in Garndolbenmaen to travel to work, to school or to hospital appointments will be all but impossible.

There has been no consultation whatsoever with the people of Garndolbenmaen on these changes to the T2 bus service.

Most of these problems could be resolved with virtually no extra cost if the T2 service was retained to Garndolbenmaen. This would require only an extra 8 minute detour (less than two extra miles) if all the T2 buses were to continue to call at Garndolbenmaen. The minor extra expenditure would be mitigated by the avoidance of public expenditure on paying for taxi fares for school students and those people on low incomes who travel to Ysbyty Gwynedd for appointments. It would also restore a useful bus service between Garndolbenmaen and Cricieth which is now included in the new T2 bus route.

This practical proposal to resolve the problem has already been suggested by local councillor Steve Churchman, and it would be helpful if others would



also support this campaign for the T2 service to be retained for the people of Garndolbenmaen.

## 1. Background

TrawsCymru is the Welsh Government funded medium and long distance bus network in Wales. It comprises a range of services connecting destinations across Wales and in some cases into England.

Previously, the Welsh Government worked with local authorities which procured TrawsCymru services on its behalf. Since 2021 the procurement process has led by Transport for Wales (TfW).

The T2 connects Bangor with Aberystwyth. In November 2023 TfW announced changes to the T2 and T3, including that “the T2 service will now serve Criccieth instead of Garndolbenmaen, which will be served by the new T22 services which will be entering service soon”.

The T22 was introduced on 12 February, connecting Caernarfon, Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog. The timetable indicates that this provides 6 services in each direction Monday to Saturday which stop at Garndolbenmaen. The service does not stop at the vilage on Sunday and there does not appear to be an alternative service.

Although the former T2 timetable is no longer available on the TrawsCymru website, media reports indicate that Garndolbenmaen was served by eighteen T2 Traws Cymru bus services each day, with five services on a Sunday.

## 2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government has a target that, by 2040, 45% of journeys will made by public transport, walking and cycling. A bus reform Bill is expected during this Senedd which the Welsh Government hopes will help deliver on this goal.

As this Senedd Research article shows, bus passenger numbers have been declining for many years across Great Britain, including Wales. The pandemic saw a rapid decline which has not recovered.

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 £39m in the current financial year the form of the Bus Network Grant (BNG) for local authorities to “secure bus services that they deem socially necessary that the commercial market will not provide”. The statement says the BNG will “act as a bridge from the emergency funding that has been provided to bus franchising”.

The letter from the Cabinet Secretary on this petition describes the changes to the service outlined above. It says:

Based on an examination of passenger demand as part of these changes, Transport for Wales re-routed the T2 service to operate via Criccieth and Rhoslan rather than Dolbenmaen and Garndolbenmaen, which are served instead by the new TrawsCymru T22 service which links these two communities with a regular bus service to Caernarfon and Porthmadog.

The letter does not make reference to the apparent reduction in service frequency, or the absence of a Sunday service.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

In Plenary on 17 January Mabon ap Gwynfor MS, highlighted the impact of the change to the T2 service on students, and the fact that the Welsh Government’s National Transport Delivery Plan 2022-27 chapter on bus services states that a “new strategic approach to service design” is being developed. It continues:

Our service designs will build on the extensive engagement we have undertaken in the development of Bws Cymru. We will also consult on any future changes, with local authorities, and user groups before making major changes.

The Member asked the then Deputy Minister for Climate Change:

... whether it’s right that Transport for Wales did not consult with bus users and those communities, and will you look again to ensure that the communities of Garndolbenmaen, Llanuwchllyn, Llandderfel and others do get that full service that they need?

The Deputy Minister responded by apologising for the interruption to services, explaining that TfW had been working with Gwynedd Council planning “changes to the network to provide better coverage, in fact, on the corridor between Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog” referring to the T22. He explained a “slight delay” in launching the T22 service as being the result of difficulties in introducing electric vehicles, and pointed to the expected February launch date.

On 9 January, during the debate on the Draft Budget 2024-25, Delyth Jewel MS highlighted the additional funding allocated to support TfW rail services in the budget, commenting:

... while these vast quantities of money are being used to plug holes in the TfW rail budget, bus services are being starved of funding. Over the weekend, we learned that the T2 bus service through Garndolbenmaen has been axed at short notice. At the end of last year we witnessed the closure of the Bwcabus service that connected some of the most isolated, geographically, communities in south-west Wales. These are only a few examples of a wider pattern of the erosion of bus services, particularly in rural areas that don't have access to the rail network, or indeed Valleys communities, where car ownership is proportionally far lower than in cities.

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-06-1425  
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/05038/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

02 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 March to my predecessor regarding – “Petition P-06-1425 We ask the Welsh Government to reverse its decision to stop T2 buses calling at Garndolbenmaen”.

We are in the process of further strengthening and improving the TrawsCymru strategic bus network across Wales, which includes the introduction of more reliable and frequent services on key routes, new more environmentally friendly vehicles, simplified and more affordable ticketing arrangements and better information / connections for passengers at key interchanges.

Following discussions with Gwynedd Council, Transport for Wales (TfW) have been made various changes to the TrawsCymru T2 Bangor to Aberystwyth service which has included the introduction of an improved regular clockface timetable throughout the day on this key long distance route, along with the introduction of a more frequent service on Sundays. Based on an examination of passenger demand as part of these changes, Transport for Wales re routed the T2 service to operate via Criccieth and Rhoslan rather than Dolbenmaen and Garndolbenmaen, which are served instead by the new TrawsCymru T22 service which links these two communities with a regular bus service to Caernarfon and Porthmadog.

More affordable and simplified ticketing arrangements are now also offered on both of these routes, and the T22 will be served by a dedicated fleet of new electric vehicles, and the T2 route with new Euro 6 diesel vehicles.

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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.

Based on your feedback we have asked TfW to continue to closely monitor these new timetable and service route arrangements, and provide us with an update by the end of July on how services are settling down. We will also consider the petition as part of this work.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Ken Skates AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport

## **T2 Bus Service – Main Objection Points**

Prior to rerouting the T2, WG, Tfw and Cyngor Gwynedd consulted each other, but failed to consult residents and service users in the area. The loss of the T2 service was compensated by the lesser T22 service resulting in the following for service users:

- unable to get to work and or home from work;
- unable to attend appointments at Ysbyty Gwynedd except around midday;
- have seen access to GP severely restricted;
- have seen access to Dental services severely restricted;
- have had their evening and Sunday social activities completely eliminated;
- experienced curtailed retail opportunities and;
- suffered restricted ability for study at schools and colleges in the Bangor area.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) requires public bodies to consider the following in decision making. My observations accompany each of the headings.

### Collaboration:

The failure to consult service users and residents was a failure of this requirement.

### Integration:

The well-being goals of the WG, Tfw and Cyngor Gwynedd have been undermined by the failure to consider and understand the needs of service users.

### Involvement:

Those locally with the most interest in the outcome have not been involved in the service analysis. Therefore the process does not reflect the needs or diversity of the area which the Welsh Government, Tfw and Cyngor Gwynedd all serve.

### Long-term:

Balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the long-term needs cannot be proven because long-term needs of the community have not been assessed. How can you safeguard what has not been assessed and measured?

### Prevention:

Failure to consult is contrary to this principal. Consulting users and residents could have prevented problems or the service deterioration and assisted in the WG meeting objectives.

### Additional Matters Relating to the Act:

By virtue of the negative impact on Poverty, Health inequalities, Mental Health, Education and Climate Change as a result of no public consultation the decision to implement the changes to the T2 bus service in 2023 is contrary to the requirements of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (2015).

### My Conclusion:

The WG acted in good faith to improve services, however the process was flawed by the failure of the agencies to consult service users and residents in the affected area and therefore the decision to reroute the was T2 also flawed.

## The Alternatives:

If residents had been given the opportunity to voice opinions, suitable alternatives would have been suggested that:

1. Satisfy the needs of the WG, TfW and Cyngor Gwynedd.
2. Satisfy the needs the residents of Penmorfa, Garndolbenmaen and Cricieth.
3. Produced a better T22 service than has been provided.
4. Connected ALL the communities in point 2 above to the strategic rail network.
5. Ensured ALL the communities in point 2 above can still access local services.
6. Provided social connections of an evening and Sundays for ALL communities.

Two alternative options that should be given full consideration:

1. T2 route restored as was, via Penmorfa and Garndolbenmaen  
T22 rerouted via Cricieth, Rhoslan then on to Caernarfon.  
Linking the Cricieth area to the T2 strategic service.

Advantages:

- a.) T2 service restored to Penmorfa, Dolbenmaen and Garndolbenmaen.
- b.) Cricieth remains connected to strategic T2 route by T22 service, No 3 Caelloi Bus and Cambrian Coastline Railway.
- c.) T2 service reconnected directly to Cambrian Coast Railway at Porthmadog.
- d.) Earlier, later and Sunday services for Garndolbenmaen, Dolbenmaen and Penmorfa are restored.

Disadvantages: None that I can think of.

2. T2 routed to Cricieth, Rhoslan and Garndolbenmaen (Via Glandwyfach)  
T22 routed via Penmorfa to Garndolbenmaen to Caernarfon (as present).  
The T2 could reroute to Garn from Glandwyfach (as services historically did) before heading towards Bangor.  
The T22 remains unchanged

Advantages:

- a.) T2 service restored to Garndolbenmaen
- b.) Cricieth, Rhoslan and Garndolbenmaen all connected to strategic route.

Disadvantages:

The loss of the extended and Sunday services for Penmorfa remains unaddressed.

## Additional Notes:

### 1.) Comparison of T2 and T22 Services

<u>Day</u>	<u>T2 Service</u>	<u>T22 Service</u>
M-S	Nine buses E/W	Six buses E/W
Sun & BH	Eight buses E/W	None

(Not shown is the T2 has earlier and later buses than the T22).

### 2.) Impact on Journey Times

From Google Maps, journey times by car are calculated as follows:

#### Current Route:

57 Mins = Porthmadog to Bangor Via Cricieth and Caernarfon (taken as baseline)

#### Alternative Route 1:

54 Mins = Porthmadog to Bangor Via Garn and Caernarfon – Saves 3 mins

#### Alternative Route 2:

103 Mins = Porthmadog to Bangor Via Cricieth, Garn and Caernarfon – Adds 6 mins

- Obviously by bus the journey will take longer, however this illustrates the changes to journey times for different route options.
- This clearly demonstrates that routing the T2 through Penmorfa and Garndolbenmaen is shorter than the current route.
- INCREASE to journey time by changes introduced in November 2023 – Added 3 mins

### 3.) Who made the decision to divert to T2 away from Garndolbenmaen?

From FOI requests, it can be seen that the defacto decision to divert the T2 bus service away from Garndolbenmaen was made by a senior officer in Gwynedd Council in May 2022:

#### 11 May 2022 at 15.31

Initial email approach from an officer in Transport for Wales to a senior officer in Gwynedd Council asking whether Gwynedd Council wanted the T2 bus service to continue to run through Garndolbenmaen or divert it via Cricieth.

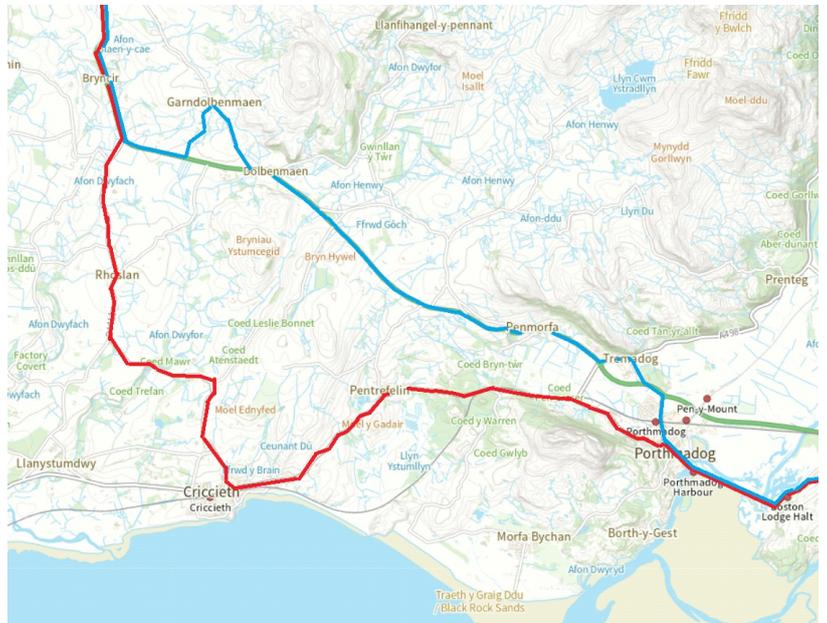
#### 11 May 2022 at 16.00

The reply from the Gwynedd Council senior officer was sent which stated that “our preference” was for the T2 bus service to go through Cricieth and not Garndolbenmaen.

The decision was given just 29 minutes after the request. No time for consultation of residents and service users. As County Councillor I was NEVER consulted. **This appears to be the sum of the TfW consultation.**

**Current Routes**

T2 (RED)  
T22 services (BLUE)



**Suggested Alternative ROUTE 1:**

“Swap” the routes:

T2 (RED),  
T22 (BLUE)

Saves 3 mins For T2

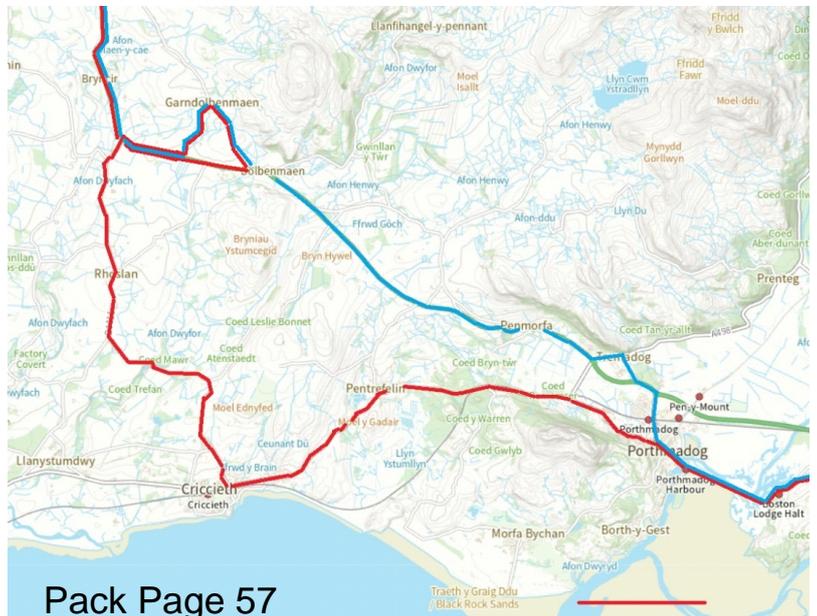


**Suggested Alternative ROUTE 2:**

“Garn Loop”

T2 (RED),  
T22 (BLUE)

Adds 6 mins for T2



## P-06-1429 - Install a roundabout, not traffic lights, at fatal Nash Junction, Pembrokeshire

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8813-2

**Petition Number:** P-06-1429

**Petition title:** Install a roundabout, not traffic lights, at fatal Nash Junction, Pembrokeshire

**Text of petition:** The Welsh Government has approved traffic lights instead of a roundabout to be installed at the fatal Nash Junction in Pembrokeshire junction, following many collisions and the death of a young motorcyclist.

Roundabout - Many residents of Pembrokeshire and also the Council feel a roundabout would be more appropriate, considering Irish Ferry traffic and that it is the main road for the south of the county.

### 1. Background

Fingerpost junction is the junction of the A477 with the A4075 turning for Pembroke.

Ashley Rogers, a 29 year old motorcyclist, lost his life on the morning of 13 May 2023 while travelling to work. However, the junction has long been a focus of calls



for action on road safety. Steps to improve it were announced in 2012 following calls from the community and local politicians. Improvement works were completed in 2014, and were subject to subsequent Road Safety Audits..

The A477 trunk road is the responsibility of the Welsh Government and the South Wales Trunk Road Agent (SWTRA) – one of two agents which manage the Welsh trunk road on the Welsh Government’s behalf. The A4075 is a local road and is the responsibility of Pembrokeshire County Council.

## 2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government published its Road Safety Framework in 2013. This set three targets to improve road safety so that by 2020, compared to the baseline average for 2004-2008, there would be:

- 40% fewer people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads;
- 25% fewer motorcyclists killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads; and
- 40% fewer young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads.

The Welsh Government’s statistical release on police recorded road accidents 2020 (published 2021) was the last to report on these targets. It notes the likely impact of Covid-19 in lowering accident rates below what they would have been had the pandemic not occurred. Therefore, it considers average data for the period 2016-2019 in assessing progress, concluding that the target for total killed and seriously injured and for young people have been exceeded. However, “relatively little progress has been made towards the motorcyclists target”.

The Welsh Government consulted on a new Road Safety Strategy in late 2023.

The then Deputy Minister for Climate Change wrote to the Chair of the Committee in August 2023, in response to a previous petition on the issue (below). He said a report investigating collisions and near misses at the junction had been produced, and the Welsh Government and SWTRA had “committed to a programme of short and medium term measures at the junction in 2023/24”.

In the short-term, SWTRA would implement signage / road marking changes and “possible minor junction layout changes” along with u-turn prohibitions.

In the medium term, the Deputy Minister says they will “assess the suitability and enforcement requirements of a speed restriction on this section and provide a business case for the introduction of traffic signals”.

The final report of the Welsh Government’s roads review panel was published in February 2023. Its conclusions, and the Welsh Government, response [are summarised in this Senedd Research article](#). The then Deputy Minister referenced this in his August 2023 letter, saying:

All future road schemes in Wales must be considered in line with the Roads Review report recommendations. Currently, the intention is to introduce small scale changes before committing to larger engineering measures so as to minimise future land take for highways, minimise carbon emissions, encourage modal shift and reduce dependency on the private car.

[Work began on the installation of the traffic signals](#) at the junction in May, and is expected to be completed by September.

The letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport confirms that the “traffic light solution” is now under construction, and that the project will consider active travel and street lighting amongst other factors.

With regard to the roundabout proposal, the Cabinet Secretary emphasises that Welsh Government policy requires that the solution minimises impact on the environment and land requirements outside the highway boundary. He says that a roundabout which meets design standards and would accommodate HGVs would require more land than the traffic light solution, and have a greater impact on the environment.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

The [Petitions Committee considered a petition](#) calling for a “roundabout for the A477/A4075 junction” between January 2016 and January 2020. This noted that “the current road configuration has not resolved the problems on this dangerous stretch of road”.

Committee correspondence with the Welsh Government highlighted an extensive Road Safety Audit undertaken following the 2012-14 junction improvement works. At the time, the Petitions Committee agreed to close the petition as “the junction is currently being actively reviewed”.

Mr Rogers' death has been raised on a number of occasions in plenary by Sam Kurtz MS, for example on 16 May, 6 June and 5 July 2023.

As noted above, you considered a petition in autumn 2023 calling for the introduction of comprehensive safety measures at the A477 'Fingerpost' junction. This was debated by the Senedd in November 2023 and closed in December. You noted a "positive outcome", having considered correspondence from that petitioner who was content with the outcome and happy to leave the "appropriate method for correcting the road layout", whether traffic signals or a roundabout, "to those with appropriate expertise." However, the petitioner noted "the long term plan including the installation of a roundabout certainly seems sensible."

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.

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru**  
**Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport**



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

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1429  
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/05732/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

02 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for letter of 23 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-06-1429 Install a roundabout, not traffic lights, at fatal Nash Junction, Pembrokeshire.

The traffic light solution for the A477 Nash Fingerpost site is now under construction. This will be a fully traffic light signal controlled junction designed in accordance with UK and Welsh Government standards and will consider the inclusion of controlled pedestrian and active travel crossing points where feasible. As part of the design, active travel arrangements, provision of street lighting, environmental and engineering solutions will be assessed and road safety audits will be completed. The traffic lights will be controlled using an intelligent traffic control system which will seek to minimise congestion.

Regarding the request to install a roundabout at this location, Welsh Government policy requires transport solutions that have the least impact on the environment and reduced land requirements outside the highway boundary. The installation of a roundabout at this location that meets design standards and is large enough to accommodate HGVs would require more land than the current scheme and have a negative impact on the environment.

Traffic signals can be installed within the existing highway boundary and no additional land is required, which helps shorten the time for the safety improvement scheme to be implemented.

Yours sincerely,

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru**  
**Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport**

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

**Back Page 62**  
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-06-1429 Install a roundabout, not traffic lights, at fatal Nash Junction, Pembrokeshire - Correspondence from the Petitioner to Committee, 03 September 2024.**

Dear Petitions Committee,

Thank you for your response regarding Petition P-06-1429. I appreciate the commitment to improving safety at the A477 Nash Fingerpost site. However, I noticed the letter was addressed to "Jack" instead of "Laura," which I assume was an oversight.

As a keen geologist, I am deeply invested in both safety and environmental preservation. I believe a roundabout could be a sustainable solution with minimal environmental impact for several reasons:

1. **Ecosystem Preservation:** A roundabout can integrate seamlessly with the natural landscape, preserving local flora and fauna. Unlike traffic lights, it avoids continuous light pollution, benefiting nocturnal wildlife.
2. **Land Impact:** The geological study of the area indicates that a roundabout would not disrupt significant geological features. Local farmers have generously agreed to provide the necessary land, ensuring minimal disturbance to the existing ecosystem.
3. **Sustainable Design:** Roundabouts require less ongoing energy consumption than traffic lights, reducing the long-term environmental footprint. They can also be landscaped with native plants, enhancing local biodiversity.
4. **Local Support:** The local council and community strongly favor the roundabout proposal, recognising its potential for improved traffic flow and safety. This local backing underscores the roundabout's viability and desirability.
5. **Policy Considerations:** While Welsh Government policy emphasizes minimal environmental impact and land use, the agreement with local farmers addresses the land requirement issue. The roundabout would align with sustainable transport goals by reducing energy use and integrating with the environment.
6. **Safety and Efficiency:** Roundabouts are proven to reduce the severity of accidents and improve traffic flow by eliminating the stop-start nature of traffic lights.
7. **HGV and Traffic Volume:** Traffic lights often cause delays for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) due to frequent stops and starts, leading to increased emissions and fuel consumption. With the anticipated rise in traffic due to local port development and area expansion, a roundabout would better manage the higher volume and weight of traffic. Roundabouts facilitate continuous movement, reducing idling time and emissions, which benefits the environment. This design ensures smoother flow, accommodates future growth efficiently, and aligns with sustainable transport goals by minimizing the ecological footprint.

Please also remember that the local councillors have been working hard for decades towards encouraging the Senedd to see the sense of a roundabout at Nash Finger Post - I am sure you have minutes and emails pertaining to this. There is certainly Welsh press covering the recent events in place, and this letter in honour of transparency and accountability will be shared publicly. As a Quaker, I hold utmost belief in shared and open discourse.

As I touched upon previously in correspondence with you, councillors have approached and made the appropriate arrangements with the local farming community regarding the appropriate land needs and they have kindly supported and agreed to provide the land.

I do hope all these points help when you consider this petition, and a simple press search will show you the Welsh and at times national media response.

I would also like to point out that the electricity for the traffic lights was put in *during* the 'call of the community and the electorate' for a roundabout at this location, before those who asked to be heard were able to present their case fully.

The traffic lights, therefore, as I am sure you know, have now been most speedily and efficiently completed - thank you for your dedication in completing this without haste. It is most generous of the Senedd to be so time conscious and aware of our community needs.

Democratic consideration is the core of the Senedd and the long term consideration of the communities it serves. I hope these points highlight the potential benefits of a roundabout at this location, and that the installed traffic light system does not detract from a just and meticulous consideration of the long term benefit of the community, electorate, councillors and many businesses that have put their trust in this road being an efficient, accessible and safe mode of transportation - very like the roundabout currently under construction at Penblewn. A precedent perhaps worth applying in this case with Nash Finger Post?

Thank you for considering this perspective and for your ongoing efforts to enhance road safety.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Griffiths

# A Beacon of Hope at Risk: Please Support Bronllys Well-Being Community Hub!

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR248813-4

Petition Number: P-06-1431

**Petition title:** A Beacon of Hope at Risk: Please Support Bronllys Well-Being Community Hub!

**Text of petition:** We call on the Welsh Government to:

Support the transfer of underutilised land at Bronllys Community Hospital site to Bronllys Well Being Park CLT Ltd for a nominal sum to develop a community well-being hub.

Encourage Powys Teaching Health Board to respond to community issues and concerns with respect, transparency, and support for the proposed community-led initiative.

Embrace the long-term objectives of this carefully researched proposal, which aims to improve local people's lives.



## 1. Context

Bronllys Well Being Park CLT was established in 2016 as a Community Benefit Organisation dedicated to improving the lives of local people in areas such as affordable housing, employment and well-being. The overall intention is to develop an asset owned by the local community which will support and enhance Bronllys Community hospital.

Among the goals of Bronllys Well Being Park is to:

- **Utilise existing vacant and unused land and buildings** within the grounds of Bronllys Hospital estate to encourage small businesses and social enterprises (particularly in the health and well-being sectors) offering local employment opportunities;
- Employ existing vacant and unused facilities at the Bronllys Hospital estate to offer sporting, recreational and wider social activities.

The organisation published a feasibility study in 2021 which:

reviews and highlights how land assets within the Bronllys hospital site could promote and enhance well-being opportunities for local communities.

The study also notes that:

BWBP CLT is **responding to requests by Welsh Government** to work with Powys Teaching Health Board and Powys County Council...to develop a Health & Wellbeing Park.

The study highlighted that:

- Bronllys hospital site has **many structurally obsolete buildings and estate land** which is not being used to its full potential and which as a result has become a maintenance burden to the health board;
- BWBP CLT Ltd should by raising awareness of land or open space which may come under threat from any proposed future private or commercial development at Bronllys hospital [to] preserve the interests of local communities and members.

## 2. Community Asset Transfer

A Community Asset Transfer (CAT) occurs when a public sector body transfers the management and/or ownership of a property, land or services to a community council or the third sector/community group. This avenue presents opportunities for communities to own and manage facilities that might otherwise be closed as the public body is unable to subsidise them any longer.

A CAT usually involves a transfer at less than full market value, either at reduced cost or nominal consideration. Transferring an asset could include a number of different tenures, including a management agreement, a licence to occupy, a short or long lease, and a freehold transfer.

A Mapping Communities Assets in Wales report published by Building Communities Trust in 2020 highlighted some of the barriers around community Asset Transfer in Wales. This included difficulties with the CAT process and variable outcomes across Wales and some patchiness in access to professional support.

The Institute of Welsh Affairs report Our Land: Communities and Land Use published in 2022 identifies further challenges. Key points include:

- There are few limited mechanisms for community control beyond Community Asset Transfers.
- Communities in Wales 'appear to be some of the least empowered on this island' and there is 'no statutory right to buy land or assets as in Scotland, and no right to bid, challenge, or build as in England.'

Plunkett UK Ltd published its Community Ownership: A Way Forward for Wales report in February 2024. This references Bronllys case directly and notes that:

- It received **public endorsement** from then Future Generations Commissioner Sophie Howe in 2021.
- Communication with Powys Teaching Health Board has reached a standstill, and it is **unclear why they will not accept the request**.

### 3. Welsh Government Action

Welsh Government published a [Community Asset Transfer best practice guide](#) in 2019 which states that it:

recognises the importance of community assets and has a **specific commitment** ‘to work with communities to help maintain local facilities that bring people together’.

The Welsh Government has also published some useful [resources on CATs](#) including an [example of the CAT process](#) and [successful case studies](#).

Responding specifically to this petition, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care notes that “this is not a matter in which I am able to intervene”. The letter also states that officials have “confirmed there are no buildings or land which are currently deemed to be surplus to requirements”.

### 4. Welsh Parliament action

The Local Government and Housing Committee published its report on [Community Assets](#) following its [inquiry](#) in October 2022. Senedd research published an [article on the Committee inquiry](#). The report made 16 recommendations, including:

- The Welsh Government should set out how it intends to make the process of ascertaining ownership of land and assets easier for communities and how the process can help to empower groups to take on assets they would like to see continue;
- The Welsh Government should establish a coordinated support package to support communities that are seeking to buy or lease land or assets; and
- That the Welsh Government establish a Commission to ‘stimulate innovative thinking on community ownership of land and assets in Wales.’

In a [written response to the committee’s report](#), the Welsh Government reiterated that it is:

fully supportive of communities taking control of assets, where it is appropriate for them to do so and there is sufficient local support.

In this response, the Welsh Government accepted in principle the call to establish a commission, noting:

The Minister for Climate Change has already stated that she is minded to agree to a commission. The form and scope of a commission will need to be carefully considered before action is taken to implement this, and other recommendations making reference to a commission.

In October 2023, 12 months after publication of the report, the Chair of the Committee wrote to the Minister for Finance and Local Government and the Minister for Climate Change for an update on progress with implementing each of the recommendations.

The Minister for Finance and Local Government responded to the letter on the 03 November 2023 with a progress update and provided additional supporting information on 17 November 2023 (included with response from 03 November). It notes that work on “establishing the Commission, its membership, scope and how it will work is well advanced” and that the Welsh Government is hoping to be in a position to “make a formal announcement on the chair and membership of the Commission by early January 2024”. Any future legislative proposals would form part of the work of the new commission.

On 30 May 2024, the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Housing wrote to Cefin Campbell MS following a request for an update on plans to establish a commission on community ownership. The Cabinet Secretary stated that a Community Asset Commission was established in March 2024, and that:

The commission is tasked with encouraging innovative thinking on community ownership of land and assets in Wales. As part of this work, the current legislative framework will be explored along with potential barriers to land and building ownership by community groups.

Despite this, there have seemingly been no further announcements by the Welsh Government relating to the development of the Commission, its membership or its remit.

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

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1431  
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/05733/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

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

CC: Minister for Mental Health and Early Years

08 July 2024

Dear Jack Sargeant MS,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-06-1431 A Beacon of Hope at Risk: Please Support Bronllys Well-Being Community Hub!

I note the petitioner's concerns about the development of the estate, but I hope you will understand this is not a matter in which I am able to intervene. The use and development of the Bronllys Community Hospital site is a matter for Powys Teaching Health Board, and my officials have confirmed there are no buildings or land which are currently deemed to be surplus to requirements.

I hope the community group will understand the route for engagement is through their established links with the health board.

Yours sincerely,

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol

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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-06-1431 A Beacon of Hope at Risk - Please Support Bronllys Well-Being Community Hub! - Correspondence from the petitioner to Committee, 05 September 2024**

## **BWBP's Response to Welsh Petitions Committee**

Please note our response to the document received 2nd September 2024 and to be considered on 16th September 2024.

In the document, Eluned Morgan AS/MS, the then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care stated:

"I note the petitioner's concerns about the development of the estate, but I hope you will understand this is not a matter in which I am able to intervene. The use and development of the Bronllys Community Hospital site is a matter for Powys Teaching Health Board, and my officials have confirmed there are no buildings or land which are currently deemed to be surplus to requirements.

I hope the community group will understand the route for engagement is through their established links with the health board."

Our responses to your questions are provided below:

### **1. What are your thoughts on the attached document?**

We are troubled by the Health Minister's apparent inability to intervene in this matter, despite recognising the challenges related to our request, namely, the transfer of underutilised land to BWBP CLT.

Moreover, her response does not encourage the Health Board to address community concerns in a manner that is respectful, transparent, and supportive of the proposed community-led initiative.

Finally, the long-term objectives of this well-researched proposal -- largely funded by the Welsh Government (e.g., The Prince's Foundation and Arwain Grants -- have not been given due consideration. This initiative is designed to reduce financial strain on the Health Board, and by extension, the Welsh Government, while improving the well-being of the local community.

## 2. Does it adequately address the issues that you raised?

As noted above, the document clearly does not address the issues raised.

## 3. Do you have further questions in response?

We ask for a more thorough response to all the questions raised, rather than a deflection of responsibility from the Welsh Government to the Health Board.

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

We believe the petition process raises serious concerns about the Welsh Government's commitment to addressing important issues presented by the community. The attached document highlights critical flaws in the petition process itself.

We seek clarification on whether the Welsh Government truly lacks authority over Health Boards. If this is the case, who is responsible for ensuring that these publicly funded organisations meet their obligations and are held accountable? It seems that Health Boards may operate with unchecked autonomy, which surely cannot be correct.

Please advise us on the process for submitting a formal complaint, as we appear to be at an impasse. The Welsh Health Minister is unwilling to intervene, and the Health Board refuses to engage with us in a transparent and meaningful manner.

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### Issues Regarding the Welsh Government's Petition Process

*Document authored by: Bronllys Well Being Park CLT (05-09-2024)*

**The Welsh Government's handling of petitions raises certain issues regarding people's right to free expression. Although the government's restrictions may not be direct violations of free speech rights, they pose the following challenges to democratic principles.**

#### **1. Non-Acceptance of Signatures from Non-Government Online Platforms**

The Welsh Government's refusal to recognize signatures from platforms other than its official online site limits the channels through which citizens can engage with government. This restriction, which does not exist in many other countries, might be

perceived as encroaching on people’s freedom of expression, constraining the variety of perspectives and ideas.

By exclusively endorsing its own platform, the Welsh Government is able to control the narrative and limit the scope of petitions it must address. This could stifle dissenting voices and discourage citizens from using alternative, potentially more accessible platforms to express their concerns.

## **2. Limiting the Petition Period**

A six-month time limit on petitions is an arbitrary restriction on the duration of petition campaigns. This timeframe may not allow sufficient time for petitioners to gather support and raise awareness about their issue and may limit the opportunity for the full exercise of free speech.

A six-month period for collecting signatures disproportionately affects people in rural communities who need significantly more time than individuals who live in more populated areas to raise awareness. In addition, certain issues might require more time to gain traction and for petitioners to collect signatures, particularly if the issues are complex or not widely understood. Therefore, a fixed six-month petition period might not be suitable for all types of issues.

## **3. Accessibility and Inclusivity**

The Welsh Government requires more than 10,000 signatures in order for the petition to be debated in the Senedd. High signature requirements disproportionately present barriers for rural communities or less well-known issues, limiting the ability of minority voices to be heard. In other words, under current petition requirements, it is almost impossible for local issues in rural communities to be recognised and debated by the Welsh Government.

The unfairness of the “10,000-signature requirement” to rural communities can be demonstrated as follows:

- The population of Cardiff in 2023 was 362,400; the population of Powys was 133,200. A petition relevant to Cardiff would require only 2.75% of people in Cardiff to sign the petition. A petition relevant to Powys, however, would require 7.5% of people across Powys to sign the petition, a proportion almost three times greater than the proportion required for Cardiff.
- Not only are rural communities at a disadvantage because of a relatively small population size, but this disadvantage is exacerbated by a low population density, making it much more difficult to collect signatures in rural areas than in urban areas. For example, in 2021 the population density of Cardiff was 2,572 people per square km, while the population density of Powys was only 26 per square km.

Requiring a high number of signatories for parliamentary debate may mean that some valid issues or concerns never reach the Senedd, severely limiting the scope of public discourse. It could be argued that debate of important issues should not be contingent on an arbitrary number of signatures but rather on the merits of the concerns being raised.

#### **4. Word Limits**

Placing word limits on petitions appears to be a matter of administrative expediency for the government. Word limits, however, may infringe on people's ability to fully articulate their concerns, arguments, or requests. When a word limit is too restrictive, it can stifle meaningful public discourse, which reduces the effectiveness of the petition platform as a tool for citizen engagement.

Word limits can undermine the effectiveness of the petition platform as a means for citizens to voice their concerns and engage with the government. It may discourage people from participating in the democratic process if they feel their voices cannot be adequately heard due to arbitrary constraints.

In addition, having to eliminate important components of more complex petitions to meet word limit requirements raises serious freedom of speech concerns. Omitting essential points in a petition distorts or misrepresents the petitioner's views.

#### **5. Word Censorship**

The Welsh Government's practice of disallowing specific words or requiring the replacement of certain terms in petitions, such as replacing "facilitate" with "support," may be seen as a form of linguistic control. The government essentially is imposing its preferred language.

This restriction can be problematic because it limits the way citizens can express their ideas, preventing them from conveying the precise nuances of their concerns or proposals. Such restrictions can lead to situations where citizens feel compelled to conform to the government's language preferences, leading to self-censorship.

Although the Welsh Government may regulate certain language for various reasons, doing so may limit the diversity of opinions and ideas that can be expressed through the petition system and hinder the free exchange of ideas.

#### **6. Restricting the Use of Photographs and Graphics**

Freedom of speech encompasses not only the right to express opinions through words but also through various forms of visual communication. Restricting the use of photographs or graphics on the Welsh Government's official petition site limits the expressive capacity of petitioners. This restriction is an infringement on people's ability to convey their message effectively.

#### **7. Withholding Signatory Information**

Petitioners often use the names and email addresses of signatories to mobilize and communicate with supporters, which is an integral part of political speech and advocacy. When the Welsh Government withholds this information gathered on its petition

platform, it restricts the petitioner's ability to engage in open, informed, and democratic discourse.

**Although the Welsh Government's petition practices may not constitute direct infringements on free speech rights, they are problematic because they limit the ways in which citizens can engage with government, express their concerns, and participate in the democratic process. In a democratic society, it is essential to strike a reasonable balance between administrative efficiency and the protection of citizens' rights to free expression and participation in public discourse. In the interest of advancing democratic principles, the Welsh Government should carefully consider any limitations or restrictions to ensure they do not unduly hinder free speech, particularly for individuals in rural areas.**

# 20mph petitions

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8622

This briefing has been prepared to support the Committee's consideration of two petitions relating to 20mph default speed limits. All references to Cabinet titles/personnel were correct at the time of preparing this briefing (August 2024).

## Petition 1

Petition Number: P-06-1432

**Petition title:** Hold a Wales-wide Public Poll to establish the true level of public support for the 20mph limit

**Text of petition:** Public opinion throughout both social and mainstream media now shows that the vast majority of the people of Wales are strongly against the new 20mph limit. Yet despite this, the Welsh Government insists it has the support of the majority. Official surveys to date are from very limited numbers in specific areas and can in no way be taken as representative of the feelings of the entire Welsh population.

Claimed support is now widely seen as nothing more than statistical manipulation.

The public now has no faith in these claims and in the interest of credibility the truth needs to be established.



In my view refusing to allow the people of Wales to voice their opinion on something that has such a massive impact on every aspect of their lives is undemocratic, authoritarian, and insultingly dismissive of the people. There has to be complete openness and honesty in the level of support this 20mph limit really has and this can only be achieved by giving all the people of Wales the opportunity to voice their opinions.

A Wales-wide Public Poll is the only democratic way to establish beyond doubt to both the Welsh Government and the population of Wales what the true level of support really is.

### Petition 2

**Petition Number:** P-06-1438

**Petition title:** Start a public inquiry into to the reasons, justification and evidence for 20mph.

**Text of petition:** The reports and feedback from the public in general, since the introduction of the default speed limit, seem to contradict the justification given by Ministers. I believe it is an unnecessary expense to no proven benefit. Where is all the evidence, not selective facts. Where are the facts on the positive side of keeping the 30mph, specifically on the benefit to the economy.

## 1. Background

In 2019 the Welsh Government set up a task and finish group to consider whether 20mph should become the default speed limit in residential areas. In July 2020, the Welsh Government accepted the group's recommendations, including that the default speed limit on restricted roads should be reduced from 30mph to 20mph.

Following public consultation and a pilot scheme across eight communities, the Welsh Government laid the Restricted Roads (20 mph Speed Limit) (Wales) Order in June 2022. The draft Order was passed by the Senedd in July 2022 and came into force in September 2023.

The policy has received widespread media coverage and the petition calling for the legislation to be ‘rescinded’ has received over 469,000 signatures – the highest ever received for a Senedd petition.

Senedd Research has previously published a number of articles on:

- [the policy and reaction](#) to it in the lead up to national roll-out;
- the [implementation of the policy](#) and the effectiveness of 20mph speed limits;
- how the policy will be [enforced and monitored](#); and
- [developments since the policy came into force](#) (such as the [guidance review](#)) and early monitoring data.

The petitions under consideration relate to public opinion on the policy and to the evidence on the impact of 20mph speed limits.

## Impact of 20mph speed limits elsewhere

Historically, evidence on the efficacy of 20mph speed limits has been mixed. A 2018 UK Government [report on the effectiveness of 20mph speed limits](#) found “insufficient evidence” that 20mph limits in residential areas made a “significant change” in collisions and accidents.

In contrast, [a 2018 review of evidence](#) commissioned by the Welsh Government found “moderate to strong” evidence that 20mph limits reduce casualties. The review also considered evidence on other factors including active travel and air pollution.

Part of the challenge in assessing the impact arises from differing approaches to implementing 20mph. Speed limited areas vary in size, and [there’s a distinction between](#) self-enforcing 20mph limits without traffic calming measures, and traffic calmed 20mph zones.

Belfast, often cited as an example of 20mph limits, saw 76 city centre streets move to 20mph in 2016. A [three year follow up review of the Belfast scheme](#), published in 2022, found “little effect for reduction in road traffic collisions, casualties and speed when a 20 mph speed limit intervention is implemented in a city centre”.

However, rather than finding 20mph limits ineffective, the reviewers found:

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The intervention was implemented at the city centre scale (only 76 streets) in comparison to the recent city-wide intervention in Edinburgh which showed significant reductions in road traffic speed, collisions and casualties. Large scale implementation of 20 mph speed limit interventions may be an important factor for effectiveness (scale).

A [2021 evaluation](#) of Edinburgh's city-wide scheme concluded it "was associated with meaningful reductions in traffic speeds". A [three year post implementation review](#) reported a 30% decrease in collisions and a 31% decrease in casualties.

Transport for London has [found similar results](#) for its wide-area scheme, with collisions falling 25% over two years to June 2022, and those resulting in death or serious injury down 24%.

## Monitoring and review in Wales

### Impact in pilot areas

As outlined, [pilots took place](#) in eight communities across Wales to trial 20mph default limits in the lead up to the national roll-out in September 2023.

The [first monitoring report](#) on the impact in pilot areas was published in March 2023, followed by a [final monitoring report](#) (for the pilot areas) in February 2024. Data up to May 2023 showed:

- "large positive" changes in relation to speed reduction Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and attitudes to active travel;
- a "slight positive" change in vehicle / pedestrian yield behaviour; and
- "no discernible change" in local air quality and "slight negative" changes in vehicle journey times, including a general decrease in punctuality for peak time bus services.

### Monitoring the national roll-out and public opinion

In September 2023 Transport for Wales (TfW) published a [monitoring framework document](#) for the national roll-out. This identifies the policy objectives and the indicators to be used. Data will be collected for up to five years post-implementation. This includes "qualitative attitudinal surveys". The framework says:

We will examine the attitudes and perceptions of people living in areas where the speed limit has been reduced using attitudinal surveys after the national roll-out. The surveys will include questions on attitudes towards using active travel modes (walking, wheeling and cycling) for local journeys in built-up areas and will also consider respondents' perceptions on matters relating to traffic speed, traffic noise and effects on communities. There will be a particular focus on more vulnerable groups in society when collecting attitudinal data.

In terms of reporting timescales the framework says TfW will publish an interim report in June 2024 based on data collected during the first 6 months following the national roll-out. At the time of preparing this briefing this report has not been published. A report on the first full year of implementation is also expected in December 2024. Formal reporting will then take place annually.

## Review of exceptions guidance

While the default 20mph speed limit is now in force on restricted roads, highway authorities (local authorities for local roads and the Welsh Ministers for trunk roads/motorways) can use Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to change the limit from the default of 20mph where appropriate.

In November 2022 the Welsh Government issued guidance to highway authorities on the process for setting exceptions. However the Welsh Government has suggested that local authorities across Wales have interpreted the guidance differently. It therefore established a review team to examine how the guidance had been applied.

The review team published its initial report in February 2024 and its final report in May. The Welsh Government subsequently issued updated guidance for local authorities in July and says "from September, highway authorities can start to apply the new framework to assess speed limits on roads where a change is considered appropriate".

The Welsh Government has also launched a "national listening programme" on the policy and is asking the public to identify and report roads to the local highway authority where they believe the speed limit should change.

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## 2. Welsh Government action

In a letter to the Chair dated 22 July on the petition calling for a Wales wide poll to establish the level of public support, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates MS refers to the national listening campaign and the updated guidance discussed earlier. The Cabinet Secretary also suggests “there is no evidence to support the petitioner’s assertion that a majority of the population is against the default 20mph speed limit”. However a YouGov poll conducted in late July showed 72% oppose the policy.

The Cabinet Secretary has also written to the Chair in relation to the petition calling for a public inquiry (letter dated 16 July). The Cabinet Secretary again highlights the national listening campaign and updated guidance.

## 3. Welsh Parliament action

In July 2020 the Senedd debated the introduction of default 20mph speed limits with 45 of 53 Members voting in favour of the motion.

As outlined, the Welsh Government laid the Restricted Roads (20 mph Speed Limit) (Wales) Order in June 2022. The draft Order was passed by the Senedd in July 2022. It has been raised in the Senedd on numerous occasions.

In October 2023 the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee scrutinised the former Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS on the policy.

The Committee has previously considered a number of petitions relating to the policy including:

- A petition calling on the Welsh Government to stop the introduction of the 20mph limit (considered in April 2022). At that time the Committee agreed to close the petition due to the ability of local authorities to change the limit on roads where 20mph would not be appropriate.
- A petition calling on the Welsh Government to hold a public poll on the speed limit reduction (considered in October 2022). This petition was also closed.

- A petition calling for a survey of residents living in the pilot areas (considered in March 2024). Again this petition was closed in light of monitoring work taking place through TfW.

In May a Plenary debate was held on the largest ever Senedd petition calling for the policy to be scrapped.

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-06-1432  
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/05731/24

Chair - Petitions committee

22 July 2024

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May regarding Petition P-06-1432 Hold a Wales-wide Public Poll to establish the true level of public support for the 20mph limit.

The primary goal of the 20mph default policy is to save lives and reduce casualties on our roads. The evidence from around the world is very clear – decreasing speeds will reduce collisions, save lives, and reduce injuries – helping to improve quality of life and make our streets and local communities safer for all. I want to build from the consensus that 20mph is the right speed limit near schools, hospitals, nurseries, community centres, play areas and in built-up residential areas.

There is no evidence to support the petitioner's assertion that a majority of the population is against the default 20mph speed limit. Previous petitions have not achieved anything like majority support.

However, we cannot escape the fact that 20mph has served to polarise some of the people and communities we serve. Against that backdrop, I felt we should take a step back and listen to the views of everyone involved.

To support the National Listening Programme I have instigated, we have published a [webpage](#) to help signpost people towards the relevant highway authority where they want to feedback on specific speed limits.

Through the drumbeat of regional meetings we are putting in place with the support of Transport for Wales, and with the help of the County Surveyors' Society Wales, we want to co-create a framework that supports highway authorities to make the right decisions for local roads – particularly when those calls are finely balanced.

I will be providing an update on the guidance via an Oral Statement to the Senedd on 16<sup>th</sup> July. After the summer break, we will continue to support highway authorities in the implementation phase of assessing roads, making of traffic regulation orders and finally in the implementation of changes on the ground. We acknowledge that it may take several months from September 2024 onwards before we see any changes on the ground.

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

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

My officials will then focus on prioritising guidance for other speed limits where people live.

Further information, including an updated FAQ page, can be found at:

[Introducing 20mph speed limits: frequently asked questions | GOV.WALES](#)  
[20mph speed limits | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

Yours sincerely,

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

**Ken Skates AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Transport and North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1438  
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/05730/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

16 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May regarding Petition P-06-1438 Start a public inquiry into the reasons, justification and evidence for 20mph.

The primary goal of the 20mph default policy is to save lives, reduce collisions and casualties on our roads. The evidence from around the world is very clear – decreasing speeds will reduce collisions, save lives, and reduce injuries – helping to improve quality of life and make our streets and local communities safer for all.

We have already seen evidence that collisions and injuries on roads reduced in the final quarter of 2023 in Wales. The latest speed data also show that lower speeds being maintained on 20mph roads. We'll need data for multiple years to draw firm conclusions, but it's encouraging to see things moving in the right direction.

I want to build from the consensus that 20mph is the right speed limit near schools, hospitals, nurseries, community centres, play areas and in built-up residential areas. However, we cannot escape the fact that 20mph has served to polarise some of the people and communities we serve. Against that backdrop, I felt we should take a step back and listen to the views of everyone involved.

To support the National Listening Programme I have instigated, we have published a [webpage](#) to help signpost people towards the relevant highway authority where they want to feedback on specific speed limits.

Through the drumbeat of regional meetings we are putting in place with the support of Transport for Wales, and with the help of the County Surveyors' Society Wales, we want to co-create a framework that supports highway authorities to make the right decisions for local roads – particularly when those calls are finely balanced.

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

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

I will be providing an update on the guidance via an Oral Statement to the Senedd on 16<sup>th</sup> July. After the summer break, we will continue to support highway authorities in the implementation phase of assessing roads, making of traffic regulation orders and finally in the implementation of changes on the ground. We acknowledge that it may take several months from September 2024 onwards before we see any changes on the ground.

My officials will then focus on prioritising guidance for other speed limits where people live.

Further information, including what impact the new speed limit has had, can be found on our updated FAQ page at:

[Introducing 20mph speed limits: frequently asked questions | GOV.WALES](#)  
[20mph speed limits | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

Yours sincerely,



**Ken Skates AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport

# P-06-1439 Improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South West Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8813-6

Petition Number: P-06-1439

**Petition title:** Improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South West Wales

**Text of petition:** Grassroots music venues operate within shoestring budgets despite providing vital platforms for emerging talent. Music Venue Trust has warned that approximately 10% of GMVs will close by the end of 2023.

Due to a lack of vital late night travel links, audiences are being stopped from attending venues that they would otherwise actively support.

Welsh Government must act to improve vital late night travel links and ensure that grassroots culture is accessible and protected for years to come.

Open letter to Welsh Government - <http://www.swansea-arena.co.uk/an-open-letter-to-welsh-government>



Welsh Government Analysis of 10 Questions that form the basis of "Welcome to Wales: Priorities for the visitor economy 2020 to 2025: summary" - [https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/sites/tourism/files/documents/10-Questions\\_Response-Analysis-Report\\_2020-01-22\\_English.pdf](https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/sites/tourism/files/documents/10-Questions_Response-Analysis-Report_2020-01-22_English.pdf)

## 1. Background, Welsh Government and Welsh Parliament action

In an [open letter to the Welsh Government](#), Swansea Arena, and a number of other venues, suggest a lack of late night public transport is preventing audiences from attending events.

Responding to this petition, in his letter to the Chair, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates MS says he is “aware that late night transport is often raised as a particular challenge for venues”.

The Cabinet Secretary suggests addressing the challenge will require integration across the transport system. He highlights the role of [Regional Transport Plans \(RTPs\)](#) which are being developed by [Corporate Joint Committees](#). Final RTPs are due to be submitted to the Welsh Government by the end of March 2025.

### 1.1. Rail services

In relation to late night rail services, the Cabinet Secretary’s letter suggests “there are a number of constraints that exist which affect our ability to operate later rail services”. He says this is “primarily a reserved matter” and so appears to be referring to infrastructure constraints. [Rail infrastructure](#), and the infrastructure planning and delivery process, are reserved to the UK Government - with the exception of the [Core Valley Lines](#), which [transferred into Welsh Government ownership in 2020](#). Executive powers to procure the Welsh rail franchise operated by Transport for Wales (TfW) are devolved, but the rail system as a whole is reserved and wider rail franchises operating in Wales, such as Great Western Railway services to Swansea, are the responsibility of the UK Government.

The issue of late night rail services was raised during the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee's (CCEI) 2023 scrutiny of TfW and rail inquiry. The Committee raised concerns over the timing of the last trains to leave Cardiff following international football matches. In response, ahead of a set of fixtures that took place in March 2024, TfW provided later services and worked with Network Rail to rearrange scheduled engineering works to allow for later services.

The issue of late night rail services was also raised in Plenary in June. The Cabinet Secretary suggested there was a need to increase farebox revenue from other services to enable later services (which potentially need more subsidy) to run. He said:

The whole point of the metro within the south-east Wales area is that we'll be providing more services...which will generate a higher farebox, which will then enable us to use the subsidy in other areas of Wales and, indeed, later into the evening and potentially earlier into the morning.

## 1.2. Bus franchising

The Cabinet Secretary's letter suggests the introduction of bus franchising will enable a network and timetable to be designed to "best support the economy of Swansea and its surrounding area".

In 2022 the Welsh Government published a White Paper which proposed legislation requiring bus franchising throughout Wales. It would mean responsibility for planning most bus services would pass from local authorities to TfW and the Welsh Ministers. A Bus Bill is expected to be introduced by spring 2025.

The Welsh Government's 2024 roadmap to bus reform sets out how franchising will be implemented using a gross-cost model. Operators will be paid a fee to run specified services (with incentives in place) while TfW will receive fare revenue – and therefore carry the risk if passenger targets aren't met.

In Manchester, where bus franchising has already been rolled out, a night bus pilot scheme has recently begun - with buses running at least every hour, 24/7 on two busy routes.

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.

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a  
Gogledd Cymru  
Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Transport and North  
Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1439  
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/05727/24

Chair - Petitions committee

22 July 2024

Dear Chair,

Thank you for the previous Chair's letter of 23 May, on behalf of Lisa Mart, regarding Petition P-06-1439 improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South-West Wales.

Welsh Government works closely with music venues across Wales through Creative Wales. We have engaged with the sector directly through regular advisory group meetings where stakeholders are encouraged to raise any trends, successes, or issues they're experiencing. I am aware that late night transport is often raised as a particular challenge for venues.

Addressing this challenge will require all parts of the transport system, including other rail operators, bus operators and the local authority to work together. Specifically on rail, there are a number of constraints that exist which affect our ability to operate later rail services. As this is primarily a reserved matter it is not within the gift of the Welsh Government or Transport for Wales.

As we move towards a new system of bus franchising, Transport for Wales can work with local authorities and bus operators to design a new bus network, and timetable, to best support the economy of Swansea and its surrounding area. The Welsh Government and Transport for Wales are also working with the local authorities to develop regional transport plans that can align infrastructure improvements with these new services to make them both attractive and sustainable, as well as improving active travel and rail access.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Transport and North Wales

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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-06-1439 Improve vital late night public transport infrastructure in South and South West Wales - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 09 September 2024**

Thank you very much for the below and attached – we appreciate that this petition will be considered.

We appreciate the thoughtful response in the letter attached, and the engagement in the live music sector through Creative Wales – however the urgency needed to address this issue has not been addressed and the response mirrors feedback received by these venues for the many years this has been an issue.

As the Venue Director for Swansea Arena – I am acutely aware that the Arena was funded in order to improve the economy of the local area.

I am incredibly passionate about live music and the impact that this Arena can have on Swansea – however we will not be successful if we do not continue to develop new local talent that can work their way through the local grassroots music venues up to an Arena tour.

Live music tours in 2024 are predominantly heritage acts who themselves started their careers in the 70s/80s/90s in their local music venues – but these venues are facing their most challenging times – with Music Venue Trust reporting that in 2023 one grassroots music venue closed per week due to a lack of financial stability. So in 10-20 years' time, who will be the artists playing Swansea Arena?

All the local independent music venues in Swansea – Bunkhouse, Sin City, Hippos, Elysium – can provide evidence of customers actively deciding not to buy tickets to their gigs due to the lack of available transport. This has resulted in national promoters choosing not to have Swansea on their tour routing as they cannot guarantee the return. All of this puts strain on an already tight financial model which faces the challenges of increasing rents, business rates and utilities.

It also means – frustratingly – that although the Arena can attract 2000-3500 to the area for an event, people are not remaining in the locale to continue their evening in these venues as they have to run from the event to get the last train home. A large % of our audience actively choose to miss the encore in order to be able to get home safely.

It is imperative to everyone's idea of a successful and thriving city that we do not lose any of the venues mentioned above – and a focus on transport to the area during our late night economy is one of the key factors in supporting this

We appreciate that the logistics of improving the current transport model are not simple, due to the number of stakeholders involved – but we are confident that a solution can be found

Please do reach out if you need any further information

# P-05-1441: Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead should be given statutory protection by Cadw, as an ancient tree

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8813-8

**Petition Number:** P-05-1441

**Petition title:** Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead, should be given statutory protection by Cadw, as an ancient tree

**Text of petition:** Over a thousand years old this ancient Tree, is now very vulnerable after several trees recently have been targeted by criminals. The tree holds an important place associated with the Battle of Crogen in 1165. The tree should be placed under the protection of CADW. The tree is in a very vulnerable position near Offa's Dyke, in the county of Wrexham near Chirk.

## 1. Background

The Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead (Derwen Adwy'r Meirwon) is an ancient tree in Wrexham County Borough. It is located in the park of Chirk Castle near to Offa's Dyke and the site of the 1165 Battle of Crogen. The tree is said to be over 1000 years old and is named for a supposed burial site connected to the battle to which it bore witness.



In 2014 the Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead came ninth in a European-wide 'tree of the year' competition. It was entered into the competition by Woodland Trust Wales.

While Cadw has no powers to protect specific trees, the Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead sits within the park of Chirk Castle, which has been included in the statutory register of historic parks and gardens maintained by the Welsh Ministers.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 amended the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 to place a duty on the Welsh Ministers to compile and maintain a register of sites of special historic interest in Wales, including parks and gardens.

As such, the statutory register came into force on 1 February 2022, replacing a previous non-statutory register. The statutory register does not impose any new legal restrictions on Wales' historic parks and gardens or introduce a new consent regime. Registered sites continue to receive the current level of protection through the planning system

The tree is also subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). A TPO prohibits the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of a tree without the consent of the Local Planning Authority. The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 amended the Forestry Act 1967 to impose an unlimited fine for illegal tree felling

## 2. Welsh Government action

The then Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Lesley Griffiths MS, wrote to the Committee setting out the existing protections for the tree. The letter noted that Welsh national planning policy, Planning Policy Wales, had been updated to strengthen protection for all trees, including ancient woodland and individual ancient, veteran and heritage trees.

The letter stated that a TPO, to which the tree is subject, is currently the most effective protection for a tree.

The Cabinet Secretary emphasised the Welsh Government is "firmly committed" to protecting ancient trees and woodlands. She said the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS, is currently considering the approach to strengthening protections for ancient woodlands.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

A previous petition, [P-06-1306 More protection for ancient & veteran trees in Wales. Old Trees can be relocated. Stop The Chop](#), called for greater protection for ancient and veteran trees in the planning system. This petition was considered complete by the Petitions Committee at its meeting on 3 July 2023, noting that the Agriculture (Wales) Bill had passed stage 4 of the legislative process.

Greater protection for ancient woodland and veteran trees was discussed during passage of the Agriculture (Wales) Bill through the Senedd. The Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee [recommended at stage 1](#) that the then Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths MS, should set out how greater protections for ancient woodland and veteran trees would be addressed.

[The Minister responded](#) stating the need to take a holistic approach. She noted amendments the Bill would make to the *Forestry Act 1967* to provide the ability to add site specific or bespoke conditions to felling licences where appropriate. She also noted changes to planning policy (see above), and work ongoing to develop the National Forest for Wales and the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

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-06-1441  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05303/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru

03 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Your letter of 23 May, addressed to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, regarding Petition P-06-1441, has been passed to me for reply as this issue falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

The Oak at the Gate of the Dead, the subject of the petition, stands in the park of Chirk Castle, which has been included in the statutory register of historic parks and gardens maintained by the Welsh Ministers. Registration does not impose any additional consent regime. Planning authorities, however, should value, protect, conserve and enhance the special interest of parks and gardens included on the register and their settings. When planning authorities are determining planning applications, the effect of a proposed development on a registered historic park or garden, or its setting, should be a material consideration.

In February, the Welsh Government updated national planning policy on the protection of trees and woodlands. *Planning Policy Wales* 12 strengthened policy for all trees (including ancient woodland and individual ancient, veteran and heritage trees). Paragraphs 6.4.37–44 set out the significant landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of trees, outlining policies for their protection and promoting positive interventions in the planning system to recognise their importance. Decision making and development plan policies in local planning authorities must be in conformity with *Planning Policy Wales*.

This ancient tree has been subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) since 2010. The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of a tree without the consent of the local planning authority. A TPO is currently the most effective protection for a tree. The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 amended the Forestry Act 1967 to impose an unlimited fine for illegal tree felling, with the aim of providing better protection for the environment and wildlife.

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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.

Although Cadw is responsible for recommending historic parks and gardens to the Welsh Ministers for registration, it has no powers to afford protection to specific trees or plantings. The Welsh Government, however, is firmly committed to the protection of ancient trees and woodlands. The Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs is currently considering our approach to strengthening the protections for ancient woodlands as part of the Programme for Government.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice

**P-06-1441 Oak tree at the Gate of the Dead, should be given statutory protection by Cadw, as an ancient tree - Correspondence from the Petitioner to Committee, 25 August 2024**

I would like to submit the attachments and following statement for the application/submission for the Crogen Oak (Oak tree at the gate of the dead):

.....

Oak tree at the gate of the dead

1. there may be existing levels of protection in place, but it is beside the road; and not defined within a 'Park' setting, not clearly fenced off. Ie in video: <https://youtu.be/BBT6nFKLjfU?si=siKz6kr2I3lupLK->
2. No intact fencing specific to protect the tree makes it vulnerable, and easily attacked and hacked at by someone needing wood for making a fire.
3. The age and vulnerable nature of the tree makes it a target for activists who have destroyed the likes of the Sycamore Gap tree at Hadrian's Wall
4. There is no true indication of the importance of the tree as featured in the image enclosed with this communication
5. because of the importance of the tree; although it's associated with the Chirk estate with signage nearby (but not at site) guidance offered by Danish state legislature should see the importance of the tree within its historical and cultural significance, ie a set protection offered by Cadw in line with other historical and culturally significant structures. As enclosed: Denmark Nature Protection Act 1992. This act although in another legislative region, as a model sees trees protected alongside historical monuments, as listed: Part 3 .... trees protected with popular beliefs and folklore.
6. Cadw should offer protection to certain trees as living historical structures with a connection in the historical and cultural landscape.

Further to this, Adfer Hanes Cymru a registered charity would be able to monitor and assist with the protection of the tree, if guided to do so.

If I can provide further data I will do so.

Karl-James Langford FSAScot, MLitt, PGDipAH



**BOX 4.1**  
**VISIBLE MONUMENTS PROTECTED BY THE NATURE**  
**PROTECTION ACT (1992)**

**Part 1 (protected with protection zone)**

burial mounds, cairns  
stone cists, dolmens, passage graves  
ship-settings  
fortified or moated sites  
fortifications  
disused churchyards  
ruins  
runestones, monoliths  
rock carvings  
crosses, milestones, boundary stones

**Part 2 (protected with protection zone, if owner notified)**

mills  
dams and dykes  
bridges and road construction  
stone banks and stone settings  
earthworks and moated sites with buildings  
holy wells  
canals  
structures near or in lakes, rivers and bogs  
settlement sites

**Part 3 (protected if owner notified - no protection zone)**

ancient monuments covered by Part 1 but invisible  
stones and trees connected with popular beliefs and folklore  
soldiers graves  
memorial monuments  
boundary walls of stone or earth  
traces of field cultivation  
trapping pits  
heaps of branches or stones near roads and bridges, accumulated as a result of local tradition

# Petitions Briefing

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 September 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 Medi 2024

Reference: SR24-8813-1

**Petition Number:** P-05-1444

**Petition title:** Women of North Wales have the right to have a Menopause Service/Clinic in Ysbyty Gwynedd.

**Text of petition:** Not everyone can afford to travel to Wrexham. Not everyone can afford to pay privately to go to a Menopause clinic. Not everyone has the time to go to Wrexham, maybe they care for children and family members etc. Everyone should have the choice. This should be on our doorstep in Ysbyty Gwynedd with more specialist services local to North Wales including regularly updates for GP's, Gynaecologists, practitioners and employers supporting them on Menopause and the benefits of HRT.

The health board expect women to travel to the nearest NHS menopause clinic in Wrexham, as they are cutting back the little support we have in Ysbyty Gwynedd, this is not acceptable and especially in the current financial crisis. We need resource on our doorstep local to us; the health board do not meet the demands of women suffering the ordeal, misery, pain, and discomfort along with all the other symptoms of the Menopause and the impact on their family.

Welsh Government must invest more in menopause resources and services in Wales.



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# 1. Background

**Menopause** is a natural part of aging that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. It typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, and is diagnosed after 12 months without a menstrual period. Menopause happens when the ovaries stop producing reproductive hormones, particularly estrogen and progesterone. The symptoms before menopause, known as perimenopause, and after, post-menopause, can last for years.

Despite the universality of menopause, the **British Menopause Society, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and Society for Endocrinology** say there has been a lack of support for women going through this phase. They say many women report a lack of education and their healthcare professionals' lack of adequate training on the menopause.

**Fair Treatment for the Women in Wales emphasise** that women make up 52% of the population in Wales. At some point in their lives, these women will experience menopause. **Public Health Wales report** that around 1 in 3 women are either currently going through or have reached the menopause.

In terms of accessing services for menopause in Wales, the majority of women in Wales access advice about menopause-related symptoms, including Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) prescriptions, from primary care services. Women with menopause-related symptoms are seen in secondary care in general gynaecology clinics. Specialist menopause clinics are also available in some areas to see women with more complex menopause-related issues, without the need for a referral into secondary care. These are run by menopause specialists.

## Welsh Government Initiatives on Menopause

The Welsh Government has been working on a number of initiatives to improve menopause care and support across Wales, including:

- The Welsh Government established the **All-Wales Menopause Task and Finish Group** in July 2022. This group comprised healthcare professionals, service-user representatives, and Welsh Government officials. Their goal was to address inequitable access to menopause services and provide recommendations for improved care.
- The group published its **Final Report** in January 2023. The report made a number of recommendations to ensure high standards of menopause

care. This includes raising public awareness, demand-capacity modelling for services, staff training and implementing best practices based on National Institute for Health and Care (NICE) guidelines.

- The Welsh Government has emphasised the importance of menopause in GP training and continuous professional development provided by Health Education and Improvement Wales.

## Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Menopause Provision

In July 2023, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) launched a Menopause Café. This initiative includes virtual and face-to-face sessions for staff to discuss menopause-related issues. These sessions aim to provide support and raise awareness within the workplace.

## 2. Welsh Government Action

The Welsh Government provided a response to the Petition on 3 July 2024, stating it recognised that “there are improvements to be made in menopause care, treatment and support and greater consistency in those services across Wales”.

The response refers to the NHS Wales 10-year women’s health plan, which is being developed to deliver the ambitions set out within the Welsh Government’s Quality Statement for Women and Girl’s Health. Further details about the plan are provided in this Senedd Research article, ‘Women’s health needs and the pursuit of equity: the absence of a dedicated plan’.

The Welsh Government clarify that the recommendations made by the All-Wales Menopause Task and Finish Group in their final report will be taken forward as part of the Women’s Health Plan. The Women’s Health Plan is scheduled for publication by December 2024.

Specifically in relation to BCUHB, the response states

All gynaecology consultants across the three hospital sites in North Wales see women with menopause-related symptoms in their general gynaecology clinics.

Specialist menopause clinics are run by the three menopause specialists and they see people with more complex menopause-related issues, such as multiple treatment failures, primary ovarian insufficiency, complex medical problems, high-risk cancer genes or hormone

dependent cancer and testosterone initiation. These clinics are based at Deeside and Wrexham Maelor Hospital. A mix of face-to-face and virtual slots are available based on patient choice. This is in addition to e-advice for women via their GP practice.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

There have been questions asked in the Senedd on menopause. For instance,

- Conservative MS Laura Anne Jones shared her personal experience of menopause in May 2024. She called on the Welsh Government to ensure better employment support is available for women experiencing menopause.
- Labour MS Vikki Howells asked the then Health Minister, Eluned Morgan MS about support for women in Wales who are experiencing the menopause in June 2021. Eluned Morgan MS responded that “the Welsh Government takes women’s health, including menopausal concerns, very seriously and expects all health boards to provide a full range of services to women experiencing the menopause in accordance with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance”.

In addition, the Senedd has been proactive in addressing menopause-related issues. On World Menopause Day, the Senedd announced that they are now one of the UK’s leading organisations when it comes to supporting staff who are experiencing menopause. The Senedd Commission became the first organisation in Wales to adopt the BSI’s (British Standards Institution) guidance on menopause and menstruation.

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-06-1444  
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/05736/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

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

03 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition P-06-1444 *Women of North Wales have the right to have a Menopause Services/Clinic in Ysbyty Gwynedd*.

Health boards are responsible for delivering services for women in their community. We recognise that there are improvements to be made in menopause care, treatment and support and greater consistency in those services across Wales.

As you will be aware, the NHS is developing a 10-year Women's Health Plan which will detail how it intends to realise the ambitions set out within the Welsh Government's [Quality Statement for Women's and Girls' Health](#). The plan will aim to address existing inequities in provision or barriers to access, taking a life course approach to ensure the provision of good quality health services for women throughout their lifetime.

In July 2022, the Welsh Government established the All-Wales Menopause Task and Finish Group to advise on improvements in equitable access to and standards of menopause care across Wales. The group's final report was published in February 2023 and made a range of recommendations to improve equity, access, quality, staff training, public awareness and research. These will be taken forward as part of the Women's Health Plan.

My officials have contacted Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board about its menopause service provision. It has confirmed that the majority of women in North Wales access advice about menopause-related symptoms, including HRT prescriptions from primary care services. All gynaecology consultants across the three hospital sites in North Wales see women with menopause-related symptoms in their general gynaecology clinics.

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

Specialist menopause clinics are run by the three menopause specialists and they see people with more complex menopause-related issues, such as multiple treatment failures, primary ovarian insufficiency, complex medical problems, high-risk cancer genes or hormone dependent cancer and testosterone initiation. These clinics are based at Deeside and Wrexham Maelor Hospital. A mix of face-to-face and virtual slots are available based on patient choice. This is in addition to e-advice for women via their GP practice.

The health board is reviewing job plans to enable the specialists to increase capacity to respond to demand. It is also exploring pilot virtual sessions with GPs to help provide specialist advice for women, closer to home, without the need for a referral into secondary care.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol

**P-06-1444 Women of North Wales have the right to have a Menopause Services/Clinic in Ysbyty Gwynedd – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 08 September 2024.**

Thank you for your email on 3, July 2024, regarding my petition Women have the right to have a Menopause Clinic in North Wales : Ysbyty Gwynedd .

This is a very similar letter that Helen Stevens-Jones Director of Partnerships, Engagement and Communications of Ysbyty Gwynedd sent to Mr Rhun ap Iorwerth AS, 4 February 2024

Eluned Morgan's response is not acceptable and does not address the questions and concerns raised in the petition

She states that "the Health Board are responsible for delivering services for women in their community ", exactly they should, not Wrexham which is not central to North Wales. She states that the Health Board states that majority of women access advice for their menopause from their primary care service. Does she have the stats for this statement by the Health Board? have these women been asked how good was the service they received , did they benefit from the service , where they listen to and heard, did they understand what was said to them, was it explained to them, did they understand , did they feel they had time to talk in depth about what was happening to them, was the service a " great".....amongst many more questions I would ask if I was the Engagement and Communications Director, as this is my role and has been for many years

It is good to read that the Health Board is looking at reviewing job plans, but how quickly and how well will this service be? Will it just be a tick box tokenistic service or will it really help and benefit women of North Wales and I hope this will all be based in Ysbyty Gwynedd? I hope so

The Welsh language act 1993, places a duty on every public body providing a service to the public in Wales, how they will provide a service in Welsh to their service users, have they also taken this on board?

I look forward to hearing from you soon  
Regards  
Delyth

***Below you will see highlighted in yellow my response to the letter from Helen Stevens-Jones :***

*Thank you for your email on 9 February 2024, asking about the development of menopause services at the Health Board.*

All of our gynecology consultants across our three hospitals continue to see women and people with menopause-related symptoms in their Gynecology Clinics.

As you state in your email, our Women's Services have recently successfully implemented Specialist Menopause Clinics which are run by our three Consultant Gynecologists who are accredited as menopause specialists by the British Menopause Society. Why can one of these not be set up in Ysbyty Gwynedd, it would not cost much to have a clinic in Bangor YG once a week and will save money travel, are etc for the patients. Wrexham is not central to North Wales patients

These specialist clinics, based in Deeside and Wrexham Maelor Hospital, are for providing specialist menopause advice to patients across North Wales, This is not North Wales, these need to be more central to North Wales, not on the English border with more complex needs such as multiple treatment failures, insufficiency premature ovarian failure, complex medical problems, high risk cancer genes or hormone dependent cancer. Why can they not provide someone who can deal with complex patients in YG? Why make the patients travel .The waiting list for Wrexham is awful. I have been told recently by women the waiting time is 2 years! I have also been informed that the service is awful, several women complaining to me about the treatment and inadequate service in Wrexham, this is not acceptable

Our menopause specialists often hold virtual consultations to avoid the need for patients to travel as we appreciate that traveling to face-to-face consultations can involve a significant journey from some parts of North Wales, and this has been appreciated by the women and their families. How many virtual consultations have they done? Women need the choice and sometimes face to face is a must, virtual does not "show "how the women is, it's doesn't give the human touch which is so needed with the Menopause

Our Women's Services are now taking a number of actions, led by our menopause experts, in order to maintain and expand the service moving forward. These include training medical and nursing colleagues, in primary and secondary care, and educating Women's Services staff and allied health professionals through webinars and teaching sessions. Where are these based? is there a list of where they are for people to access? Yes there are many more training providers offering the well-being of menopause in the work place etc, Menopause Champions etc, there are books and online etc which is fantastic we are speaking more and more about it and not afraid anymore, we are now much more knowledgeable .....but these are not the professionals that can offer best advice and treatment

Recently, the Clinical Leader has invited expressions of interest from colleagues in the Central and Western Health Board area to receive training in this subject with the aim of providing services closer to home. How many have replied to this request? also how many speak Welsh as this is just as important to be able to talk in the language of choice, at home being where?

The service is currently re-reviewing job plans for the current specialists to enable them to provide additional face-to-face and virtual consultations across North Wales and is investigating the possibility of a pilot program of virtual sessions with doctors family to review their cases and provide specialist input and advice without the need to refer a patient to secondary care. By when and where? Is this going to be Ysbyty Gwynedd?

As you will appreciate, funding remains a significant challenge in the NHS. However, we are committed to ensuring that we provide accessible, high quality menopause services across North Wales and I hope that my comments provide reassurance that we continue to develop the arrangements to support this. Please feel free to contact me again if you need more information on this. What is being asking for does not require funding, it's a car or train journey once a week or more to Bangor from Wrexham by a consultant

## Petitions on the name 'Wales' and 'Cymru'

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8973-1

This briefing has been prepared to support the Committee's consideration of two petitions relating to the name of the Country – one in support of abolishing the name 'Wales', making 'Cymru' the only name, and one in support of maintaining the name 'Wales'.

### Petition 1

**Petition Number:** P-05-1446

**Petition title:** Abolish the name 'Wales' and make 'Cymru' the only name for our country

**Text of petition:** Wales is a name imposed on Cymru and is essentially not a Welsh word at all. The world knows about Wales because of its English connection since 1282. Hardly anyone has heard of Cymru or realises that we have our own unique language and culture which is totally different from the other countries within the United Kingdom



## Petition 2

**Petition Number:** P-05-1451

**Petition title:** Keep the name 'Wales' and not waste any more taxpayers money on pointless exercises

**Text of petition:** This is to counter the petition to abolish the name 'Wales' and to only refer to our fine land as 'Cymru'.

We are proud of our Welsh roots but this would be a pointless waste of taxpayers money. Cymru OR Wales-let people refer to God's country however they want and not impose an ideology on anyone.

Let the silent majority be heard!

## 1. Background

There have been many international examples of places and nations changing their official title. In 2022, the Turkish Government sent a letter to the UN formally requesting that it be referred to as Türkiye, the Turkish spelling and pronunciation of Turkey. The Republic of Türkiye is now the country's official name, and the country is listed as Türkiye in the UN list of Member States.

Another recent example is Czechia, the new name adopted in 2016 for the Czech Republic. However, some in the country had concerns that the name was too similar to the Russian region, Chechnya, while it was reported that the former prime minister, Andrej Babiš told the Wall Street Journal in 2020 "I don't know who came up with such a stupid idea".

There have also been calls to change the name New Zealand to Aotearoa (long white cloud) in Māori. More than 70,000 people signed a petition there calling for a change in name. Meanwhile, there was also talk of the possibility that India might change its name to Bharat, the Sanskrit and Hindi name for India after the Prime Minister, Nerandra Modi, sat behind a nameplate inscribed with "Bharat" during a G20 summit.

Here in Wales, the petition calling for abolishing the name 'Wales' and use 'Cymru' as the sole name has gathered 12,100 signatures. While a counter-petition to keep the name 'Wales' has gathered 5,430 signatures.

## 2. Etymology of 'Cymru' and 'Wales'

Dr. Dylan Foster Evans, an expert on the history of the Welsh language posed the question - [What's in a name?](#) - in this article on Welsh place names, noting that the:

English name, *Wales*, derives from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'foreigners', or in particular those foreigners who were under the influence of the Roman empire.

The Welsh name for Wales, *Cymru*, on the other hand:

comes from the plural of *Cymro*, 'a Welshman'. The word *Cymro* is thought to derive from an earlier Brittonic word, *combrogos* - 'a compatriot' or 'a fellow-countryman'.

In an [opinion piece on Nation.Cymru in 2019](#), Gareth Ceidiog Hughes writes about the use of the word Welsh, noting that the etymology of the word Welsh is "rooted in less than flattering connotations":

It is derived from the old Germanic word *walha*. It is a variation on a common word used hundreds of years ago by Saxons to mean foreigners or outsiders. Germanic tribes invaded England in the fifth century, and this is how they referred to the native Celtic population, whom they displaced, murdered or enslaved.

The article goes on to contrast what the writer considers a "far more benign etymology of the word *Cymry*" which is

derived from the Old Welsh word *combroggi*, meaning fellow-countrymen or compatriot. *Cymru* is the land of the compatriots.

## 3. Use of 'Cymru' only

Wales remains the internationally recognised name of the nation, rather than *Cymru*, despite the equal status given to both languages in Wales.

In October 2022, the Football Association of Wales made headlines on the eve of the World Cup in Qatar, when it transpired that informal discussion had been taking place with European football's governing body, UEFA, about its name.

The Chief Executive, Noel Mooney, told reporters that *Cymru* is already used internally by the FAW for its communications and by its staff, and that:

The team should always be called Cymru, that's what we call it here.

He continued by noting that:

Internationally we feel we have a bit more work to do yet. So we are going to this World Cup as Wales.

But I think 2023 will be a year when we have a good discussion with all the different stakeholders - whether that's governments, our own boards, councils and decision-making bodies, staff, club and players.

## 4. Organisations changing to Welsh only names

There are also examples of organisations in Wales 'changing' names, at least in terms of its daily use, to using only their Welsh name.

In November 2022, Snowdonia National Park Authority agreed to refer to Wales' highest mountain, *Snowdon*, by its Welsh name only, *Yr Wyddfa*. It also decided to refer to the National Park as 'Eryri' only, rather than Snowdonia.

The Park Authority recommended that Members of the authority:

approve the use of the names Yr Wyddfa and Eryri in the Welsh and English languages, giving officers the discretion to use the terms, Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) and Eryri (Snowdonia) in English, should the context require this for education and engagement purposes. It is foreseen that Yr Wyddfa and Eryri will be the usual and common forms and that over time, as awareness increases, that these would be the only forms used by the Authority. The change would occur over time, as Authority publications and interpretation are updated.

Following suit the following April was Brecon Beacons National Park. After a rebranding exercise, the Park decided it would only use its Welsh language name, *Bannau Brycheiniog*, as its corporate name in future.

The *Senedd* itself has a Welsh and English name, but the name *Senedd* has established itself as the primary name used for the national parliament.

The Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 replaced the name 'National Assembly for Wales / Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru', with 'Senedd Cymru or the Welsh Parliament'. Both have equal status in the legislation, although the Act refers to the institution as 'the Senedd' throughout. The legislation also made provision for elected members to be known as 'Members of the Senedd / Aelod o'r Senedd'. which may have supported the use of the 'Senedd' more widely in public discourse in both Welsh and English context.

## 5. Welsh Parliament action

The Senedd has considered several petitions in the last few years relating to Welsh place-names. A petition that closed in February 2023 called for renaming Wales to her original name, Cymru, which received 414 signatures.

It was considered by the Petitions Committee on 06 February 2023.

## 6. Welsh Government action

Responding to the petition to 'rename Wales to her original name, Cymru' in 2023, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language at that time, Jeremy Miles MS, noted that:

Our intention [the Welsh Government] is to continue to use both Cymru and Wales, to refer to our nation in both its official languages, and to continue to promote the visibility and use of Welsh at a community and national level, reflecting our conviction that Welsh belongs to us all.

Responding to the current petition on making 'Cymru' the only name for the country, the then Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles MS noted his "support for any public body that promotes its Welsh name" which highlights the language and the culture.

The Cabinet Secretary went on to reiterate what was said to the previous petition in 2023 that that:

It is not our intention to formally change to using only 'Cymru'. This does not mean that we are not extremely supportive of using 'Cymru' as an organisation, and we're eager to increase the use of the Welsh name for our country...

[...]Ultimately, the name that we use for the country is bound up with our identity as individuals, as people, as a nation. With that in mind, we support the idea that anyone has the right to use 'Cymru' or 'Wales' for our country.

Responding to the petition to “Keep the name 'Wales' and not waste any more taxpayers money on pointless exercises”, the Cabinet Secretary stated that:

Our policy as an organisation is to use the Welsh language as well as the English, to reflect the nature of our work representing and working on behalf of everyone in Wales, no matter where they live or which language they speak. With that in mind, it is not our intention to formally change to using only 'Cymru'.

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

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language**



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1446  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEEW/05468/24

**Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government**

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

8 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May, seeking my opinion on the issue raised in the petition calling on us to “abolish the name ‘Wales’ and make ‘Cymru’ the only name for our country”.

The question around using one name is a natural question. We’ve seen public bodies such as Eryri and Bannau Brycheiniog National Parks opting to use their Welsh names, and the Football Association of Wales using ‘Cymru’ in every communication, be it in Welsh or English. These examples have set a precedent for the idea and I fully understand why the question has been raised. It has been extremely interesting following the public debate around these examples.

As the Cabinet Secretary with responsibility for the Welsh language, I do of course support any public body who promotes its Welsh name, highlighting the language and our culture in doing so. However, it’s important to note that each of the organisations named above operates within its own context, with different issues to consider accordingly. Eryri National Park’s decision was the result of a vote by the National Park’s Authority for example, in an area with a high density of Welsh speakers. In Bannau Brycheiniog National Park, its identity had been subject to two years of discussions by the Park’s Authority with volunteers, residents, visitors and businesses. This included a stakeholder panel, citizen assembly and a consultation process.

Our policy as an organisation is to use the Welsh language as well as English, to reflect the nature of our work representing and working on behalf of everyone in Wales, no matter where they live or which language they speak.

Our strategy, *Cymraeg 2050: a million Welsh speakers* and our commitment in the Programme for Government to safeguard Welsh place-names has put the Welsh language high on the agenda, and raised people’s awareness of these issues. We also have a

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CF99 1SN

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

[Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales](mailto: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.

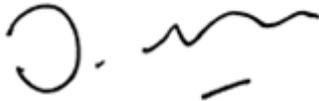
strategy on using Welsh within the Welsh Government – *Cymraeg. It belongs to us all* – meaning that work to increase usage and mainstream the Welsh language happens at many levels in the organisation, internally and externally.

However,

it is not our intention to formally change to using only 'Cymru'. This does not mean that we are not extremely supportive of using 'Cymru' as an organisation, and we're eager to increase the use of the Welsh name for our country, as well as the lovely names we have for our towns and cities, our lakes and mountains, on our English channels as well as on our Welsh ones. I'm fully aware that seeing and hearing Welsh names, as well as understanding their meaning, can be a powerful tool in safeguarding and promoting them in Wales and beyond.

Regarding the name of the country itself, there are several factors to consider, including the economy, tourism, marketing and education. But ultimately, the name that we use for the country is bound up with our identity as individuals, as people, as a nation. With that in mind, we support the idea that anyone has the right to use 'Cymru' or 'Wales' for our country.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a wavy line and a short horizontal stroke.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language

**P-06-1446 Abolish the name 'Wales' and make 'CYMRU' the only name for our country**

22/07/24 Arfon Jones'(petitioner) response to Welsh Government response (Welsh)

Annwyl Jack Sargeant AS,

'Rwyf yn ysgrifennu'r llythyr hwn yn sgil darllen y llythyr a ysgrifennodd Jeremy Miles i chi, llythyr oedd mwy neu lai yn dweud - os yw fy nehongliad o'i lythyr yn gywir - nad oes gan Llywodraeth LLafur yng Nghymru unrhyw fwriad i ddiddymu'r enw Wales er mwyn dyrchafu yr enw CYMRU i'w phriod le i fod yr unig enw swyddogol ar ein gwlad.

Gadewch i ni yn gyntaf edrych ar ganlyniad dwy ddeiseb - deiseb o blaid diddymu'r enw Wales a deiseb o blaid cadw'r enw Wales, cyn i mi rannu fy marn gyda chi pam fy mod yn meddwl fod dehongliad Jeremy Miles o gadw'r enw Wales - o gofio yr oes sydd ohoni - yn hollol amhriodol.

Canlyniad diddymu'r enw Wales:  
12,101 o blaid

Canlyniad cadw enw Wales:  
5,439 o blaid

Mae'r canlyniad yn ddigon clir fod y genedl yn awchu am newid a bod angen symud i ffwrdd o'r hen drefn wladychol sydd wedi parhau yma yng Nghymru ers creu deddf uno rhwng Cymru a LLoegr yn 1536 - deddf sydd yn uniongyrchol gyfrifol dros seisnigeiddio ein gwlad drwy ei galw yn Wales - a hynny yn enw swyddogol arni hefyd. Mae'r enw Wales yn gyfystyr a thri pheth - seisnigeiddio pawb a phopeth gan ddisgwyl i'r Cymry grebachu o ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg er mwyn gwneud i eraill deimlo'n gyffyrddus. Mae'r dyddia yna ar lawr gwlad wedi darford Jack. Dim ond agwedd y LLYWODRAETH yng Nghymru sydd yn dal Cymru yn ôl.

Mae Jeremy Miles yn ei lythyr i chi yn cydnabod ei fod yn deall pam fod y cwestiwn o ddiddymu'r enw Wales a gwneud Cymru a Chymru'n unig i fod yr unig enw ar ein gwlad yn gwestiwn hollol naturiol i'w ofyn - drwy gyfeirio at sefydliadau megis Parc Cenedlaethol Cymru a Chymdeithas Peldroed Cymru sydd mond yn defnyddio yr enw Cymraeg am ein gwlad. Oherwydd y deallusrwydd yma sydd gan Jeremy Miles o'r naturioldeb hyn mae rhaid ei fod felly yn derbyn yn ddi gwestiwn yr egwyddor tu ôl i hunaniaeth aelodau tuag at eu gwlad. Mae newid aruthrol ymysg dirniadaeth pobol ifanc ynglyn sut maent yn edrych ar eu hunaniaeth a bod mwy o berthyn i'r enw Cymru na sydd i'r enw Wales - gofynnwch i gefnogwyr Peldroed Cymru boed iddynt fedru'r Gymraeg a'i pheidio beth yw arwyddocad y geiriau eiconig "'Da ni yma o hyd"' a mi gewch yr ateb - oherwydd ein bod yn cefnogi Cymru. Mae'r oes yn newid a mae rhaid i Lywodraeth Cymru newid hefyd.

Mae'n amlwg i gefnogwyr tim Peldroed Cenedlaethol ein gwlad feddu a emosiynau athronyddol amyneddol go arbennig i'w galluogi i wneud y naid hollbwysig i ffwrdd o gefnogi Wales i gefnogi Cymru o ddod i ddeall beth yw gwir arwyddocad tu ôl yr enw Wales a beth yw ystyr tu ôl i'r enw Cymru h.y o fod yn estroniaid yn ei gwlad ei hunan i fod yn wladgarwyr Cymreig yng Nghymru.

Yn anffodus - nid yw Jeremy Miles wedi ystyried hyn o gwbl. Yr unig ddadl mae Jeremy Miles yn ei gynnig o safbwynt parc cenedlaethol Eryri a Bannau Brycheiniog yw bod ymgynghori ar sawl lefel wedi bod gan ddefnyddio'r ddadl bod dwysedd niferoedd y Cymry Cymraeg yn ardaloedd Gorllewinol Cymru yn esgus i gyfiawnhau y ddadl dros y newid. OND dyw'r ddadl yma ddim cweit yn dal dŵr o safbwynt Cymdeithas Peldroed Cymru sy'n rhychwantu Gogledd Ddwyreiniol Cymru, Y Gororau, a chymoedd y De Ddwyrain h.y yr ardaloedd mwya seisnig eu hiaith. Ac eto mae'r gefnogaeth i'r enw Cymru yn eu plith yn un anhygoel.

Beth yw'r pwynt felly i Senedd Cymru fod yn heriol a dewr gan geisio eu gorau glas gael miliwn o siariadwyr Cymraeg erbyn 2050 os nad ydynt yn ddigon dewr i gynnig i'r miliwn yma y parch maent yn eu haeddu o gael byw yng Nghymru a nid Wales. Bydd cadw'r enw Wales yn tanseilio ac yn dibrisio holl waith ac egwyddor y Parc Cenedlaethol a Chymdeithas Peldroed Cymru ac hefyd bydd yn tanseilio ymdrech y Senedd i wireddu'r her o gyrraedd y miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg. Gweler holl lythyrau - sydd eisioes yn hysbys i'r pwyllgor - i'r perwyl yma - a gafodd ei cyhoeddi gan y wasg yng Nghymru yn ystod cyfnod y ddeiseb.

'Dwi o'r farn bydd mynd a phoblogaeth Cymru gyda chi yn daith gyffroes tuag at y miliwn gan gynnig iddynt y wefr o gael byw yng Nghymru yn hytrach na Wales yn tanio ysbryd y boblogaeth - yn union fel mae'r ddeiseb fuddugoliaethol wedi llwyddo i ymddangos. Wrthgwrs bydd angen esbonio, addysgu, a chynnal deiolog fydd yn rhoi gobaith o'r newydd i drigolion Cymru fod yna wawr fudfugoliaethus ar droed i'w plant a phlant eu plant am ganrifoedd i ddod. Cofier, Jack, am y winllan a roddwyd i'n gofal a phwy yw gofalwyr ein gwlad - neb llai na llywodraeth Cymru ei hunan wrthgwrs - fel arall does dim pwynt cael llywodraeth Cymru o gwbl.

Tybiaf y gallaf ymddiried ynddoch fel gwleidydd i fod yn wrol ac yn gadarn dros eich gwlad, ei phobol, ei gwleidyddiaeth, ei hanes a'i hunaniaeth. Dyma gyfle i wrthdroi canrifoedd o fyw dan warth yr enw 'Wales'. Pwy mewn gwirionedd sydd am gael byw fel estron yn ei wlad ei hun??

Byddwch yn ddewr Jack Sargeant, arweiniwch i gael ymateb cadarnhaol gan y Pwyllgor Deisebau i draddodi'r freuddwyd hon, i gyd fynd a'r miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg y dyfodol.

Fe fyddwch yn arwr o fewn eich Gwlad a thu hwnt. Yr ymateb rhwydda bosib gennych fydd i ysgubo'r ddeiseb i domen hanes a'i anghofio OND o dderbyn yr her a'r frwydyr a'r weledigaeth er budd Cymru fe fyddwch wedi sicrhau eich lle yn hanes Cymru am ganrifoedd i ddod.

Yn gywir,

Arfon Jones - Hen Golwyn, Conwy.

The petitioner has also shared several newspaper articles or letters expressing his views and concerns which he wishes to be brought to the attention of Members of the Petition Committee as part of their consideration of his petition.

## 1. Y Cymro - Ionawr / January 2024

### Diddymu 'Wales' a defnyddio 'Cymru' yn unig - be feddylier felly?

'Mae'n hen bryd i ni fel cenedl ddeffro i'r hyn sydd yn digwydd yma o dan y faner Wales a'i chyfystr Seisnig - i ddyrchafu popeth yn y Saesneg yn unig'

Lansiwyd deiseb i ddiddymu'r enw 'Wales' a gwneud 'Cymru' yr unig enw ar y wlad.

Bydd y ddeiseb, sy'n casglu enwau tan fis Mehefin eleni, yn cael ei chyflwyno i Lywodraeth Cymru a gobaith awdur yr ymgyrch, Arfon Jones, yw y bydd wedi casglu digon o enwau i alluogi dadl yn y Senedd ym Mae Caerdydd.

Dywedodd bydd rhaid cael 10,000 o gefnogwyr y ddeiseb cyn gwnaiff y senedd hyd yn oed ystyried edrych arni i drafod.

Wrth i'r Cymro fynd i'r wasg roedd 8,953 wedi llofnodi'r ddeiseb yn barod.

Dywed y ddeiseb mai enw sydd wedi ei orfodi ar Gymru yw'r enw 'Wales' sydd yn ei hanfod ddim yn air Cymraeg o gwbl.

Aiff yn ei blaen: "Mae'r byd i gyd bron yn gwybod am Wales oherwydd ei chysylltiad Seisnig â Lloegr ers 1282.

'...rhaid cael 10,000 o gefnogwyr y ddeiseb cyn gwnaiff y senedd hyd yn oed ystyried edrych arni i drafod'

"Nid oes fawr neb yn gwybod am Gymru a bod ganddi iaith a diwylliant unigryw ei hunan sydd yn hollol wahanol i'r gwledydd eraill o fewn y Deyrnas Unedig."

Yn ôl gwefan deisebau Llywodraeth Cymru caiff pob deiseb â mwya na 250 llofnod ei throafod gan y Pwyllgor Deisebau ar ôl iddi orffen casglu llofnodion. Caiff deisebau sydd â mwya na 10,000 llofnod eu hystyried ar gyfer dadl yn y Senedd

Gellid canfod y ddeiseb ar-lein - deisebau.senedd.cymru/deisebau/245956 ac mae'n casglu llofnodion hyd at 13 Mehefin 2024.

Mae'r galw am ddiddymu enw 'Wales' y diweddara'f mewn amryw o ymgyrchoedd i godi ymwybyddiaeth o Gymreictod yn ddiweddar.



Y CYMRO 5



Llynedd penderfynodd Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog i ddefnyddio'r enw Cymraeg yn unig. Roedd hyn yn dilyn penderfyniad Awdurdod Parc Eryri i ddefnyddio Yr Wyddfa fel yr unig enw i fynydd uchaf y wlad. Penderfynwyd hefyd defnyddio'r term Eryri yn unig.

Dywedir bod tîm pêl-droed Cymru hefyd yn ystyried defnyddio'r enw uniaith Gymraeg ar y llwyfan rhyngwladol. 'Cymru' sydd eisoes yn cael ei ddefnyddio gan Gymdeithas Bêl-droed Cymru wrth gyfathrebu'n fewnol ac yn allanol, a hefyd gan staff ym mhencadlys y corff llywodraethu ym Mro Morgannwg.

### 'Mae' 'na bobl wedi eu geni yma sydd ddim yn gwybod mai Cymru yw enw ein gwlad'

Athro ysgol wedi ymdeol yw Arfon Jones a wariodd bron i chwarter canrif yn Ysgol Y Moelwyn, Blaenau Ffestiniog yn gyfrifol am ddatblygu a chyflwyno addysg Dylunio a Thechnoleg.

Ychwanegodd: "Dwi'n teimlo'n angerddol y dylai enw ein gwlad adlewyrchu ein hanes ni y Cymry a nid hanes y concwerwr nôl yn 1282 a'u hanes o rwbio'r halen i'r briw yn 1536 pryd y gwnaethpwyd yr enw Wales yn enw swyddogol Seisnig ar ein gwlad.

"Does a wnelo'r enw 'Wales' ddim byd i wneud â'n gwlad ac er gwaetha hyn oll - dyma'r union enw sydd yn cael ei ddefnyddio heddiw i'w marchnata, a hynny oll ar draul iaith gynhenid, frodorol Cymru. Mae 'na bobl wedi eu geni yma

sydd ddim yn gwybod mai Cymru yw enw ein gwlad a mai Cymraeg yw iaith frodorol y Cymry heb i ni ddechrau sôn am anwybodaeth gweddill y byd am Gymru a chefnidir ei phobl.

"Mae'n hen bryd i ni fel cenedl ddeffro i'r hyn sydd yn digwydd yma o dan y faner Wales a'i chyfystr Seisnig - i ddyrchafu popeth yn y Saesneg yn unig.

"Ystyriwch am un funud y gwahaniaeth rhwng y ddau enw: Wales a Chymru. Enw wedi orfodi ar ein gwlad yw Wales sydd yn union gyfystyr â gorfodi'r Saesneg ar ein plant ar draul y Gymraeg. I unrhyw un sydd yn derbyn yr enw Wales rhaid iddynt dderbyn hefyd y syniad bod addysg ddwyieithog yng Nghymru yn ffafrio yr iaith Saesneg dros y Gymraeg drwy dderbyn yr egwyddor bydd pawb ar

ddiwedd cyfnod addysg ffurfiannol 5 - 18 oed yn hollol rugl a llythrennog yn y Saesneg yn unig. Mae'r peth yn hollol hurt ac yn gwylydd mawr amom fel cenedl.

"Ar y llaw arall fodd bynnag, mae Cymru yn air sydd yn rhan annatod o swm ein pobl, gwead ein tirwedd a'r enwau hynafol ar hyd a lled y wlad yn ein atgoffa o'n hanes. Erbyn heddiw mae'r enw Cymru yn gyfystyr â chyflwyno addysg ffurfiannol dwyieithog mewn modd fel bydd pobl ifanc y dyfodol yn gadael ysgol yn gwbl llythrennog yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

"Y cwestiwn yw, a fedrwn ni gyflawni hyn tra bod yr enw Wales yn hongian uwch ein pennau yn ein hatgoffa o 500 mlynedd o gael ein gormesu gan iaith estronol. Yr ateb yn syml yw NA."

## 2. Y Cymro 26/05/24

Annwyl Ohebydd y Cymro,

Wel dyma ni ar y 3ydd o Fehefin 2024 ac 'rydym o fewn 10 diwrnod i'r ddeiseb, sydd yn gofyn i senedd Cymru ddiddymu'r enw Wales a gwneud Cymru a Chymru'n unig i fod yr unig enw ar ein gwlad, ddod i ben, pryd bydd

Ilywodraeth Cymru yn dechrau ystyried beth i wneud gyda hi - naill ai parhau ar drefn bresennol o barhau gyda'r ddau enw ar ein gwlad gyda ychydig mwy o bwyslais ar yr enw Wales o bosib fel sydd wedi bod erioed, neu, penderfynu i wneud Cymru yr unig enw arni am y tro cyntaf ers bron i 500 mlynedd.

Bydd y llywodraeth o bosib yn penderfynu os ydynt am fynd lawr yr un trywydd a phenderfyniad a gafwyd gan Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri yn ôl yn Chwefror 2023 pan benderfynodd y Parc ddiddymu'r enwau saesneg megis Snowdon a Snowdonia a dyrchafu'r enwau cynhenid Cymraeg sef Yr Wyddfa ac Eryri i sefyll ar ei traed ei hunan heb yr angen am ymyrraeth gan unrhyw iaith arall gael y cyfle i anilysu gwir ystyr enwau ein cenedl. Mae'n debyg y chwaraeodd 'tarddiad' ran allweddol yn y penderfyniad yma.

Heb os nac onibai, mae Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri yn haeddu'r ganmoliaeth a dderbynid ganddi gan ein pobol am osod y Gymraeg yn ei phriod le am y tro cyntaf ers 1953.

Mae'r ddeiseb wedi llwyddo i ennyn, nid yn unig diddordeb yma yng Nghymru ond diddordeb rhyngwladol yn ogystal ac i fyny at rwan mae wedi llwyddo i ennill 12,057 o gefnogwyr hyd yma. Hefyd mae wedi rhagori ar y trothwy a osodwyd gan Senedd Cymru ar gyfer iddi gael ei thrafod ar lawr y siambr ac wrthgwrs mae hynny'n ganlyniad calonogol tu hwnt.

A pham bod hyn oll yn bwysig? Yn yr oes sydd ohonni, nid yw'n gwneud unrhyw synnwyr o gwbl i unrhyw wlad gael dau enw, ac yn enwedig yma yng Nghymru ble mae ystyr un enw yn wrthgyfetbyniad llwyr o'r ystyr a roddir gan y llall. Er engraifft mae ystyr y gair Wales yn bychanu ac yn difrio y Cymry, yn cyfeirio atynt yn estroniaid yn ei gwlad ei hunan, tra, i'r gwrthwyneb, mae'r enw Cymru yn cyfeirio at y genedl gyfan yn frodyr ac yn gymrodorion i'w gilydd. Mae'r enw Cymru yn meddu ar tarddiad cywir o'r Frythoneg s'yn golygu combrogo - brawdgarwch - i gael bod yn enw ar ein gwlad. Nid oes gan yr enw Wales y tarddiad cywir i fod hydynoed yn enw yn ein gwlad heb sôn am fod yn enw swyddogol arni. Ond, enw swyddogol yw hi wedi bod ers bron i 500 mlynedd.

Hefyd mae twf aruthrol ar hyd a lled Cymru yn y galw am addysg drwy'r iaith Gymraeg, a bydd hyn yn holl bwysig i'r cenedlaethau o ddisgyblion a myfyriwyr y dyfodol i gael enw ar eu gwlad fydd nid yn unig yn cynrhychioli yr iaith byddant yn derbyn ei haddysg drwyddi ond hefyd bydd yn adlewyrchu yr iaith byddant yn ei siarad yn ogystal. Nid yw'r enw Wales ar y llaw arall yn cynrhychioli yr iaith Gymraeg o gwbl nac yn adlewyrchiad ohonni boed ar lafar

neu'n lenyddol.

Byddai diddymu'r enw Wales yn gwneud yr un iot o wahaniaeth i hygyrdd y Saesneg yn y wlad hon oherwydd mae wedi cael y rhyddid am bron 500 can mlynedd i saesnegeiddio bron pawb sydd yn byw yma ( ond ddim cweit), yn ogystal a chael rhwydd hant i anlysu llawer gormod o'n henwau cynhenid Cymraeg - rhai ohonynt yn prysuro o fynd yn anghof fel Yr Wyddfa ac Eryri er engraifft ond bellach gyda Snowdon a Snowdonia wedi cael i diddymu fel y crybwyll eisioes, mae gobaith i'r iaith Gymraeg unwaith yn rhagor, ond mae llawer mwy o waith i wneud i'r cyfeiriad yma.

Ar y llaw arall pe byddai yr enw Cymru yn cael ei ddiddymu yna byddai dim rheswm o gwbl i'r iaith Gymraeg fod. Mae'r ddau elfen yn greiddiol i'w gilydd ac wedi gwreiddio'n ddyfn i wneuthuriad y naill a'r llall. Pe byddai un yn pedio a bod byddai'r llall yn methu a goroesi.

Mae'r senedd ar drothwy gwneud penderfyniad a fydd yn diffinio ein gwlad am weddill y ganrif hon. Y cwestiwn y dylfen i gyd ofyn yw - oes gan ein gwleidyddion y weledigaeth, y doethineb, y deallusrwydd a'r awydd i wneud yr hyn a welwyd gan Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri o rod-di Cymru yn gyntaf am unwaith mewn 500 can mlynedd. Amser a ddengys wrthgwrs, a mae'r genedl i gyd yn awchu am newid i'r drefn wladychol sydd yn parhau yma yng Nghymru.

Yn olaf, hoffwn ddiolch o galon i bob un a gefnogodd y ddeiseb hon a 'rydym i gyd yn byw mewn gobaith bydd penderfyniad y Senedd yn caniatu ni gyd floeddio allan CYMRU AM BYTH a nid gorfod rhoi fynny gyda'r enw Wales am 500 can mlynedd arall.

Yn gywir,

Arfon Jones - Hen Golwyn

### **3. Wales online 28/05/24**

Dear Editor,

Well, here we are on the 3rd of June 2024 and in 10 days time, Senedd Cymru will have to decide which name best suits our country for the 21st century - will it be CYMRU or will it be WALES or perhaps it will be both, with more than a slight bias towards Wales perhaps as has always been the case.

It will of course be a decision for Llywodraeth Cymru to make, in response to the petition, requesting the Senedd to abolish the name Wales and make Cymru and Cymru alone be the only name for our country, in pretty much the same way that Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri decided on the fate of our iconic mountain and its surrounding area, and thank goodness, common sense prevailed on that occasion when the outcome between Yr Wyddfa/Snowdon, Eryri/Snowdonia was decided on provenance and not on pedigree. Yes indeed, Yr Wyddfa and Eryri most certainly have the provenance required enabling them to be stand alone names, without the need for them to be overshadowed by any other language to take away their true meaning, and the whole nation applauds Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri for arriving at that decision in February 2023 for maximising the full potential of our language, for the first time since 1953.

The petition, asking Senedd Cymru to abolish the name Wales, has today collected 12,064 signatures to date supporting the motion, and it has clearly exceeded the number of signatures required for it to be debated on the floor of the Senedd.

Why is this important? Well, It makes no sense at all for any country to have two different names that are completely at odds with one another and especially here in Cymru/Wales in the 21st Century to have an English name that is disparaging of its people - describing it's citizens as foreigners, can no longer be acceptable. Whilst on the other hand we have the name Cymru that better describes its population as brothers and compatriots - from the brythonic word *combrogos* - from which the name Cymru derives from.

Also, there is a huge demand for 'addysg drwy'r iaith Gymraeg' in this country and it will be of paramount importance for future generations of school pupils and students alike to be able to relate to the name of their country in such a way that the name not only represents the language they are being taught in but also reflects the language they speak. The name Wales has never represented nor has it ever reflected the true language of our country, and it will come as no surprise to no one, I'm sure, to hear that there is no such language as a Welsh language, because the Welsh per se do not speak a language called Welsh. The elusive Welsh language quite simply does not exist. Our language is called Cymraeg, and, immediately on hearing the name, one can feel the resonance between Cymraeg and Cymru, and that's because they both share the same provenance. However, there is no resonance felt between Cymraeg and Wales because they do not share that vital ingredient.

Abolishing the name CYMRU for example would negate the need for CYMRAEG simply because the one element cannot exist without the other, as both names are inextricably inked to one another by virtue of the provenance they share. If

one element disappears the other goes as well, but, for some, getting rid of the name CYMRU would solve many problems for the many, and also save governments a great deal of money to spend on improving roads infrastructure for example than having to promote and fund a language that defines who we the Cymry, are.

On the other hand - abolishing the name Wales would have no detrimental effect on the English language in this country whatsoever when one considers the course of the last 500 years, the history of Cymru, its people and place names that have suffered the effects of being anglicised - such as an attempt through state policy to prevent children speaking their one and only language - Cymraeg. However, that was then and the present is all about creating a better and a more inclusive country. It is the time for Cymru to shine for the first time in 500 years - and for that to happen, the Senedd will have to decide that Cymru will be the official name for our country. The Senedd is on the cusp of making a monumental decision with this petition and the correct decision will be a significant historical event for our country.

However the big question is - do our ministers possess the vision, the wisdom and the political will to deliver in the same vein that Parc Cenedlathol Eryri has delivered for our country? We will all find out soon enough. If they haven't, then Parc Cenedlathol Eryri may just as well reinstate Snowdon and Snowdonia and llywodraeth Cymru may as well allow Wales be the defacto name of this nation and continue along the trajectory which began in 1536 through the creation of the act of union and enshrined by the laws of England - to totally anglicise our country. The Senedd should and must take a leaf out of the stance that Cymdeithas Pel Droed Cymru are currently taking - to put CYMRU on the world stage for the first time in 500 years.

And finally - many thanks to all who supported the petition and let us hope it is going to be CYMRU AM BYTH and not Wales for yet another 500 years.

Yn gywir,  
Arfon Jones - Hen Golwyn

#### **4. Yr Herald Gymraeg 30/05/2024**

Annwyl Ohebydd yr Herald,

Wel dyma ni ar y 3ydd o Fehefin 2024 ac 'rydym o fewn 10 diwrnod i'r ddeiseb, sydd yn gofyn i senedd Cymru ddiddymu'r enw Wales a gwneud Cymru a Chymru'n unig i fod yr unig enw ar ein gwlad, ddod i ben, pryd bydd llywodraeth Cymru yn dechrau ystyried beth i wneud gyda hi - naill ai parhau ar drefn bresennol gyda cael y ddau enw ar ein gwlad fydd a ychydig mwy o

bwyslais ar yr enw Wales o bosib fel sydd wedi bod erioed, neu, penderfynu i wneud Cymru yr unig enw arni am y tro cyntaf ers bron i 500 mlynedd.

Bydd y llywodraeth o bosib yn penderfynu os ydynt am fynd lawr yr un trywydd a phenderfyniad a gafwyd gan Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri yn ôl yn Chwefror 2023 pan benderfynodd y Parc ddiddymu'r enwau saesneg megis Snowdon a Snowdonia a dyrchafu'r enwau cynhenid Cymraeg sef Yr Wyddfa ac Eryri i sefyll ar ei traed ei hunan heb yr angen am ymyrraeth gan unrhyw iaith arall gael y cyfle i anilysu gwir ystyr enwau Cymraeg ein cenedl. Mae'n debyg y chwaraeodd 'tarddiad' ran allweddol yn y penderfyniad yma.

Heb os nac onibai, mae Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri yn haeddu'r ganmoliaeth a dderbynwyd ganddi gan ein pobol am osod y Gymraeg yn ei phriod le am y tro cyntaf ers 1953.

Mae'r ddeiseb wedi llwyddo i ennyn, nid yn unig diddordeb yma yng Nghymru ond diddordeb rhyngwladol yn ogystal ac i fyny at rwan mae wedi llwyddo i ennill 12,065 o gefnogwyr. Hefyd mae wedi rhagori ar y trothwy a osodwyd gan Senedd Cymru ar gyfer iddi gael ei thrafod ar lawr y siambr, ac, wrthgwrs mae hynny'n ganlyniad calonogol tu hwnt.

A pham bod hyn oll yn bwysig? Yn yr oes sydd ohonni, nid yw'n gwneud unrhyw synnwyr o gwbl i unrhyw wlad gael dau enw, ac yn enwedig yma yng Nghymru ble mae ystyr un enw yn wrthgyfetbyniad llwyr o'r ystyr a roddir gan y llall. Er engraifft mae ystyr y gair Wales yn bychanu ac yn difrio y Cymry, yn cyfeirio atynt yn estroniaid yn ei gwlad ei hunan, tra, i'r gwrthwyneb, mae'r enw Cymru yn cyfeirio at y genedl gyfan yn frodyr ac yn gymrodorion i'w gilydd. Mae'r enw Cymru yn meddu ar tarddiad cywir o'r Frythoneg sef - combrogo - brawdgarwch - i gael bod yn enw swyddogol ar ein gwlad. Nid oes gan yr enw Wales y tarddiad cywir i fod hyd yn oed yn enw yn ein gwlad heb sôn am fod yn enw swyddogol arni. Ond, enw swyddogol yw hi wedi bod ers bron i 500 mlynedd a hynny ar drael yr enw CYMRU.

Hefyd mae twf aruthrol ar hyd a lled Cymru yn y galw am addysg drwy'r iaith Gymraeg, a bydd hyn yn holl bwysig i'r cenedlaethau o ddisgyblion a myfyriwyr y dyfodol i gael enw ar eu gwlad fydd nid yn unig yn cynrhychioli yr iaith byddant yn derbyn ei haddysg drwyddi ond hefyd bydd yn adlewyrchu yr iaith byddant yn ei siarad yn ogystal. Nid yw'r enw Wales ar y llaw arall yn cynrhychioli yr iaith Gymraeg o gwbl nac yn adlewyrchiad ohonni boed ar lafar neu'n lenyddol.

Byddai diddymu'r enw Wales yn gwneud yr un iot o wahaniaeth i hygredd y Saesneg yn y wlad hon oherwydd mae wedi cael y rhyddid am bron 500 can

mlynedd i saesnegeiddio bron pawb sydd yn byw yma ( ond ddim cweit), yn ogystal a chael rhwydd hynnt i anilysu llawer gormod o'n henwau cynhenid Cymraeg - rhai ohonynt yn prysuro o fynd yn anghof fel Yr Wyddfa ac Eryri er engraifft ond bellach gyda Snowdon a Snowdonia wedi cael eu diddymu fel y crybwyll eisioes, mae gobaith i'r iaith Gymraeg unwaith yn rhagor, ond mae llawer mwy o waith i wneud i'r cyfeiriad yma.

Ar y llaw arall pe byddai yr enw Cymru yn cael ei ddiddymu yna byddai dim rheswm o gwbl i'r iaith Gymraeg fod. Mae'r ddau elfen yn greiddiol i'w gilydd ac wedi gwreiddio'n ddwfn i gyfansoddiad y naill a'r llall. Pe byddai un yn pedio a bod byddai'r llall yn methu a goroesi.

Mae'r senedd ar drothwy gwneud penderfyniad a fydd yn diffinio ein gwlad am weddill y ganrif hon. Y cwestiwn y dylen i gyd ofyn yw - oes gan ein gwleidyddion y weledigaeth, y doethineb, y deallusrwydd a'r awydd i wneud yr hyn a gafwyd gan Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri o roddi Cymru yn gyntaf am unwaith mewn 500 can mlynedd? Amser a ddengys wrthgwrs, a mae'r genedl i gyd yn awchu am newid o'r drefn wladychol sydd yn parhau yma yng Nghymru.

Yn olaf, hoffwn ddiolch o galon i bob un a gefnogodd y ddeiseb hon a 'rydym i gyd yn byw mewn gobaith bydd penderfyniad y Senedd yn caniatáu ni gyd floeddio allan CYMRU AM BYTH a nid gorfod rhoi fynny gyda'r enw Wales am 500 can mlynedd arall.

Yn gywir,

Arfon Jones - Hen Golwyn

## **5. Daily Post 03/06/2024**

On the 13th of this month the petition requesting Senedd Cymru to abolish the name Wales will come to an end when deliberations will begin, concerning which name is best suited for the 21st century - will it be CYMRU or will it be WALES or perhaps it will be both, with more than a slight bias towards Wales perhaps as has always been the case.

It will of course be a decision for Llywodraeth Cymru to make, in response to the petition, requesting the Senedd to abolish the name Wales and make Cymru and Cymru alone be the only name for our country, in pretty much the same way that Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri decided on the fate of our iconic mountain and its surrounding area, and thank goodness, common sense prevailed on that occasion when the outcome between Yr Wyddfa/Snowdon, Eryri/Snowdonia was

decided on provenance and not on pedigree. Yes indeed, Yr Wyddfa and Eryri most certainly have the provenance required enabling them to stand alone names, without the need for them to be overshadowed by any other language to take away their true meaning, and the whole nation applauds Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri for arriving at that decision in February 2023 for maximising the full potential of our language, for the first time since 1953.

The petition, asking Senedd Cymru to abolish the name Wales, has today collected 12,064 signatures to date supporting the motion, and it has clearly exceeded the number of signatures required for it to be debated on the floor of the Senedd.

Why is this important? Well, It makes no sense at all for any country to have two different names that are completely at odds with one another and especially here in Cymru/Wales in the 21st Century to have an English name that is disparaging of its people - describing its citizens as foreigners, can no longer be acceptable. Whilst on the other hand we have the name Cymru that better describes its population as brothers and compatriots - from the brythonic word *combrogos* - from which the name Cymru derives from.

Also, there is a huge demand for 'addysg drwy'r iaith Gymraeg' in this country and it will be of paramount importance for future generations of school pupils and students alike to be able to relate to the name of their country in such a way that the name not only represents the language they are being taught in but also reflects the language they speak. The name Wales has never represented nor has it ever reflected the true language of our country, and it will come as no surprise to no one, I'm sure, to hear that there is no such language as a Welsh language, because the Welsh per se do not speak a language called Welsh. The elusive Welsh language quite simply does not exist. Our language is called Cymraeg, and, immediately on hearing the name, one can feel the resonance between Cymraeg and Cymru, and that's because they both share the same provenance. However, there is no resonance felt between Cymraeg and Wales because they do not share that vital ingredient.

Abolishing the name CYMRU for example would negate the need for CYMRAEG simply because the one element cannot exist without the other, as both names are inextricably inked to one another by virtue of the provenance they share. If one element disappears the other goes as well, but, for some, getting rid of the name CYMRU would solve many problems for the many, and also save governments a great deal of money to spend on improving roads infrastructure for example than having to promote and fund a language that defines who we the Cymry, are.

On the other hand - abolishing the name Wales would have no detrimental effect on the English language in this country whatsoever when one considers the course of the last 500 years, the history of Cymru, its people and place names that have suffered the effects of being anglicised - such as an attempt through state policy to prevent children speaking their one and only language - Cymraeg. However, that was then and the present is all about creating a better and a more inclusive country. It is the time for Cymru to shine for the first time in 500 years - and for that to happen, the Senedd will have to decide that Cymru will be the official name for our country. The Senedd is on the cusp of making a monumental decision with this petition and the correct decision will be a significant historical event for our country.

However the big question is - do our ministers possess the vision, the wisdom and the political will to deliver in the same vein that Parc Cenedlathol Eryri has delivered for our country? We will all find out soon enough. If they haven't, then Parc Cenedlathol Eryri may just as well reinstate Snowdon and Snowdonia and llywodraeth Cymru may as well allow Wales be the defacto name of this nation and continue along the trajectory which began in 1536 through the creation of the act of union and enshrined by the laws of England - to totally anglicise our country. The Senedd should and must take a leaf out of the stance that Cymdeithas Pel Droed Cymru are currently taking - to put CYMRU on the world stage for the first time in 500 years.

And finally - many thanks to all who supported the petition and let us hope it is going to be CYMRU AM BYTH and not Wales for yet another 500 years.

Yn gywir,  
Arfon Jones - Hen Golwyn

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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# Agenda Item 3.10

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1451  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEEW/05471/24

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

10 July 2024

Dear Jack Sargeant,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May, seeking my view on the issue being raised in the petition: "Keep the name 'Wales' and not waste any more taxpayers money on pointless exercises".

This, of course, is a counter petition to the one calling on us to "abolish the name 'Wales' and make 'Cymru' the only name for our country". I have responded to that petition separately.

As I note in the other response, the question around using one name is a natural question, considering that bodies such as Eryri and Bannau Brycheiniog National Parks have opted to use their Welsh names, and the Football Association of Wales using 'Cymru' in every communication, be it in Welsh or English.

It's important to note that the organisations named above operate within their own unique context and have different issues to consider accordingly. Eryri National Park for example, work in an area with a high density of Welsh speakers. In the case of Bannau Brycheiniog National Park, the Park's Authority had been consulting widely for two years on the change. Based on different factors again, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park has said it will continue to use both 'Arfordir Penfro' and 'Pembrokeshire Coast'. We respect these processes and support the decisions made.

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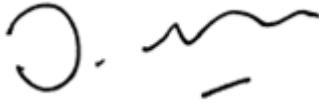
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

Our policy as an organisation is to use the Welsh language as well as the English, to reflect the nature of our work representing and working on behalf of everyone in Wales, no matter where they live or which language they speak. With that in mind, it is not our intention to formally change to using only 'Cymru'.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language

## Designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8973-4

**Petition Number:** P-05-1449

**Petition title:** Designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

**Text of petition:**

We, the undersigned, urgently petition the Senedd to designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

This designation will be in line with the recent decision (November 2023) to designate all AONBs in the UK as "National Landscapes."

The imminent threat of pylons and wind turbines necessitates urgent designation to safeguard its integrity and to protect and preserve its cultural and historical, as well as ecological, significance.

The NRW has characterised the Tywi Valley as having a "National Landscape Character" with unique features which make the valley "both scenically and ecologically outstanding".

The NRW has noted the valley's use as a transport corridor since prehistoric times, its use as a significant agricultural area, and its historical significance (a well' settled area with a long sense of history - as attested by the "string of fortifications, from stone castles to simple mottes and ancient prehistoric hill forts and Roman encampments" which dot the valley.



All of these, the NRW noted, combine to form the archetypal ‘beautiful’ landscape that is the Tywi Valley.

Numerous funding grants have been made in recognition of this unique character of the Tywi Valley.

The Tywi Valley is cherished and loved by visitors and locals alike.

The Tywi Valley is a beautiful unique natural landscape like no other. The Tywi Valley needs your help!

## 1. Background

Nationally important landscapes in Wales are designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or National Parks under the *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (the 1949 Act)*. Together these ‘Designated Landscapes’ cover around 25% of Wales. Although National Parks and AONBs have different statutory purposes, together they seek to:

- conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
- promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.

*Natural Resources Wales (NRW)* says AONBs are “protected by law because of their special landscape qualities, wildlife, geology and geography”. The *designation triggers obligations* in relation to development plans, and allows for the making of access orders and the establishment of conservation boards.

AONBs differ from National Parks in that they lack the statutory purpose to promote opportunities for the public to enjoy and understand the area.

*Wales is home to four AONBs* (Anglesey, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, Llŷn Peninsula and Gower – additionally the Wye Valley AONB spans the Wales and England border), and three National Parks (Bannau Brycheiniog, Pembrokeshire Coast and Eryri).

### Designating AONBs

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The power to designate AONBs was originally contained in the 1949 Act but was modified by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000* (the 2000 Act). Under *Section 82* of the 2000 Act, NRW can designate any area in Wales (which is not

already a National Park) as an AONB if the area is of such outstanding natural beauty that it should be conserved and enhanced. The procedure for designating AONBs is detailed in [Section 83](#) of the 2000 Act.

In response to this petition, the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS, says NRW is “currently examining the case for designating a new National Park in north-east Wales”, adding that this is an “extensive and exhaustive process and will be the priority for the coming years for NRW in terms of new designations”.

### Rebranding AONBs

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The petitioner refers to a recent (November 2023) decision to ‘rebrand’ AONBs in the UK as ‘National Landscapes’. This is in reference to a [2018 ‘Landscapes Review’](#) which considered whether protections for AONBs and National Parks [in England](#) were still fit for purpose. The [central proposal of the resulting report](#) was to “bring National Parks and AONBs together as part of one family of national landscapes”.

This review and report refers to England only, and Senedd Research is unable to find any evidence that it’s being adopted in Wales. As a devolved area, any changes to designated landscapes policy would be the responsibility of the Welsh Government.

### Planning

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[NRW says](#) that “AONB have more protection than other areas under the planning process”. The Welsh Government’s national planning policy – [Planning Policy Wales \(PPW\)](#) - sets out that AONBs must “be afforded the highest status of protection from inappropriate developments” (see section 6.3.8, page 134).

The granting of AONB status may therefore result in the local planning authority (LPA) applying stricter development controls in the area when producing the local development plan, and when deciding planning applications.

PPW states that “major developments should not take place in National Parks or AONBs except in exceptional circumstances”. PPW is accompanied by the National Development Framework (the NDF) – [Future Wales: the national plan 2040](#) - which forms the national development plan. The NDF states that “applications for large-scale wind and solar will not be permitted in National Parks and [AONBs]”.

## Local authority responsibility

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[Section 89](#) of the 2000 Act requires the local authority in whose area an AONB lies to prepare and publish an AONB management plan which must be reviewed every five years. This will have resource implications for the local authority.

## 2. Welsh Government action

A review of AONB and National Parks was undertaken in 2015; the resulting '[Marsden Report](#)' provided 69 recommendations.

The Future Landscapes Working Group was later established by the Welsh Government to explore the Marsden Report recommendations, [reporting in 2017](#). The report is explored further in a [Senedd Research article](#).

Welsh Government then published [Priorities for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks 2018 \(valued and resilient\)](#), which sets out four goals for AONBs and National Parks in Wales:

- they are Valued Places;
- they contain Resilient Environments;
- they support Resilient Communities; and
- the AONB partnerships and National Park Authorities must adopt Resilient Ways of Working.

The Welsh Government's [Programme for Government](#) includes a commitment to designate a new National Park to cover the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, which is currently an AONB.

In response to this petition, the Cabinet Secretary says NRW is "committed to undertaking an all-Wales technical assessment of natural beauty", and that as part of this NRW is considering "Landscape Character Assessments" that may be of interest to the petitioner when completed.

The Cabinet Secretary highlights that designations need to "demonstrate a level of local support including local political support", and questions:

... the extent campaigners have secured local support and aligned different, sometimes conflicting, approaches to protecting landscapes.

The Minister offers to arrange for NRW officers discuss the proposal with the petitioner in greater detail.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

There has been no Senedd activity regarding the AONB designation of the Tywi Valley.

The Petitions Committee has previously considered petition P-06-1302 Protect Mid-Wales' unique Cambrian Mountains: designate them an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Having received over 20,000 signatures, the petition was debated in Plenary before being closed.

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-06-1449  
Ein cyf/Our ref HIDCC/05516/24

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

12 June 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 24 May 2024 regarding Petition P-06-1449 to designate the Tywi Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is responsible for undertaking the process of designating AONBs and National Parks in Wales. They are currently examining the case for designating a new National Park in north-east Wales. This is an extensive and exhaustive process and will be the priority for the remainder of this Senedd term for NRW in terms of new designations. We also have much to do to improve and empower current designations to contribute more significantly to combatting the nature and climate crises.

As part of their designation programme over 2022-25, NRW has also committed to undertaking an all-Wales technical assessment of natural beauty. Amongst the evidence NRW is considering is the Landscape Character Assessments mentioned as they assess areas across Wales against the statutory natural beauty criteria. This work will clearly be of interest to those campaigning for AONB status when completed.

For designations to be taken forward it is important to demonstrate a level of local support including local political support for designation. A question remains to the extent campaigners have secured local support and aligned different, sometimes conflicting, approaches to protecting landscapes.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi / We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I am happy for my officials to request that NRW officers discuss some aspects of the proposal with campaigners in greater detail. I will follow these discussions closely.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping strokes that form a stylized representation of the name.

**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs

Attention: Katherine Wheeler  
Swyddog Cefnogi Pwyllgor, Senedd Cymru  
Committee Support Officer, Welsh Parliament

12 September 2024

Dear Madam,

**Re: The Designation of the Tywi Valley as an AONB - P- 06 - 1449**

We refer to your letter dated 12 June 2024 - your reference Ein cyf/Our ref  
HIDCC/05516/24. By way of a response to the contents of that letter, and to your  
questions re. same, we'd like to make the following points:

***1) Does it (the document) adequately address the issues that you raised?***

No it does not.

The document fails to explain why the NRW is limited to the consideration of one issue  
at a time. Why cannot the NRW look at a crucial issue of the Tywi Valley AONB  
Designation, which is on the verge of being destroyed forever, at the same time as  
considering the issue of National Parks, for example?

Is the NRW only tasked to work on one issue at a time, even if this means that a huge  
part of Welsh natural heritage (the Tywi Valley) may be destroyed in the interim?

As you might be aware, the Tywi Valley is currently in the midst of a battle to prevent  
the erection of pylons along the length of the valley. If planning permission is granted

then the valley will never be the same again. Its outstanding natural beauty will be destroyed forever.

If, on the other hand, the Tywi Valley were an AONB, this would never have become a consideration.

For this reason we consider it to be a matter of emergency and we believe that the NRW should prioritize this idea of the AONB designation. I do not believe that the remit of the NRW is such that it can risk this possible atrocity which would forever spoil the beauty of the Valley.

Further, the NRW has recognized, on numerous occasions, that the Tywi Valley is clearly an area of outstanding natural beauty. This is evidenced by funding received for Tywi Valley related projects over the years. The NRW has often had a role in delivering or approving these. Specifically:

### ***Tywi a River Through Time***

2008 to 2011

The TAYO project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£1.5 million) and the European Rural Development Plan (£557,378) between 2008 and 2011, aimed to conserve the Tywi valley's landscape and biodiversity. It left a lasting legacy, with ongoing community impact and activities. Future funding supported heritage skills bursaries.

### ***The Taclo'r Tywi***

Ongoing (?)

We have not been able to ascertain the funding amount for this project. Nevertheless, the Taclo'r Tywi project, administered by the NRW and funded by the Welsh Government's Sustainable Management Scheme (SMS-N2K), aimed to improve water quality and biodiversity in the River Tywi catchment area.

### ***The Dyffryn Tywi – Tirwedd Hanes Ein Bro***

EAFRD (WG RC\_RDP Wales) contribution

£698,000.00

The Dyffryn Tywi – Tirwedd Hanes Ein Bro 2 year project, funded by European Structural Funds and the Welsh Government's Sustainable Management Scheme, aimed to sustainably manage the historic landscape of the Tywi Valley.

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/sites/walesruralnetwork/files/Evaluation%20of%20Dyffryn%20Tywi%20Final%20Report.pdf>

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/sites/walesruralnetwork/files/Dyffryn%20Tywi%20Landsker%20FINAL%20Report%20%202021.pdf>

### ***Cycle Path***

In October 2019, nearly £17 million was allocated from the Levelling Up Fund to extend the Tywi Valley Cycle Path. This is again substantial funding which indirectly recognizes the natural outstanding beauty of this area.

### ***2) Do you have further questions in response?***

Over 3.5 thousand individuals have signed our Petition. This shows considerable support for the designation of the Tywi Valley as an AONB.

When we have spoken to local politicians, all have expressed support for the designation.

However, the current anti-Pylon battle has led to what one might refer to as battle fatigue. So many individuals are so closely involved in this battle, they do not have time to also focus on, what many consider to be the far more important issue, which is the designation of the Tywi Valley as an AONB.

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

It is impossible to understand why the Tywi Valley would not be considered worthy of AONB designation. There is absolutely no question that it is an area of outstanding natural beauty. This has been confirmed in numerous funding projects that have been supported by the NRW over the years.

We, the authors of the petition, and the supporters of the petition, believe that failure to consider the designation is tantamount to failure to protect what is an invaluable natural and cultural heritage asset.

There is no other place like the Tywi Valley. There is no other place with such richness of flora and fauna and such richness of cultural heritage.

To allow the valley to be destroyed, desecrated, really, is to allow an unforgivable cultural crime.

We believe that on the basis of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act allowing this to happen would be to breach the tenets of that legislation. In particular failure to consider the AONB Designation amounts to a failure to take action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at achieving the goals of that piece of legislation.

We believe that by failing to consider the possibility of the designation of the Tywi Valley as an AONB the Senedd is betraying future generations of Wales and allowing the destruction of this area of outstanding natural beauty.

Last but not least, as a side note, if onshore windfarms can in future be built in England, where the power is needed, there'll be less need to erect windfarms in Wales. In fact, the need might be removed entirely. We believe that the Senedd must now take this into consideration given the new Government's attitude to onshore windfarms in England.

Many thanks for your consideration of the above.

Kind Regards,

Veronika Hurbis and Natalie Singh

# P-05-1453 Accessible and clean public toilets

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 8 Gorffennaf 2024  
Petitions Committee | 8 July 2024

Reference: SR24/8973

Petition Number: P-05-1453

Petition title: Provide funding and support for the adequate provision of accessible and clean public toilets

Text of petition:

Wales Seniors Forum research shows that many older people do not go out or reduce the time they are out of the house because of a lack of public toilets. This can lead to isolation and loneliness. Inadequate provision of facilities is a public health issue that affects all of us, preventing some from fully accessing their communities.

## Background

There has been recognition by the Welsh Government that a lack of adequate toilet facilities is a public health issue, and can have a disproportionate impact on some population groups.

Toilets for public use matter to everybody and remain a high-profile issue. They are, however, even more important to certain groups within society, including older people, people with disabilities, people with



particular needs (including certain medical problems), women, children and young people and their families.

These groups can be disproportionately affected by poor provision, for example, poor provision is understood to have particular negative impacts on older people, as some may be less likely to leave their homes without having confidence that adequate facilities will be available to them. This can contribute to increased social isolation and inactivity, as well as affecting people's ability to maintain independence and dignity in later life.

The [Public Health \(Wales\) Act 2017](#) requires each local authority in Wales to prepare and publish a local toilets strategy. This must include an assessment of their community's need for toilets (including changing facilities for babies and Changing Places facilities for disabled people), and must set out how the local authority proposes to meet this need.

The Act does not place a duty on local authorities to provide or maintain public toilets, nor is there a specific requirement for local authorities to implement their toilet strategies.

In developing their local toilets strategies, it's expected that local authorities will consider the wide range of toilet facilities that are available in their areas, including those in public buildings such as libraries, leisure centres etc., and also those in private businesses.

In its response to the Petitions Committee (3 July 2024) the Welsh Government says that in the context of the ongoing challenging financial climate, it is more important than ever to encourage creative solutions to better meet the public's need for access to suitable toilet facilities.

Solutions could include community asset transfers and empowering town and community councils and social enterprises to take on responsibilities for managing standalone public toilets, if proposals are sustainable. The Welsh Government has worked with the UK Government to ensure that standalone public toilets in Wales now receive 100% relief from business rates.

We expect local authorities to continue to take every opportunity to talk to the public and representative groups about the challenges they face in accessing local toilet facilities and equally to key delivery partners, such as town and community councils, to listen to concerns and seek

views and involvement in identifying and delivering sustainable solutions.

There's further discussion of the health, wellbeing, and environmental impacts of poor toilet provision, including for different groups of people, in the Fourth Assembly Health Committee's [report on the public health implications of inadequate public toilet facilities](#) (2012).

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-06-1453  
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/05903/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

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

03 July 2024

Dear Jack Sargeant MS,

Thank you for your letter about Petition P-06-1453 Provide funding and support for the adequate provision of accessible and clean public toilets.

The Welsh Government recognises that access to accessible and clean toilets affects public health. Toilets for public use matter to everybody, they are even more important to a growing number of people within society who are experiencing continence issues. Poor provision can lead to increased social isolation and inactivity, as well as affecting people's ability to maintain independence and dignity in later life.

Our *Strategy for an Ageing Society*, sets out our vision for an age-friendly Wales which supports people of all ages to live and age well and challenges the way we think and feel about ageing. One of the four aims of the strategy is to improve local services and environments, which looks to tackle loneliness and isolation and support wellbeing and a priority is to improve the availability of public toilets.

To deliver a strategic approach to the provision of toilets across Wales, the [Public Health \(Wales\) Act 2017](#) requires local authorities to publish a local toilets strategy for their respective areas. Comprehensive [statutory guidance](#) has been provided to help local authorities develop their strategies.

It is the aim that local authorities will consider the wide range of existing toilet facilities available in both the public sector (such as public libraries, community halls, sports centres, theatres, museums) and in private sector buildings when developing their strategies. The intention is to make better use of existing toilet facilities that could be made available to a wider public beyond a focus on traditional public toilets, given the financial challenges of providing and maintaining this type of facility.

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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.

Local authority public toilet strategies should be built around the principles of co-production, with local authorities required to engage with a broad range of potential providers and users to understand the challenges faced in both accessing and providing local toilet facilities and seeking their involvement in identifying and delivering potential solutions. On review of their strategies, local authorities are required to publish a statement of progress. A self-policing approach provides transparency to council members and the communities they represent, on the actions taken to progress the provision of toilets across Wales.

In the context of the ongoing challenging financial climate, it is more important than ever to encourage creative solutions to better meet the public's need for access to suitable toilet facilities.

Solutions could include community asset transfers and empowering town and community councils and social enterprises to take on responsibilities for managing standalone public toilets, if proposals are sustainable. The Welsh Government has worked with the UK Government to ensure that standalone public toilets in Wales now receive 100% relief from business rates.

We expect local authorities to continue to take every opportunity to talk to the public and representative groups about the challenges they face in accessing local toilet facilities and equally to key delivery partners, such as town and community councils, to listen to concerns and seek views and involvement in identifying and delivering sustainable solutions.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol



5 September 2024

Petition P-06-1453

### **Wales Seniors Forum response to the Petitions Committee**

Wales Seniors Forum recognises the financial challenges of providing traditional public toilets and acknowledges the strategic approach set out in the response from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. However, the response does not give due consideration to wider public health issues and the effects that a lack of toilet provision has on local economies.

Research has shown that older people and people with certain health conditions are more affected by poor provision, but the effects on and actions of the wider population must also be considered, especially in areas of heavy footfall in the night-time economy. If there are no toilets available, many will resort to public urination, leading to higher cleansing costs and a risk to health.

As noted in the response from the Secretary, a lack of facilities isolates some cohorts. What is not noted is the effect that this might have on the local economy; the individual is affected, but local businesses also lose out on custom and income. Many areas of Wales are reliant on tourism; without sufficient provision of toilets, the outdoor tourist sector will suffer.

Although Wales Seniors Forum recognises the need for local toilet strategies, our research has shown that this requirement needs further consideration and better implementation. As of 1 August 2024:

- 4 local authorities have no strategy information available on their websites and have failed to respond to requests for the documents
- 6 local authorities do not have any strategic review or statement of progress available

The hands-off approach from Welsh Government has resulted in a postcode lottery, with some local authorities following the statutory guidance and the review process closely, and others falling behind or not carrying out the requirements. Two local authorities have made impressive progress through co-production and partnerships, retaining a number of facilities that would otherwise have been closed. Therefore, Wales Seniors Forum would like to know if there is any oversight from Welsh Government and whether there is any structure for local authorities to share good practice?

It appears that while many of the strategies and reviews were informed by public consultation, and some local authorities made efforts to engage more widely, the majority of respondents were engaged online and in some cases, the numbers were low. This appears to have resulted in a 'cut and paste' approach to the strategies in some areas, which fail to take into account local demographics and needs. More guidance is needed to ensure that local authorities are indeed taking every opportunity to talk to the public and representative groups.

The research that was carried out by local authorities indicates that there is a lack of knowledge of the community toilet scheme amongst the public and businesses. Most local authorities seem to have experienced difficulties in recruiting local businesses to open their facilities to the public. This could be due to concerns about misuse of the facilities or the cost of maintaining and cleaning the facilities; Wales Seniors Forum members have been informed by some businesses that the grant is not enough to cover costs.

Standalone public toilets now receive 100% relief from business rates; we would like to know if Welsh Government has considered offering rates relief to businesses that make their facilities available to the public?

While some of the reviews carried out by local authorities show a slight increase in public familiarity with the toilet logo, Wales Seniors Forum has noted two issues with the sticker:

- The logo does not feature a contrasting toilet seat, which is not dementia-friendly. Only Cardiff Council has noted this and developed its own dementia-friendly logo
- Preference amongst the public is for more street signage

Although there are various online resources that provide maps and locations of publicly accessible toilets, these are only available if you have access to a smartphone; older people and those on low and fixed incomes often do not have smartphones. It is also worth noting that these resources are not always up to date; Wales Seniors Forum members have noted that some toilets are still listed that are now closed.

Wales Seniors Forum feels that while the current strategic approach is the correct one, given the financial constraints, more oversight, support and funding for local authorities is needed from Welsh Government in order to ensure a consistent level of provision across Wales. While we recognise that every area has different needs, more support is needed at a national level to enable local authorities to identify and work with delivery partners and businesses.

## P-05-1452 Meat-free Monday in every school in Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8973-7

Petition Number: P-05-1452

Petition title: Meat-free Monday in every school in Wales

**Text of petition:** We are calling for the following: Meat-free Monday in every school in Wales for environmental reasons, and for the welfare of animals.

It reduces your carbon footprint and saves the lives of animals. Additionally, it takes 2,350 litres of water to create one beef burger, so this will save a load of water.

## 1. Background

### 1.1. Healthy Eating in Schools

The Healthy Eating in Schools (Wales) Measure 2009 was passed by the Senedd in recognition that the food and drink provided in schools can make a positive contribution towards giving children and young people a healthy balanced diet and encouraging them to develop good eating habits.



The [Healthy Eating in Schools \(Nutritional Standards and Requirements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#), which were made under the Measure, set out what food and drink may be provided in maintained schools. The Regulations aim to promote healthy eating and consumption of a varied diet to get the right amount of nutrients to promote growth and good health.

The Welsh Government issued [statutory guidance in 2014](#) to local authorities and school governing bodies on how they should meet their responsibilities under the Measure and the Regulations. To comply with the Regulations, school meals must provide a balanced meal which meets [approximately one third of recommended daily nutrient requirements](#).

### 1.1.a. Meal content, including references to meat

The Regulations set out the type of food and drink which may be provided during the school day and define the nutrient content of school lunches. Food from [four categories, one of which is 'Meat, fish and other non-dairy sources of protein'](#) must form part of the school lunch provided on each school day. This can include meat, fish, eggs, nuts, pulses and beans (other than green beans).

The guidance [distinguishes between 'meat cuts' and 'meat products'](#). Chicken drumsticks, thighs, breast meat, joints, cooked sliced meat, bacon; mince meat, and lamb/pork chops are listed as examples of meat cuts. Burgers, hamburgers, chopped meat (finely chopped processed meat, e.g. canned chopped pork and ham), corned meat, sausage (including frankfurter/hotdogs and pepperoni), sausage meat, sausage rolls, meat balls, link chipolata and individual meat pies and puddings are listed as meat products.

Under the statutory guidance:

- Meat cuts must be offered on at least two days per week in primary schools and at least three days per week in secondary schools.
- Meat products must not be offered more than twice per week in both primary and secondary schools.

To monitor compliance, school governing bodies are required to provide information in their annual report on the action taken to promote healthy eating and drinking by pupils at their schools. Estyn is required to report to the Welsh Government on the action taken by schools. For background information on the impact of food and drink on pupil outcomes, see this [Senedd Research article](#) from May 2019.

## 1.2. Free School Meals.

In its Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Government committed to extending free school meals to all primary school pupils. In February 2024, the then Minister for Education and Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles MS, indicated that the roll out was on track to deliver by September 2024. On 3 September (at the start of the new school year), the Welsh Government declared that the roll out was “complete”.

In secondary schools, the Welsh Government continues to fund local authorities to provide free school meals to those pupils eligible via benefit related criteria.

The requirements of the 2009 Measure, the 2013 Regulations and the 2014 statutory guidance apply equally to all school meals, whether provided free or purchased by parents.

## 1.3. Meat-free campaigns

In 2021, the children’s television programme Blue Peter urged its viewers to eat less meat as part of a climate change challenge. The campaign prompted a response from the farming community stating that farms in Wales “produce top-quality proteins – beef and lamb – and it is produced in a sustainable, regenerative, and very environmentally friendly way”.

It was reported in the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board’s 2021-22 Annual Accounts that Blue Peter retracted its ‘go meat free’ pledge following an open letter from UK meat industry promoters: the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, Hybu Cig Cymru and Quality Meat Scotland.

## 2. Welsh Government action

Welsh Government policy is to support the Welsh agriculture and food sectors, including meat (mainly lamb and beef). Lamb and beef production, alongside dairy, form the bulk of Welsh agricultural output. Any drive for less meat consumption may potentially be at odds with this policy.

The main strategy document is the Vision for the Food and Drink Industry (2021). It aims to:

- ensure an environmentally and socially responsible supply-chain with an international reputation for excellence; and
- grow the industry at a higher rate proportionally to the rest of the UK.

Hybu Cig Cymru, which is responsible for promoting Welsh red meat, has been partly funded by the Welsh Government as outlined in [HCC FAQs](#) and [HCC Business Plan 2020-26](#).

During scrutiny of Peter Fox MS's Food (Wales) Bill, the then Rural Affairs Minister, Lesley Griffiths MS, [told the Finance Committee](#) in February 2023:

“when you look at the amount of Welsh food and drink that is procured by our schools, for instance, in school meals, and our hospitals and health boards, I certainly think that we need to increase it.”

The former Deputy Minister for Climate, Lee Waters MS, [said in Plenary](#) back in November 2021:

“Finally, on meat, clearly, the UK Climate Change Committee sets a pathway for reducing meat consumption, and it's not just meat produced in our country. Yes, Janet Finch-Saunders is right that Welsh meat has comparatively lower emissions than meats from other countries, but as I mentioned with the experience of the indigenous people of Peru and Brazil, the cheap meat that we buy in from South America is the meat that is driving the demand for soy that is leading to destruction of the rainforest, which is not then there to sequester the carbon that we need sequestered in order to keep global levels down. So, on meat, overall, the consumption does need to come down. And as I've said consistently, I think there is a case for eating less meat, but that the meat we do eat is Welsh meat, is local meat, is higher quality meat. In all of these things, all of the changes required are difficult and uncomfortable for us, but we cannot afford to duck this challenge.”

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

Speaking in Plenary in November 2021, [Carolyn Thomas MS reported](#) that during the first week of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), at a conference with presentations by schools across north Wales:

“the students had a real understanding that we all have a part to play in tackling climate change. **Their suggestions included** cutting food miles, **meat-free Mondays.....”**

Leader of the Opposition, Andrew R.T. Davies MS tabled a number of written questions on 29 January 2024, enquiring about the progress of the roll out of free school meals and monitoring of **targeted nutritional values** set for the meals delivered to pupils who take up free school meals.

In February 2024 **Jenny Rathbone MS argued** the need for the new sustainable farming scheme to address a “shortage of local ingredients” for the free school meals programme. She said “local authority catering departments are struggling to find suitable supplies at prices they can afford”.

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.

Lynne Neagle AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1452  
Ein cyf/Our ref LN/05453/24

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

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

27 June 2024

Dear Jack,

### **Petition P-06-1452 Meat-free Monday in every school in Wales**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 May 2024 regarding the petition submitted by Manon Rebeca Bellin Thompson.

The petition is calling for a meat-free Monday in every school in Wales and states the reason being 'for environmental reasons, and for the welfare of animals. It reduces your carbon footprint and saves the lives of animals. Additionally, it takes 2,350 litres of water to create one beef burger, so this will save a load of water.'

Our Food in Schools offer is underpinned by the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements (Wales) Regulations) 2013. These set out the types of food and drink that may be provided during the school day and define the nutrient content of school lunches. All food provided in maintained schools (nursery, primary and secondary settings) including all Free School Meals, should adhere to these regulations.

Local Authorities have discretion to design their own menus, and must ensure they are with compliant with the regulations. Most local authorities use a three-week menu cycle and provide a main hot meal choice, vegetarian/vegan options, or a choice of jacket potato, with a dessert. Many local authorities have days when meat is not included on the menu.

We acknowledge that vegetarian and vegan diets are a choice that parents and young people can make, and we provide advice to local authorities on how to cater for these diets within the statutory guidelines.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@gov.wales)

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

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

As part of the roll-out of Universal Primary Free School Meals, we are working with partners to increase the supply of Welsh food and drink products featured within school meals. This supports and shortens local supply chains, reducing carbon emissions, and strengthening the foundational economy.

The Welsh Government has made a commitment to undertake a review of the Healthy Eating in Schools Regulations to consider the latest scientific research and recommendations concerning nutritional standards. Preparation work, to support this review is already underway. We see this as an important tool to support our efforts to reduce child obesity levels in Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynne Neagle".

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Annwyl Jack Sargeant AS,

Diolch yn fawr iawn am yr ymateb am fy neiseb. Diolch am roi cyfle i mi ymateb.

Rwy'n credu eu bod hi'n wych bod y Llywodraeth Cymru yn ymrwmo i gynnal adolygiad o'r rheoliadau bwyta yn iach mewn ysgolion a bod rhai llywodraethau lleol ddim yn cynnwys cig ar y fwydlen. Hoffwn gwybod lle yn union yng Nghymru oherwydd rydw i yn gwybod bod nifer o lywodaethau lleol yn Lloegr ac yr Alban yn gwneud hwn? Hoffwn gwybod pryd fydd yr adolygiad yn yr ymateb, yn digwydd a gorffen. Oes yna rhyw fath o amserlen neu cynllun amdano hyn? Dydw I ddim yn credu mae ymrwmo yn digon ac mae'n rhaid i ni wneud yn well yn Nghymru i bwyta llai gig. Yn ogystal a hyn dydw i ddim yn credu bod yr ymateb yn ddigon clir ac yn afael ar y mater a cwestiwn wnes i ofyn yn digonol.

Er bod llywodraeth lleol gyda rheolaeth dros bwydlen ysgolion rydw i yn credu dylsau pob plentyn yng Nghymru bod yn rhan o newid i ein byd a'n iechyd er well. Mae hi'n siom bod llywodraeth Cymru ddim eisiau gwneud hwn. Fe wnaeth Sophie Howe cyn Comisiynydd Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol galw Dydd Llun di-gig yn "no brainer" ac yn "easy win" ar podlediad BBC 'Rare Earth Can Politicians Save the Planet'.

Hefyd mae'n rhaid ystyried y Strategaeth Fwyd Genedlaethol wnaeth cael ei comisiynu yn 2019 gan llywodraeth y Deyrnas Unedig. Wnaeth argymhell iddyn ni lleihau ein defnydd o gig 30% dros y degawd nesaf, sut well ffordd i gwneud hyn na chael Dydd Llun di-gig. Ac yn ogystal wnaeth e hefyd dweud dylsau bod pob ffreutur cyhoeddus cael o leuaf un diwrnod di-gig yr wythnos.

Fe wnaeth y llywodraeth yn Denmarc cyhoeddu cynllun cenedlaethol cyntaf am sut a allai y wlad symud tag at system bwyd seiliedig ar blanhigion. Rydw i yn gobeithio bydd ein gwlad ni yn gael cynllun fel hyn.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir

Manon Thompson

Document is Restricted

# Urgent mental health support for new dads

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 16 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 16 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8973-9

**Petition Number:** P-06-1454

**Petition title:** Calling Welsh Government to provide urgent mental health support for new dads.

**Text of petition:** Fathers with perinatal mental health problems are up to 47% more likely the risk to be rated as a suicide risk than at any other time in their lives (Quevedo et al, 2010).

New research also shows that a new father has a 22% risk of anxiety and depression during the perinatal period. Birth Trauma affects at least 30,000 women in the UK and fathers are witnessing the trauma and not getting help for PTSD. Fathers also go through baby loss and need to support the baby on neonatal wards.

We want the Welsh Government to set up support for fathers in perinatal mental health teams across Wales. We also want fathers to receive support with finance up to six weeks.

There is a report that is coming out on birth trauma that I am part of with Theo Clarke MP on fathers and birth trauma. Please look at Fathers Reaching Out - Why Dads Matter in 2020 with all the recommendations for better supporting fathers. Supporting all new parents for their mental health has far



better outcomes for the whole family, including the baby. If we don't include fathers we are at risk of mothers being affected, Adverse Child Experience (ACEs), Substance Abuse, Relationship Breakdowns, Crisis in other services and not getting to the root cause. One of the biggest killers in men is suicide and with the high risk in new fathers this is urgent. Paternal Mental Health is one of the leading causes of suicide, but we don't screen and support fathers in 2024.

## 1. Background

The perinatal period covers the time during pregnancy and the first year after having a baby.

During the perinatal period, [women can be affected by a number of mental health problems](#), which can range from mild to extremely severe. [Partners and other family members](#) may also experience perinatal mental health difficulties. This includes depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). [Research from NCT](#) (2015) suggests that more than one in three (38 per cent) new fathers in the UK have concerns about their mental health.

The [Wales Perinatal Mental Health Network](#) has been established, which is a national clinical network bringing together a range of professionals from different sectors. The Network works with women and their families to develop services.

The [NHS Wales Executive website](#) provides links to relevant advice and guidance relating to perinatal mental health, including: [Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Curricular Framework](#); [Perinatal Mental Health Programme and Pathways](#), and [Support and Advice leaflets](#).

The website for the [Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Curricular Framework](#) states:

We recognise the vital role that fathers and partners play during the perinatal period so we want to ensure that we support their mental health and wellbeing as well.

The [Wales Perinatal Mental Health Programme](#) (WPNMHP) document sets out the actions practitioners will take to ensure the **mental health and wellbeing** of

**women and their partners/families** is supported during the perinatal period. The document has a section on **fathers, partners and supporters** (pages 57-8) which states that it is important for professionals who engage with parents to take time to listen to their concerns regarding the health of their partners. At the same time, it is important to observe for signs of difficulties in the relationship of the parents or that the father/partner is suffering from anxiety or depression themselves.

This section goes on to provide information on some of the symptoms that can be experienced by men and notes that fathers, partners and supporters should also be asked 'How are you feeling today?' at all contacts with the relevant health professionals. A pathway for identifying need is set out in the programme.

In a letter to the Committee dated 10 July 2024, the then Minister for Mental Health & Early Years confirms that through the Perinatal Mental Health Programme's training offer, the Welsh Government actively encourages colleagues to inquire about the mental health of all fathers during the assessment period and to provide necessary support or referrals to ensure they receive appropriate treatment. All specialist perinatal mental health teams currently offer assessments and many also provide support to fathers, if required. A best practice guide, is currently being developed following a recent Community of Practice event, "Fathers Matter Too".

Organisations such as NCT and PANDAS (post natal depression awareness and support) provide information relating to perinatal mental health issues for fathers.

## 2. Welsh Government action

The letter from the then Minister for Mental Health & Early Years highlights the Welsh Government's recent consultations on the draft mental health and wellbeing strategy and the draft suicide and self-harm prevention strategy that closed in June. It states that officials are currently analysing responses and will consider the evidence sources referenced in the petition as part of that analysis. It is envisaged that the consultation reports for both strategies will be published in October, with a view to publication of the final strategies and delivery plans at the end of the year.

The draft suicide and self-harm prevention strategy includes an objective to deliver rapid and impactful prevention, intervention, and support to those groups in society who are the most vulnerable to suicide and self-harm through the

settings with which they are most engaged. The letter provides more detail on how this will be delivered.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

The Fifth Senedd's [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) undertook an inquiry into [perinatal mental health](#) and published its [report](#) in October 2017. The aim of the inquiry was to consider how perinatal mental health services are provided and how the Welsh Government could make improvements. The emotional well-being and mental health needs of fathers and the wider family during the perinatal period was part of the approach to the inquiry.

The Committee carried out follow-up work on the inquiry, with details provided on the [Committee's website](#).

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-06-1454  
Ein cyf/Our ref JB/05260/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions Committee

10 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 June regarding Petition P-06-1454, Calling Welsh Government to provide urgent mental health support for New Dads.

On the 11 June, our consultations to the draft mental health and wellbeing strategy and the suicide and self-harm prevention strategy concluded. Officials are currently analysing responses and will consider the evidence sources referenced within your letter as part of that analysis. It is envisaged that the consultation reports for both strategies will be published in October, with a view to publication of the final strategies and delivery plans at the end of the year.

The draft suicide and self-harm prevention strategy includes an objective to deliver rapid and impactful prevention, intervention, and support to those groups in society who are the most vulnerable to suicide and self-harm through the settings with which they are most engaged. Building on our work to deliver the vision in Talk to Me 2, this objective aims to ensure that we provide a more tailored and targeted approach to support those groups that are most vulnerable to suicide and self-harm. It also aims to ensure that we identify and provide appropriate, person-centred support within the settings where individuals who are vulnerable present. We will do this through being led by research and evidence to identify groups and settings and will develop programmes of work to support individuals and organisations.

The needs of new dads are also being considered as part of current work of the Strategic Mental Health Programme within the NHS Executive. When developing the All-Wales Perinatal Mental Health Pathways these have been developed for both women and their families.

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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.

Through the programmes training offer we actively encourage colleagues to inquire about the mental health of all fathers during the assessment period and to provide necessary support or referrals to ensure that they receive appropriate treatment. All specialist perinatal mental health teams currently offer assessments and many also provide support to fathers, if required. They are also currently developing a Best Practice Guide following a recent Community of Practice event, "Fathers Matter Too" - <https://tinyurl.com/bdcsnke4>

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayne". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'J'.

**Jayne Bryant AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd Meddwl a'r Blynyddoedd Cynnar  
Minister for Mental Health & Early Years

**P-06-1454 Calling Welsh Government to provide urgent mental health support for New Dads - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 06 September 2024**

Thank you for the response and as a keynote speaker at the conference mentioned and part of the committee feel that an independent service like Fatherhood solutions who work on setting up informal pathways would be needed.

As someone who works in England and seeing improvements for fathers feel the urgency to screen and assess fathers for their mental health is not being met. With the research that a new father is up to 47% risk of suicide and how it may impact on child development and the relationship between parents.

I have had meeting with health ministers for Wales over the last 14 years and would be happy to discuss how we can be fathers-inclusive with knowledge I have obtained internationally and at local levels.

I thank you so much for taking the time and the work you do for Wales.

# Agenda Item 3.15

## **P-06-1474 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres**

This petition was submitted by Gareth Jones, having collected a total of 13,245 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Closure of these centres runs contrary to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.

The closure of these visitor centres would have a far-reaching negative impact on the local economy, environment, and community well-being.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

**P-06-1474 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres – Correspondence from the Welsh mountain bike sector**

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached a letter to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS, on the NRW Proposal for Organisational Change and its impact on communities across Wales.

The letter is co-signed by Cycling UK, Beicio Cymru, the UK MTB Trail Alliance, Mountain Bike Wales and the Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (cc'ed), along with over 90 other groups, organisations and businesses from across the Welsh mountain bike sector.

If you could pass it on to him, it would be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Robin Grant

Founder & Chair

UK MTB Trail Alliance

**Letter to Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS, on the NRW Proposal for Organisational Change and its impact on communities across Wales.**

Dear Deputy First Minister

We are writing to you as the combined representatives of the mountain bike community in Wales, and connected outdoor sector businesses. We are alarmed by the recent news regarding the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Proposal for Organisational Change, specifically the proposed drastic reduction in budget and staffing relating to outdoor access and recreation, the direct impact this will have on mountain bike trails across Wales, and the subsequent knock-on effects this will have on the health, wellbeing and prosperity of local communities. We are also very concerned about the impact of the proposal on NRW's three visitor centres, and especially of any prolonged closure of these centres before partners are selected and able to take over their running, and the impact this would have on the economy of the areas surrounding the centres.

However, this does provide a moment to pause and reflect, to consider how we want to manage our outdoor spaces moving forward to maximise Wales's potential, as a progressive and forward-thinking nation and a leading adventure tourism destination in Europe.

We have the following five asks of the Welsh Government as a result, which we detail at the end of this letter:

1. A sustainable, meaningful and ongoing investment in maintaining and developing NRW's existing mountain bike trails.
2. NRW to materially improve its approach to working with volunteer groups, so that they can help maintain and develop Wales' mountain bike trails.
3. To ensure that either NRW's visitor centres are not closed, or that the tender and contract processes for them are expedited so they are closed only for a very short time.
4. NRW properly consider local community groups as candidate partners to take on the running of these centres.
5. That the Access Reform Programme be unfrozen, prioritised and included within the current Programme for Government.

**The value of mountain biking to Wales**

Mountain biking contributes greatly to the health and well-being of the Welsh population. Research by the Wales Adventure Tourism Organisation (WATO) estimated that just a 10% increase in recreational activity would yield £187m of social returns. It stands to reason that a 10% decrease in activity would have the opposite effect.

Mountain biking is a cornerstone of outdoor recreation in Wales, attracting thousands of visitors annually and generating significant economic benefits. The Wales Visitor Survey (2019) shows that 15% of UK staying visitors and 10% of day visitors to Wales came for mountain biking – rising to 19%/14% in the shoulder season. New research in 2023 on the [Economic and Social Evaluation of the Outdoor Activity Sector in Wales](#), funded by the Welsh Government, suggests a

total net impact from trips associated with mountain biking in Wales to be £182 million annually with 4,603 jobs supported. It also shows a total net impact from trips associated with outdoor activities in Wales to be £1.619 billion annually with 31,278 jobs supported, which is 21% of all tourism jobs in Wales.

### **Mountain bike trails in Wales**

Wales has a strong claim to be the birthplace of modern mountain biking, with the opening of the world's first trail centre at Coed-y-Brenin in 1996, a model that went on to be replicated in hundreds of locations around the world. Since then, following hundreds of millions of mostly EU capital spending, over 500km of official mountain bike trails have been built on NRW land.

NRW is responsible for the maintenance and development of these trails, but over the last decade has spent progressively less and less on their evolution and upkeep, meaning they are now in a sorry state of repair, with some, like those in Penmachno, either closed to the public for safety reasons, or virtually unrideable due to their condition and lack of vegetation management.

If NRW's proposal is implemented, it will inevitably result in the rest of NRW's trail network suffering the same fate as Penmachno, with trails quickly becoming either unrideable or closed, as there will be inadequate budget and resources to maintain them, with obvious direct impacts, not just on the users of the trails, but also on the communities around them. If these trails are to safely stay open, then both meaningful funding and a radical change of approach is required.

Volunteer groups have come forward to offer to help maintain and develop these trails, but NRW have reacted glacially and unenthusiastically in response, and there are only a couple of examples across Wales, where a volunteer group have been given permission to help maintain official NRW trails. In one of these cases, the volunteer group had to spend five years battling NRW red tape before gaining permission to work on their local NRW trails.

### **Community-built trails**

As the NRW trail network has stagnated and deteriorated, volunteers all over Wales have taken things into their own hands, come together, and created their own community-built trails. Data from a 2024 survey by the UK MTB Trail Alliance, shows that there are an estimated further 1,200km+ of these community-built trails in Wales, the majority of which are on NRW land. These trails have been built without NRW's permission, and as the landowner, NRW is exposed to the associated liability risk. NRW have not always responded as positively to these trails as they might, despite these trails being created at no cost to NRW, and their obvious benefits to the health, well-being and economy of local communities.

NRW's stated strategy is to work with these volunteer groups in order to mitigate the liability risk, helping them to formalise and come to contractual agreements for these groups to manage their own trails. However, it has proved organisationally incapable of this. The volunteer groups it has trialled this approach with are still drowning in internal NRW red tape over two and half years later, with no tangible progress made, and with these groups still not officially allowed to maintain their own trails, leaving this valuable resource, that has been gifted to the Welsh taxpayer, under threat.

### **Visitor centres**

Whilst we appreciate the financial challenges that NRW face, decisions on NRW's finances have to be considered in light of their impact on the wider economy. Whilst NRW's operating loss for a site like Coed-y-Brenin might be £325k per year, the local economy is likely to lose far more if the

services at the site are impacted. Reducing support for outdoor tourism infrastructure also directly contradicts the Wales Tourism Strategy's goals of promoting Wales as a leading destination for adventure tourism and outdoor activities.

The importance of ancillary facilities at trail centres should not be underestimated. Mountain bikers will gravitate toward trails that offer a quality ride and overall experience, which includes access to car parking, information boards, toilets, cafe, changing facilities, bike wash, bike shop etc, all of which contribute to the desirability of a destination. Closure of any visitor centres, even on a temporary basis, will directly impact this experience and make it very likely that visiting riders do not make the trip to Mid/North Wales.

Even temporary closure of the visitor centres will lead to a massive decline in trail usage while the centres are closed, with a resultant shock to the parts of the local economy dependent on those missing visitors - accommodation providers, restaurants, outdoor adventure companies - with many businesses not surviving long enough to witness any subsequent re-opening. This will have a cascading effect on other local businesses, who were dependent on those now defunct businesses for their income. This is particularly concerning in the areas around the visitor centres where tourism is a primary source of income for the local economy.

Once a centre reopens under the management of a new partner, it is unlikely visitor numbers will instantly bounce back to their previous levels, and it will in all likelihood take many years, and a considerable marketing investment, to bring visitor numbers back close to previous levels. It is entirely possible visitor numbers will never recover to their previous levels, with obvious implications for the long-term health of the local economies of the areas surrounding the centres.

### **NRW Proposal for Organisational Change**

The proposal is a regressive step that goes against the Welsh Government's ambitions regarding the health and well-being of the Welsh population, and threatens to undermine a key part of the Welsh economy. It stands in stark contrast to the principles enshrined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which emphasises the need for long-term thinking, preventative action, and the integration of environmental, social, and economic well-being. It fails to consider the long-term implications for future generations who will inherit a reduced capacity to enjoy and learn from Wales' natural landscapes.

It also leads us to question, if NRW make these proposed cuts to access and recreation budgets and staffing levels, whether they will be able to meet their statutory duties regarding access and recreation. Specifically, its duties to exercise its functions so as to promote:

- the provision and improvement of opportunities for access to, and enjoyment of, the countryside and open spaces
- open-air recreation
- the study, understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment

As well its duties to have regard to:

- the desirability of maintaining the availability to the public of any facility
- the health and social well-being of individuals and communities
- the economic well-being of individuals, businesses and communities

Consideration must also be given to the impact that the NRW proposal may have on underrepresented groups. Ethnically diverse communities, women and girls and disabled people already face challenges in accessing the outdoors for physical activity and recreation. The 2024

Annual Disability and Activity Survey highlights that less than half, 44%, of disabled people say it's easy to physically access outdoor spaces vs 78% of non-disabled people. Any plans to reduce access to the facilities available at visitor centres will mean that those from underrepresented communities and groups will be placed at greater disadvantage.

### **Our five asks of Welsh Government**

We call on the Welsh Government to direct NRW to:

1. Align actions and budgets with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, ensuring that decisions made today do not compromise the ability of future generations to enjoy the health and access to natural heritage benefits that mountain bike trails provide. There needs to be a sustainable, meaningful and ongoing investment into the maintenance and development of NRW's existing mountain bike trails.
2. Just as importantly, ask NRW to radically change its approach to working with volunteer groups, cutting their internal red tape that's blocking them from doing so currently, or if not, to look at different models to mitigate the liability risk of mountain bike trails on their land (we have some ideas to suggest here). If it can do this, there are volunteer groups standing by all over Wales (the UK MTB Trail Alliance has over 25 member groups in Wales), ready to not just help maintain and develop community-built trails but also those managed and run by NRW, which would obviously help compensate for the finite financial resources available for their maintenance and development.
3. Ensure no decision is taken to close visitor centres, even temporarily, while partners are found to run them, or if they are, then to ensure the tender and contract processes are expedited so the centres are closed only for a very short time. The finances of NRW need to be considered in the context of the wider impact on the economies of the local areas around the centres, and how it will impact the Welsh Government's ambition to grow adventure tourism.
4. We also urge you to ensure NRW properly consider local community groups as candidate partners to take on the running of these centres, and to make allowances for the fact they will be newly formed and immature entities created in reaction to the potential closing of their local visitor centre. They should not be expected to meet the same criteria that NRW would expect of a normal commercial partner.
5. Improve access to the outdoors: The budgetary issues that NRW face, and the subsequent impacts on outdoor recreation opportunities, help shine a light on access issues in Wales. We ask that the Access Reform Programme be unfrozen, prioritised and included within the current Programme for Government. Access reform offers a unique opportunity to open up access and recreation opportunities all over Wales with comparatively little budgetary outlay, to at least partially compensate for the inevitably reduced NRW recreation offering and ensure future generations can access the unique landscapes of Wales. This could also be an opportunity to legislate for a reduced level of occupier liability on access land in Wales (perhaps modelled on [how this works for the coastal margin in England](#)), which, as well as making access reform a much easier sell to private landowners, would also almost entirely remove the liability risk the Welsh Government is exposed to on all of the access land it is the occupier of (including NRW land). If responsible right-to-roam laws can exist in Scotland, Iceland, Norway,

Switzerland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and even Belarus, why not in Wales? Now is the time to change this.

The current situation requires ministerial-level understanding of the implications of the NRW Proposal for Organisational Change and subsequent pressure on NRW management to limit the impact of these harmful steps on the Welsh populace and economy.

We ask that you find time to meet with us in advance of the NRW Board meeting on 25th September, in order that we can discuss these issues in detail before any final decisions about the proposal are made.

We're hopeful that by working together, we can ensure that Wales remains a leader in outdoor recreation and sustainable tourism, fostering economic growth and community well-being while preserving our natural environment for future generations

Yours faithfully

**Gwenda Owen**

Wales Advocacy &  
Development Lead,  
Cycling UK

**Robbie George**

Director of  
Development &  
Events,  
Beicio Cymru

**Robin Grant**

Chair,  
UK MTB Trail  
Alliance

**Phill Stasiw**

Director,  
Mountain Bike  
Wales

**Paul Donovan**

Chair,  
Wales Adventure  
Tourism Organisation

All of the below 93 organisations have also individually co-signed this letter:

**Advocacy groups:**

BMC Cymru  
Disability Sport Wales  
North Wales Mountain Bike Association  
North Wales Tourism  
The Outdoor Partnership  
Trash Free Trails

**Community groups:**

Achub Nant yr Arian  
Caru Coed y Brenin  
Ynyslas Achubwch ein Canolfan

**Volunteer groups:**

Afan Trail Volunteers  
Barry Sidings MTB  
Brechfa MTB  
Clyne Riders  
Cwmcarn MTB Trail Crew  
Foel Gasnach Downhill Riders  
Kilvey Riders  
North Cardiff Trails Collective  
Risca Riders

**Outdoor sector businesses:**

A470 Training  
A Cycling  
Adventure Beyond  
Afan Lodge Hotel  
Afan Valley Bike Shed  
All Mountain Adventures  
Antur Stiniog  
Atlas Ride Co  
Beics Betws  
Beics Brenin  
Berwyn Bike Park  
Bike Doctor  
BikePark Wales  
Bike Ranch Snowdonia  
BikeShredz  
Black Mountains Cycleworks  
Brechfa Forest Barns  
Bryn Teg House  
Cadair View Lodge  
Caersws Bike Park  
Campbell Coaching  
Cycle-Tec

**Volunteer groups (continued):**

Rudry Riders  
Smilog Trails  
Tirpentwys Trails  
Trail Collective North Wales  
TWMBA  
Van Road Trails  
Wyllie Bike Park

**Riding groups:**

Breeze North Wales  
Breeze South East Wales  
Breeze South & West Wales  
Clwb Beicio Mynydd Dyffryn Conwy  
Clwb Beicio'r Bala  
Clwb Beicio Ystwyth  
Cwmcarn Paragon Cycling Club  
Dreigiau Coed Y Brenin  
Oneplanet Adventure Bike Club  
Wales Off-Road Academy

**Outdoor sector businesses (continued):**

Damian Harris Cycles  
Drover Cycles  
Drover Holidays  
Dyfi Events  
EC Cycles  
Gethin Lodge  
Glorious Gravel  
Green Events  
Hafod Trails  
Hope MTB Marathon  
Indi Cycle Works  
Mini Downhill  
Mini Enduro  
Mountain View Bike Park  
MTB Wales  
MudTrek  
Old Skool MTB  
One Giant Leap Llangollen  
OnePlanet Adventure  
Outdoor Retreats  
Pedal MTB  
Pedal Syndicate  
ProLine MTB  
Revolution Bike Park  
Ride High MTB  
Rikki Barrett MTB  
Snowdonia Bikes  
Summit Cycles  
The Lodge Staylittle  
The Roost Merthyr Tydfil  
TrailRippers Project CIC  
We Cycle  
Welsh Enduro Series  
Western Bike Events  
Wheelism  
Wye MTB

# Agenda Item 4.1

## **P-05-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve**

This petition was submitted by Kim Williams, having collected 2,422 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

It has come to the attention of the local community that NRW are planning to close the Visitor Centre at Ynyslas at the end of this year. This is taking place with no consultation, no provision of alternative protection for the nature reserve and the loss of local jobs.

NRW is the organisation that should be protecting our wildlife and communities not destroying them.

### **Additional details:**

The visitor centre at Ynyslas is critical in managing the 400,000 visitors a year that use the site. The wildlife and the habitats of the nature reserve are fragile and need protecting from this large number of visitors, vehicles and dogs if we are to avoid further biodiversity loss in Wales.

The year round presence of NRW staff at the reserve mean that there is a natural deterrent to antisocial behaviour (lighting of fires, fly tipping, vehicle access) and that any incidents that do occur are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

The centre provides information and education to all visitor so that they understand why the place is special and what impacts their actions have on it. It is also a place of social contact for the local community and is a place where nature is accessible to those with limited mobility.

Effective visitor management at Ynyslas is essential for the protection of the Nature Reserve and its wildlife.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

Jack Sargeant MS  
Petitions Committee  
Welsh Parliament

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

14 August 2024

Dear Jack,

### **Petition P-05-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve**

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the status of Ynyslas Visitor Centre.

On Wednesday 31 July, we launched a consultation with our Trade Unions and started the process of engagement with staff on proposals to restructure our organisation and reduce our Grant in Aid staff budget by £13 million before 1 April 2025.

The purpose is to re-focus our resources on the activities that will have the most impact on nature, climate and minimising pollution, as well as the statutory work that only NRW can do. Our aim is to mitigate job losses as much as possible.

As a result of our prioritisation work, one proposal is that we will no longer operate catering and retail provision at our visitor centres at Bwlch Nant y Arian, Coed y Brenin and Ynyslas. Instead we propose to actively seek out other partners to run the centres, while site access will remain open for walking, biking, play areas, car parking and toilet provision.

The National Nature Reserves and forests around visitor centres are key sites for us. There is no question that we want to conserve and protect these sites so that nature can recover, and we are unequivocal that public access to these sites will be maintained. We will continue to carry out all statutory duties and will consider the indirect effects of any recommendations.

Following our consultation, which will run until Friday 13 September, the NRW Board will make a final decision on the change proposal. At that point, we will write again and explain what the changes mean for the delivery of services at these sites, and our plans to inform and engage with the local community.

There will not be a public consultation on our proposals. In 2022/23 we held a public consultation on our new Corporate Plan, Nature and People Thriving Together, which sets our strategic direction and priorities through to 2030. The current internal consultation is about how we ensure a focus on those Corporate Plan priorities whilst adapting to live within our financial means.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clare Pillman', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Clare Pillman**

**Prif Weithredwr, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru  
Chief Executive, Natural Resources Wales**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb i hynny arwain at oedi.  
Correspondence in Welsh is welcomed, and we will respond in Welsh without it leading to a delay.

**P-06-1447 Stop Natural Resources Wales closing the visitor centre at Ynyslas National Nature Reserve – Correspondence from the petitioner, 10 September 2024**

**Ref Petitions 246323 and Save Ynyslas earlier petition**

Dear Petitions Committee

I trust you have already received my response to the earlier petition, which was considered at your July 8th meeting. Please let me know if I need to resubmit any of this.

In addition, I was asked by Huw Irranca-Davies' office for further information, which I have submitted. Please confirm that you can access these documents and let me know if I need to resend anything.

This email is in direct response to the submission you received from NRW. The letter from Clare Pillman is almost identical to the notification we received from NRW when they eventually confirmed their plans to close the Ynyslas visitor centre at the end of July.

This notification came months after they had repeatedly claimed that no such decision had been made despite having sent staff the "Ynyslas – Visitor Centre Futures Staff Briefing Note" on November 29th 2023 (I can supply a copy of this document if you need it).

The document clearly stated (and I quote directly):

*The continued provision at Ynyslas was not considered feasible, and the decision has been made to close the VC to members of the public as of the winter of 2023. Whilst the minutes do not address all the reasons for making this change a number of factors in the report supported its long-term closure.*

*Offices will still be accessible by staff as will the toilet provision on site. We will be considering how to remove carparking on the beach front. We will be liaising with facilities on how to best utilise or dispose of the site in the future.*

*For the staff impacted they will not be made redundant and are not at risk of redundancy. Staff will be offered the same employment terms but working at the Visitor Centre Bwlch Nant Y Arian. The meeting today was not a change process consultation. We will be issuing more details on the next stage of the process in the coming weeks.*

**Ynyslas - Key Messages:**

*o The café and shop should not be opened in 2024, however the toilet facilities should remain open.*

*o Ynyslas VC staff to transfer to Bwlch Nant yr Arian VC.*

*o The VC should be offered to the community for use as a social enterprise or other community use. Commercial Team to progress discussions to ascertain interest.*

*o Next steps would be to work with VC staff on site, Facilities, the Land and Place Management Teams. This to include how we should approach the operational practicalities of the proposed removal of carparking on the beach front.*

After we started raising objections to the closure, NRW claimed there had been a miscommunication. They told this to us on the ONLY occasion they have engaged with the community or public since issuing the document at a meeting in Borth on March 1st. We obtained a copy of the briefing via an FOI request. When we said it appeared not to be a miscommunication but an official document, they claimed it had been communicated without the correct authorisation. There is now a complaint with the Ombudsman Wales in relation to how they have dealt with the public over this. The case number is 202404060.

The contents of the letter NRW have supplied to you (attached to the email you sent to me) are also the same that has been circulated to the press and have no additional details. I understand they cannot disclose further information until the staff consultation closes on September 13th. Hopefully, they can update you before the Petitions Committee meets on September 16th.

In Clare Pillman's submission, she says that NRW plans to close the retail and catering facilities at their Visitor Centres to save money. However, this demonstrates that she does not understand what happens at Ynyslas Visitor Centre. It is neither a retail nor a catering facility. It is a Visitor Education Centre with a small gift shop and minimal refreshments. The interactive educational displays help visitors understand the biodiversity, geology and history of the place.

The staff at the Visitor Centre are not catering staff or solely retail operatives. They mainly work as wardens across the entire site and spend a proportion of their time within the Visitor Centre building. The staff are incredibly knowledgeable about all aspects of the site. Their work includes collecting parking money, advising visitors where it is and is not safe to park due to tidal conditions, and assisting the land manager with overall site protection. This includes, from March to September, the

daily cordoning off of an area of the dunes to protect the endangered Ringed Plover breeding sites, collecting rubbish and fly tipping and ensuring visitor safety.

There is a good deal of unexploded World War II ordinance on the beach, and the staff are regularly required to alert bomb disposal when visitors accidentally uncover dangerous finds.

One seasonal staff member has sent us the following concern:

*Something they need to really think about is the number of visitors the centre staff personally warn about not going in the water. We've all regularly turned around cars on the gate who have arrived purely to swim (mainly with children) and sent them back to Borth. Most are really thankful, didn't realise red flag, didn't read the signs, etc. Some are not thankful and do it anyway, but most listen. Add to that the people in the water (many with kids) who staff tell during their patrol, and it's a sizeable amount of people who will now be at significant risk if the staff are not there... and also the first point of contact to raise the alarm when things go wrong.... Not just people either; we've had pets/dogs get into difficulty in the water, too....*

In addition, to protect nature, the staff do regular dog poo collection walks. Not accounting for what was deposited in the bins, in 2023, the staff kept a record of every occurrence of finding dog poo (both bagged and not bagged) and logged it. They 'uncovered' 852 deposits in 2023 and are sure there were others. If uncollected, as well as being unsightly, polluting and dangerous, the dog poo damages the habitat for rare plants on the site because it enriches the soil (which is not what they need). This year, they have collected 632 deposits to date. We can provide the breakdown of bagged and unbagged if required.

Save Our Centre – Ynyslas – Achubwch Ein Canolfan is an unincorporated group of concerned citizens who have worked tirelessly since last December trying to engage with NRW.

Earlier this year, the group commissioned the report: **“Ynyslas: Aspects of the importance of the site and NRW’s responsibilities to it.”**

Its authors are Juliet Regan, who has particular expertise in the site’s orchids; geologist John Mason, an expert in conservation and climate change; and geographer Dr Margaret Hughes, who has a specialism in tourism and access to the countryside. The report was submitted to NRW, but there has been little response to its extensive and thoughtful contents other than a ‘thank you, the report has been received’ communication. (Copies can be supplied to the Committee on request)

The key point we would like to draw your attention to is:

*The potential removal of almost £49 million from a community with only 1125 residents - 2022 census - would be totally devastating ... NRW makes much of its responsibility for wellbeing; the potential death of a local community at the hands of NRW does not contribute to the wellbeing of members if that community.'*

Quotes from a Marginal Difference Analysis supporting the document include:

*'The consequences to businesses (of closure) are expected by those businesses to begin immediately and to continue for up to 10 years. They include the immediate closure of a restaurant and diminished profitability to most, if not all, of the businesses responding to the survey...they are expected to affect every business in Borth at some point over the next 10 years and to result in a number of business closures.'*

*' "Although there are already elements of anti-social behaviour reported, these are expected to increase across the board as a result of lack of warden oversight at the visitor centre...dangers to property and life are expected to result."*

We would also like to understand from the NRW how the closure of the Visitor Education Centre aligns with The Future Generations Act.

At the February NRW Board Meeting, we submitted the following question.

*Q. What is the anticipated saving if the Visitor Centre is closed?*

NRW's response in writing was

*A. There would be minimal savings on the annual operating budget.'*

In view of the answer to that last question, why are NRW threatening to close a centre that will have no positive impact on their £ 13 million shortfall?

Finally, despite claiming that access to the site will be maintained, NRW has not adequately considered how the access will happen. When we questioned where visitors would park if parking on the beach were stopped, they advised that people could park in Borth and walk down. It is over 2 miles from Borth to Ynyslas, and there is already insufficient parking in the village. The site attracts around 400,000 people a year and is essential to the local community, environment and tourist industry.

Polly Ernest

On behalf of Save Our Centre – Ynyslas – Achubwch Ein Canolfan



# Agenda Item 4.2

**P-06-1344 Moderate quality agricultural land (grade 3b) should be used for food security not solar farms**

This petition was submitted by Campaign Against East Vale Over Development (CAEVOD), having collected a total of 263 signatures.

## **Text of Petition:**

We must conserve 3b land to safeguard food security:

- Only 10–13% of Wales is Best & Most Versatile land (grades 1–3a). Climate change risks change to agricultural land grades
- 3b land supports crops
- Solar farms with 3a land within 3b land parcels are being approved (contrary to Welsh Government policy). Construction/decommission permanently damage land; 3a land will be lost
- Dual-purpose claims to offset land loss have no contractual obligation – sheep rarely graze under solar panels.

## **Additional Information:**

Developers target Welsh Government's (WG) more permissive planning policies: WG decides proposals above 10MW, England & Scotland local planning authorities decide up to 50MW. Solar panels belong on brownfield sites, residential properties & commercial buildings: use existing grid connections, reduce local electricity bills and supply surplus electricity to the National Grid = less demand for grid electricity, and agricultural land (our food security) is maintained.

- Welsh Government Soil Policy & Agricultural Land Use Planning Unit 2018–19 Soil Policy Evidence Programme Feb 2020
- <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/agricultural-land-classification-frequently-asked-questions.pdf>
- PEDW DNS/3245065 Welsh Minister Decision 27/10/22
- PEDW DNS/3267575 2022-12-19 REPS009WGClimateChange

CAEVOD is against overdevelopment in East Vale of Glamorgan. We support renewable energy in the right location: carbon neutrality in Wales without destroying our countryside.

## **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion  
Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1344  
Ein cyf/Our ref HIDCC/05651/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru

15th July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June regarding the petition from Campaign Against East Vale Over Development (CAEVOD) and the petitioners' response to the Welsh Government report.

The petitioners raise a wide range of matters about development management in Wales. The Welsh Government's planning policies are set out in Planning Policy Wales and in Future Wales, the National Development Plan.

In response to the comments from the petitioners I am pleased to provide additional information about the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system, consultation arrangements with Welsh Government and the steps we have taken to keep the ALC system up to date.

The ALC system is used to grade the quality of agricultural land so that informed decisions can be made over its future use within the planning system.

The ALC system does not define Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (BMVAL) status. BMVAL is defined by planning policy as ALC grades 1, 2 & 3a.

BMVAL is the land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non-food uses such as biomass, fibres and pharmaceuticals.

ALC Sub-grade 3b and Grade 4 are both capable of producing arable crops, though both grades have inherent limitations which restrict the versatility of these grades to a narrow range of crops and / or varying yields.

The ALC system describes the Grade 3 sub-grades as:

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Huw.Irranca-Davies@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Huw.Irranca-Davies@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@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.

### **Grade 3 - good to moderate quality agricultural land**

*Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.*

#### **Subgrade 3a - good quality agricultural land**

*Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.*

#### **Subgrade 3b - moderate quality agricultural land**

*Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass which can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.*

### **Consultation Arrangements:**

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) does not apply a lower BMVAL hectare threshold for consideration by the relevant planning authority. Reference to a 20ha threshold relates to the statutory consultation arrangements when a planning authority must consult Welsh Ministers.

At >20ha, it becomes a matter of national interest for Welsh Government. The consultation arrangements are provided for in [TAN6 - Sustainable Rural Communities](#) Annex B.

The Welsh Government's Land Quality Advice Service (LQAS) is consulted on all solar and wind farm Developments of National Significance (DNS) applications. LQAS will validate submitted ALC surveys and undertake an on-site validation assessment where necessary. This is to ensure all parties have confidence in the ALC information coming before them.

### **Principle of the ALC System:**

The criteria for grading are based on the long-term physical and chemical limitations of land for agricultural use. It is important to note the current use of the land does not affect the grade or agricultural potential. Land use is an economic and management choice of the land manager. The ALC grade describes what the land is potentially capable of, not what it is currently used for.

### **Planning Policy Wales:**

BMVAL policy does not provide blanket protection for the BMV resource. It provides a high bar for the developer to demonstrate an overriding need for that particular development proposal to use BMV land. It seeks to conserve BMV land by directing development to lower quality agricultural land, i.e. brownfield land or ALC Grades 3b, 4 and 5.

## **ALC Mapping & System Development:**

The 'Provisional ALC Maps' (referenced as 1985 by CAEVOD) were produced prior to the introduction of the 1988 system. MAFF (now Defra) intended to update the maps, hence the name 'provisional'. This this did not happen due to resourcing, data and data processing limitations at the time.

Welsh Government updated its national mapping in 2017, again in 2019 and is currently in the process of scoping its 3<sup>rd</sup> update. The Predictive ALC Map is based on the current ALC system.

Welsh Government and Defra are in the process of releasing a refreshed version of the 1988 Criteria and are also scoping the requirements for a full technical review to ensure the system continues to remain technically up to date well into the future. Any change in criteria will be reflected in a future update to the Predictive ALC Map. This body of work is supported by the extensive technical review series published as part of the Soil Evidence Programme, referenced in the response of 06 June 2023.

Once again, thank you for writing to me on this important topic. I hope this information is helpful to you or goes some way in answering your queries.

Yours sincerely,



**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs

# Agenda Item 4.3

## **P-06-1378 We want farm subsidies to be extended to small scale and market gardeners**

This petition was submitted by Karen Schneider, having collected a total of 413 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Most farmers receive around 50% of their income from government subsidies. This means they have enough money to make a living from farming and they can continue to grow food. Most farms are large but small farms (1-5 hectare) are more productive and tend to grow fruits and vegetables for local markets. These currently are not eligible for subsidies, due to their size, which is unfair and shows a lack of support for local, seasonal food growing.

### **Additional Information:**

This petition is inspired by OurFood1200. They want to build farming that:  
Is small-scale, highly productive and commercially viable.

Helps provide food security in South Wales.

Gives the asset poor, particularly our young people, a chance to access land and start a regenerative farming enterprise.

Promotes community through local trading and shared community ownership of our landscape – a “foundational economy”.

Is regenerative: purposefully building biodiversity, fixing carbon in the soil, and avoiding harmful chemicals and pollution.

Creates short local supply chains that keep profits local and at a scale that opens new opportunities to all local farmers.

Provides communities with opportunities for education, training and mental wellbeing support

Encourages healthy eating by making fresh, nutritious, locally grown fruit and veg available to everyone in our region.

Reduces the impact of our food and drink consumption on carbon emissions and deforestation across the world.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Monmouth
- South Wales East

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros  
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate  
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1378  
Ein cyf/Our ref HIDCC/05780/24

Chair - Petitions committee

13 August 2024

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July related to petition P-06-1378, asking how small scale and market gardeners are represented in the Sustainable Farming Scheme Ministerial Roundtable discussions.

We have invited the Chair of the Wales Horticulture Alliance Group to sit on our SFS Stakeholder Officials group and represent the horticulture sector. The Officials Working Group sits as a sub-group beneath the Ministerial Roundtable, and will be reviewing all aspects of scheme design, including payment methodology, before reporting back to the Roundtable.

We have included further detail of how the Ministerial Roundtable and its subgroups operate, including the membership, in our recently published response to the SFS consultation analysis.

[Sustainable Farming Scheme | GOV.WALES](#)

I have been clear that no decisions on SFS design or implementation will be made until we have concluded this next phase of stakeholder engagement. I trust this gives you some reassurance and helpful insight to the process which is underway. Thank you again for writing to me on this important matter.

**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**  
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd  
a Materion Gwledig  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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

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-06-1378 We want farm subsidies to be extended to small scale and market gardeners - Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 03 September 2024.**

Thank you for your email. I am happy that small scale growers are being represented in the group discussion. I presume they represent the growers who supply veg boxes around the country?

I hope you can make a policy which supports the farmers and consumers so we can get good quality, local produce at a reasonable price.

Thank you

# Agenda Item 4.4

## **P-06-1389 Introduce a 30mph limit on the trunk road through the villages of Eglwys Fach and Ffwrnais**

This petition was submitted by Catherine Ruth Stevenson, having collected a total of 419 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Many residential areas in Wales now benefit from a 20mph speed limit, with a strong evidence based rationale from Welsh Government. We do not feel it is safe that our villages of Eglwys Fach & Ffwrnais still suffer a 40mph limit. For over 30 years we have been campaigning for safer pedestrian access in these villages, with 2 fatalities during that time. We want Welsh Government to review the 40mph limits through the villages to enable residents to walk safely and improve well being.

### **Additional Information:**

The villages sit along the main A487. The majority of the road has no pavement so our residents, including children and young people catching school buses, residents visiting neighbours or attending events, older villagers catching the bus, all have to walk ON the main A487. In some places there is insufficient room for 2 cars to pass on the road so motorists have to slow down to a halt to avoid these walkers.

The rationale of the Welsh Government for the 20mph limits through residential areas is: "The evidence from around the world is very clear – decreasing speeds will reduce collisions, save lives and reduce injuries – helping to improve quality of life and make our streets and local communities safer for all."

Given the evidence we feel strongly that the speed limit through the villages of Eglwys Fach & Ffwrnais should be reviewed and reduced from 40mph.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ogledd Cymru a Thrafnidiaeth**  
**Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1389  
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/00402/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee

02 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February regarding petition P-06-1389 requesting the introduction of a 30mph limit on the A487 trunk road through the villages of Eglwys Fach and Ffwrnais, and providing correspondence from the petitioner. We note they have completed the consultation on the Road Safety Strategy and make reference to the Wales transport Strategy. In the previous response we outlined that the guidance on Setting Local Speed Limit in Wales (SLSLiW) is being updated to take into account new WG policies such as these two documents plus the change in default limit to 20mph on restricted roads. Priority is now being given to guidance for speed limits on roads where people live, with guidance for other roads to follow.

We are keen to continue to listen as part of this work, with engagement being an important part of the process. We also want to ensure any development of guidance for speed limits where people live aligns with the updated 20mph guidance to be published in July.

Following the release of the new SLSLiW guidance Welsh Government will review the speed limits across our Trunk Road Network. Until then, we are not making any changes to individual speed limits so we can ensure the consistency with the new guidance.

Yours sincerely,

**Ken Skates AS/MS**  
**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ogledd Cymru a Thrafnidiaeth**  
**Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport**

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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-06-1389 Introduce a 30mph limit on the trunk road through the villages of Eglwys Fach and Ffwrnais – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 19 July 2024**

Thanks for your prompt email. Here is our reply for the Petitions Committee. We look forward to their recommendations in September.

Thank you for your email with Ken Skates response to our petition. Since "Priority is now being given to guidance for speed limits on roads where people live" we should be being given priority, **as we do live on this road and we have children crossing the road in 40mph and 60mph to get to the school bus.** So we would, again petition that we be met/ consulted about the situation here. The road in question should not be considered "other roads" for which 'guidance will follow'.

We are pleased that Minister Skates is 'keen to listen' – though we have been trying get the Transport Minister to listen for 15 years now. Other than responding to the National listening Programme' about the speed limits in Wales, please could he advise how we can be heard.

We understand that the Petitions committee will meet in September to discuss this, so by then we should have a good idea of the new policies against which a decision can be made. We would therefore hope that following that meeting, actual action to reduce the speed limit on the A487 through our villages will be undertaken , and would request that the committee ask for a timescale for this. We would therefore like to keep this petition open until such date as this situation is resolved.

Many thanks for your time

Ruth Stevenson

# Agenda Item 4.5

## **P-06-1400 Fair and Adequate Resourcing of General Practice in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Lewis Williams, having collected a total of 21,620 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

General Practice in Wales is under significant and growing strain. GP numbers are declining, demand is rising, and practices are struggling to recruit and retain staff.

General practice is being forced to try and cope with inadequate resources, an unsustainable workload, and a workforce under pressure across the whole of Wales, with some areas in crisis..

### **Additional Information:**

Current inadequate capacity is a product of longstanding workload, workforce, and well-being issues, which correlate to the chronic underfunding of general medical services.

BMA Cymru Wales's Save Our Surgeries campaign asks Welsh Government to commit to a rescue package for General Practice, to provide GPs and their patients with the support they need.

By taking one minute to sign this petition, you can amplify our calls for the Welsh Government to provide a rescue package for General Practice.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair  
Petitions Committee

31 May 2024

Dear Jack

**Petition P-06-1400 Fair and Adequate Resourcing of General Practice in Wales**

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2024, drawing attention to the above petition.

The Committee has recently agreed to undertake some inquiry work into the sustainability of GP services. Work is likely to begin in the autumn and to help narrow the focus of the inquiry and shape the terms of reference, we will be working with BMA Cymru to engage frontline, practising GPs in the process.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

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

# BMA Cymru Wales comments on correspondence from Chair of the Senedd Cymru Health and Social Care Committee to Chair of the Petitions Committee

## Introduction

The BMA is a professional association and trade union representing and negotiating on behalf of all doctors and medical students in the UK. It is a leading voice advocating for outstanding health care and a healthy population. It is an association providing members with excellent individual services and support throughout their lives.

## Comments

We are pleased the petition has been considered by the Petitions Committee, and we are grateful to the Chair for bringing it to the attention of the Health and Social Care Committee.

The BMA hosted a Senedd reception in July, hosted by Russell George MS, highlighting the latest state of affairs within General Practice in Wales, and we were delighted to receive support in person from members from across the Senedd. At this event, we launched an [updated campaign pamphlet](#) and [short film](#), underlining the stark reality of 100 GP practice closures since 2012, as funding has not fairly matched rising costs to keep practices running. As was recognised by the DDRB in their report, recent uplifts to the value of the GP contract haven't been sufficient in terms of expenses to realise the recommendations on GP pay.

The BMA Cymru Wales is satisfied that the Health and Social Care Committee will now look to explore the issues raised by the petition in its forward workplan going into autumn 2024. We support this, and are hopeful this work will result in a full inquiry into the key issues facing general practice as highlighted in the Save our Surgeries campaign, including:

- Funding and resourcing
- Workforce
- Wellbeing.

## Delayed GMS Contract negotiations

At the time of writing, Welsh Government is yet commence its tripartite GMS (General Medical Services) contract negotiations for 2024-25 with GPC Wales.

In July 2024, the BMA along with other healthcare professional representatives received a letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care confirming the delay of the 24/25 contract negotiations until after the summer recess. The reasons cited were twofold: firstly, that the Doctors and Dentist Pay Review body (DDRB) report was imminent and Welsh Government intended to work with other administrations to align



publication of the recommendations. Secondly, the intent to have early conversations with the new UK Government regarding its plans for longer-term sustainable funding for the NHS.

GPC Wales has been fully prepared to begin negotiations since the spring and the joint 'mandate' for negotiations agreed between all parties, however this is yet to receive sign off by the Cabinet Secretary. The delays have been not only disappointing, but intensely and extremely frustrating and likely to create uncertainty for practices already under immense financial pressures. The first order of business for the incoming permanent Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care must be to sign off the contract mandate and allow negotiations to commence.

We have been clear in our [recent open letter to the First Minister](#) that delayed and protracted negotiations, as seen last year, cannot happen again due to the uncertainties this caused for practices. We are actively preparing for all eventualities that could arise, including the declaration of a dispute should we be unable to reach agreement within a reasonable timeframe.

# Agenda Item 4.6

## **P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend**

This petition was submitted by Micaela Panes, having collected 2,026 signatures online and 130 signatures on paper, making for a total of 2,156 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Postgraduates play a pivotal role in advancing knowledge, innovation, and cultivating expertise. However – the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2024/25 announced the removal of £12.8m from Postgraduate grants and bursaries. This will discourage aspiring Postgraduate students due to increased financial burdens, jeopardise the diversity of our academic programmes, hinder the competitiveness of our institutions globally and have an impact on the growth of the Welsh economy and communities.

### **Additional Information:**

This petition also calls for the Welsh Government to increase Doctoral Loans to match the annual UKRI Stipend. Doctoral students who receive a loan from Student Finance Wales, receive £28,395 to cover tuition fees and living costs overall for three to four years of full-time study (anyone who meets the requirements can apply to these). Whereas those on a UKRI Stipend (only available to students funded by a Research Council) receive £18,622 per annum solely for living costs. This disparity leaves Doctoral Students on loans in very precarious positions, with many working multiple jobs while in full-time study, using food banks, and even leaving their Doctoral study. With the current cost-of-living crisis, the decline in funding and studentships available, and the pitiful rate of Doctoral loans, Wales runs the risk of a substantial decline in students pursuing Doctoral study which will have a serious impact on innovation and research.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

Lynne Neagle AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1403  
Ein cyf/Our ref LN/05553/24

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
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15 July 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June 2024 regarding '*Petition P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend*'. You note that the petitioner has raised further concerns regarding impact on individuals.

The Welsh Government's budget settlement for 2024-25 is up to £700m lower in real terms than was expected at the time of the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 and £3bn lower than if it had increased in line with GDP growth since 2010. This is not sufficient to respond to the extraordinary pressures Wales faces and difficult decisions have had to be taken to radically reshape our budget to prioritise our finite resources.

An impact assessment was undertaken in connection with the change to the provision of statutory student support to postgraduate Master's (PGM) students. Section 8.2 of the impact assessment acknowledges the impact on those from low-income households via the removal of grants and by extension, some of those with protected characteristics who may typically have low incomes.

The assessment also notes that student debt will likely increase. However, repayment of loans is income contingent. This means an increase in student debt does not directly result in an increase in repayments. Borrowers repay 6% of their income above a specified threshold (£21,000 p.a.). The repayment amount does not increase unless the borrower's income increases. Those with lower incomes pay back less than those on higher incomes. The progressive nature of repayment policy mitigates against the impact of increased debt as a result of this change.

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

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

The Integrated Impact Assessment is available at <https://www.gov.wales/postgraduate-masters-support-2024-2025-academic-year-impact-assessment>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lynne Neagle'.

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education

# Agenda Item 4.7

## **P-06-1404 Increase clarity and rights for people on direct payments or WILG to live independently**

This petition was submitted by Nathan Lee Davies, having collected a total of 377 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

There's a power imbalance against disabled people. LA's are failing to provide services focusing on well-being, voice and control and co-production- core principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014. We need fairness and

- Better advocacy support & a national organisation to represent the voice of Direct Payment users
- Dispute resolution process
- Better communication channels
- LA complaints panels to have knowledge Welsh law & policy
- Re-training LA staff in the spirit & intent of the Act

### **Additional Information:**

To quote the Final Evaluation Report on the SSWBA 2014 para 6.60: "For the majority of service user & carer respondents interviewed for this evaluation, their experience was one of frustration. Against the hope offered by the Act, they perceived a series of barriers. These included a relatively 'tokenistic' approach to listening, power imbalances between themselves & professionals, the need to constantly chase professionals for support, and a lack of recognition of their rights especially around issues of cultural sensitivity among others. These barriers served to work against the experience 'offered' and 'promised' by the Act's underlying principles." Disabled people face a postcode lottery with regards to the information and services they can expect. Action is needed now.

Surely the Welsh Independent Living Grant is ring fenced money not subject to clawback at the whim of the Council? Where's co-production?

See legal precedent of R (BG) V Suffolk County Council 2021 [EWHC] 3368 (Admin).

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Wrexham

- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1404  
Ein cyf/Our ref DB/10009/24  
Chair - Petitions committee

13 August 2024

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter about petition P-06-1404 asking for greater clarity and rights for people on direct payments or the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG) to live independently. I welcome the opportunity to update you about progress in this area.

One of the questions you have raised is about the development of guidance about how direct payments are monitored or controlled. Guidance is available from several sources, including the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 – Part 4 Code of Practice (Meeting Needs). In addition, most local authorities also have their own financial reviewing and monitoring rules when dealing with public money.

There will be a requirement to develop further guidance if direct payments for continuing NHS healthcare are introduced under the Health and Social Care Bill, which is currently progressing through the Senedd. If the Bill is passed by the Senedd, this will allow us, where appropriate, to make further refinements to the social care direct payments guidance. Further detail about the Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill is available on the Health and Social Care Committee's website at [Health and Social Care \(Wales\) Bill \(senedd.wales\)](https://www.senedd.wales/HealthandSocialCare(Wales)Bill).

You also raise the issue of third-party intermediaries or advocates within the direct payments system. The Code of Practice on Advocacy under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 makes provision, so far as reasonably practicable, for local authorities to ascertain and have regard to people's views, wishes and feelings. Local authorities are required to arrange an Independent Professional Advocate (IPA) to facilitate the involvement of individuals in certain circumstances.

As we prepare for the potential introduction of direct payments for continuing healthcare, the spirit of the 2014 Act and the principle of voice and control will underpin direct payments in both social care and continuing healthcare. We will build into the continuing healthcare direct payments model the best tried and tested forms of local support provided by local authorities and third sector organisations. These organisations know their local populations

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

and therefore offer a day-to-day form of advocacy in helping users with their concerns and queries. We are also currently considering with stakeholders whether there is a role for the IPA in continuing healthcare direct payments.

Welsh Government, with the support of the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group, has commissioned the Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru to carry out a study to find out more about advocacy and self-advocacy in Wales. A draft report entitled *My Voice, My Rights, My Life – Advocacy and Self-Advocacy* has been prepared in collaboration with people with lived experience.

The Disability Rights Taskforce Independent Living Social Care working group has recently shared its recommendations, among which is a call for a National Centre for Independent Living to be established in Wales. The aim is that the centre's remit would include strengthening knowledge and understanding about direct payments and supporting those in receipt of them. The Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit's co-production research group is exploring this recommendation with a subgroup of taskforce working group members, and is gathering options to see how it might work in practice.

My officials are working across a range of sectors and with many different stakeholder groups on these pieces of work, which are designed to improve clarity for those in receipt of direct payments and further uphold the rights of disabled people.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Dawn Bowden AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Gofal Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Social Care

**P-06-1404 Increase clarity and rights for people on direct payments or WILG to live independently - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05 September 2024.**

**Update to the Senedd Petitions Committee: 16-9-2024**

1. The fundamentals of my Petition and campaign remain true, but still to be fully addressed.
2. Dealing with the Social Care Minister's letter to the Chair of this Petitions Committee, I respond seriatim:
3. Her second paragraph is over confident that the current legislation is being applied appropriately on the ground. As a Direct Payments (DP) recipient I can say that the local authority always seems to apply the guidance in their favour, not in support of the needs and welfare of the DP recipient. Local authorities are focussed upon saving money, hence the repeated funding "clawbacks" in my case.
4. The Minister's third paragraph focuses upon the anticipated "future solution". This is good but fails to address problems arising here and now. Bear in mind; "The past is history, the future is a mystery, but the present is a gift." I live in the present.
5. **Independent Intermediaries or Advocacy:** Responding from personal experience, I can say that the offer of an intermediary is neither independent nor strong enough to meet the need of DP recipients. Hence my request for some form of a "trade union" for disabled people. It doesn't have to be a trade union, but we need something.
6. Indeed, lessons were not learnt from the closure of the UK wide Independent Living Fund, when the truly independent advocate existed under a genuine "tripartite" system.
7. **Application of the 2014 SSWBA:** The Minister seems very confident that past legislation will resolve a future problem. She overlooks the existing issue that the legislation, excellent in theory falls short in practice on the ground. The battle between an individual DP recipient and a local council is uneven, where the former invariably must take what they are given, because to fight or challenge is such an uphill task...! I am a fighter; I am supported by my informal care co-operative and still this isn't enough. I have been forced in my desperation to contact Mark Isherwood, MS the Chair of the Cross Party Group on Disability. But not every recipient is either as determined as myself, nor as resolute and resourceful.
8. **The "...best tried and tested forms of local support":** The Minister has misplaced optimism about local authorities always seeking to provide the best support for their local DP recipients. We urge her to engage and learn the lessons now, to come up with the best solutions for the future.
9. In respect of talks with stakeholders about a continuing role for the IPA (?) in CHC DP's, I would like to understand more clearly what is being proposed?
10. **Draft Report: "My Voice, My Rights, My Life":** This has been drafted by the Local Authorities themselves, so that they are effectively "marking their own homework". I have direct experience of the reality on the ground and there has been no

collaboration or consultation with myself or others, who I suspect who would present a different reality.

11. **The Disability Rights Taskforce Independent Living Social Care Working Group:**  
The recommendation for a National Centre for Independent Living is very interesting. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the subgroup mentioned by the Minister in this penultimate paragraph. I could bring my on the ground, lived experience to this group.
12. I am pleased that the Health and Social Care Committee is progressing with the Health and Social Care Bill. This may provide me with a solution to my current problems in the future, namely by early 2026. However, it doesn't address my issues here and now. More needs to be done.
13. I want to avoid getting drawn into further discussions about a potential future solution for myself and other DP recipients; our issues are occurring now and the Minister, Dawn Bowden is clearly focussed upon the future.
14. There is a juxtaposition of the Minister's future solution and my Petition with current problems which do not neatly overlap. But my issues and those of DP recipients need to be understood and addressed, if we are to avoid repeating the same mistakes in future legislation.
15. I wish to emphasise that the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA 14) is excellent in theory, but not being faithfully applied on the ground. This must be addressed. The anticipated "future solution" really doesn't deal with the current problems being faced now. And the differences between theory and practice need to be looked at as a matter of urgency, if we are to reach the right solution.
16. The objective of this petition is to resolve current DP issues, thereby resulting in better solutions being created for the future.
17. As of today, the current amount of my latest "clawback" by the council is £3,277.70.
18. I suffer with Friedreich's Ataxia so that I must live in the present not hope for a better tomorrow. I want solutions now; sorry for being persistent or a nuisance. To emphasise; "The past is history, the future is a mystery, but the present is a gift."
19. I wonder if the Petitions Committee or indeed the Minister has considered creating a Commissioner for Disabled People? If this is thought to be both appropriate and necessary for the Armed Forces (announced in the King's speech), why not for disabled people?
20. Paralympians show what disabled people can do when given the opportunity. I am looking for a similar opportunity as I believe I have lots to contribute to our society. The same applies to all disabled people, but we are square pegs trying to fit into round holes at the convenience of other people.
21. The recent experience of Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson "crawling" of a train at Kings Cross station, epitomises the problems facing all disabled people in 2024; despite all the existing equality legislation, we don't have equality. We need solutions NOW.

Nathan Lee Davies, 6-9-2024