

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 2 – Senedd

Meeting date:
27 June 2013

Meeting time:
09:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



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Agenda

Private Pre-meeting – 09.00 – 09.15

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions (09.15)

2 Inquiry into participation levels in sport – evidence session 4 (09.15 – 09.45) (Pages 1 – 4)

Show Racism the Red Card Wales (SRTRC)
CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 1

Sunil Patel, SRTRC Campaign Manager
Ashok Ahir, SRTRC Welsh Advisory Committee member

3 Inquiry into participation levels in sport – evidence session 5 (09.45 – 10.35) (Pages 5 – 10)

National Union of Teachers
CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 2

Stuart Williams, Unions Principal Officer

Break – 10.35 – 10.45

4 Inquiry into participation levels in sport – evidence session 6 (10.45 – 11.25) (Pages 11 – 16)

Welsh Local Government Association
CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 3

Dr Chris Llewelyn, Director of Lifelong Learning, Leisure & Information
Peter Gomer, Policy Advisor, Leisure, Culture & Heritage
Iwan Davies, Head of Culture, Tourism and Recreation

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

6 Inquiry into the future of equality and human rights in Wales – key issues (11.25 – 11.40) (Pages 17 – 21)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Private paper 4

7 Papers to note

Letter from Minister for Natural Resources and Food – update on actions following the meeting on 23 May 2013 (Pages 22 – 23)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 5

Letter from the Minister for Culture and Sport – Update on action following the meeting on 15 May 2013 (Pages 24 – 31)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 6

Letter from Chair of Petitions Committee re petition – Coed Cadw Cymru (Pages 32 – 35)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 7

Letter from Steve Thomas CBE, Chief Executive, Welsh Local Government Association re meeting on 5 June 2013 (Page 36)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 8

Letter from Paula Walters, Director, NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights (Pages 37 – 38)

CELG(4)-20-13 – Paper 9

Paper 1

National Assembly for Wales

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Inquiry into participation levels in sport in Wales

Response from : Show Racism the Red Card Wales

Background

1. Show Racism the red Card Wales is a small organisation operating across Wales. The majority of its funding comes from Big Lottery Wales and partnership agreements with 11 Welsh Local Authorities. In addition, it receives financial support from the Football Association of Wales to the tune of £15,000 and in kind support from Trade unions. We have recently received support from two legal firms, Thompsons and Simpson Millar. Contrary to public opinion we receive no money from the football clubs, football players, or any other institution connected to football.
2. Our work is unique as we work with sporting role models. We primarily work with young children in schools, primary and secondary, young people in youth clubs and have in the last two years initiated a teacher training programme working to support teachers in tackling racism in schools setting.
3. We produce education material for use in and by schools in tackling racism, challenging homophobia, negative images of refugees and asylum seekers, Islamophobia, and on combating the new far right.

Our response

4. SRTRC Wales welcomes the committee's initiative in holding this enquiry. It is something we have been arguing for and believe it necessary to challenge institutionalised perceptions that there is NO problem in Wales.
5. Further our evidence has to be read in two contexts. Firstly as from our experience and knowledge of working with over 10,000 children annually on these issues, we consider ourselves to have gained a unique insight in to the barriers that face young people, in particular minority ethnic communities in sport and a variety of other fields.
6. Secondly as we mention below, there is little research available and we know that in the past this has been used as a reason to not do anything whilst we await result of new research findings. We urge the committee to consider the qualitative evidence of our experience, and knowledge of working with young people and communities, whilst supporting our efforts to secure a strong robust independent evidence base.

7. In respect of the areas you want to examine. Our evidence adds real value to the following:
 - The availability of datasets and statistics to measure participation levels in sport, particularly those disaggregated by equality strand and socio-economic groups;
 - The opportunities and barriers to sports participation that exist for different groups of people, including by equality strand and socio-economic groups;
8. We would like to impress upon the committee what we know.
9. We know there is little research commissioned in to discrimination in sport. We have been told that it is difficult as the sample size is small for it to be statistically significant. We have been told that to conduct a statistically viable survey would be too expensive. Even after we have suggested that qualitative research is more appropriate, and more important, we still have not been able to access research grant support.
10. This is why we are embarking on a small qualitative research initiative of our own, and are in dialogue with Welsh academic institutions to conduct such a piece of work on our behalf. It is also why we support a bid being made by a new institute named the Research and Verification Institute to the lottery whose main aim is to commission research pertinent to minority ethnic communities.
11. We know also the lack of participation in sport by ethnic minority communities is complex. And there is a tendency to simplify and stereotype the different communities without a real comprehension of these communities' aspirations and culture.
12. For example, there is a marked difference between the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Hindu communities in themselves, yet they are classed as Asian and provision of services to them are seen as homogenised. Similarly we class African and Caribbean as though they too are homogenised, we do not understand the difference between the South Korean and the Chinese, between the Somali and the Sudanese and the list can go on.
13. One can be forgiven for thinking that when it comes to playing sport, if all we did was to provide the opportunity for these communities to play that they would take up the opportunity. Many of the communities too would like that. The problem is, it's not that simple.
14. Refugees and asylum seekers are told that they not entitled to facilities. We know for many years they went and played in open parks in unstructured games for fear that if they accepted 'support' their status would be affected. Yet they still managed to host a refugee world cup between their own communities.

15. Then we create rules for people to participate, and we are not referring to the rules of a game. For example, to engage in one of the Football leagues, a team needs a designated pitch and posses £6,000 (I think this is the right figure) in their bank account. We are told this is in case they are fined or have to pay the referees costs. We know many working class young people and minority ethnic communities who simply cannot afford this.
16. This is further complicated by the discrimination faced by communities, their status in the society in which they live, and, how young people perceive and witness what is happening around them. This goes for both white and Black young people.
17. We know young people from minority communities who are grappling with the desires and attractions of western and eastern society. Between the requirements of religious observance and the demands of the being involved with their peer group.
18. In once sense a young person who has a non traditional family has a real advantage, as they can access the best of both worlds, but this is not the case for a great majority of Asian communities. Nor is this analysis the same for the African-Caribbean, Chinese communities or the Somali, Sudanese, Arabic, Polish, Bulgarian and a plethora of other communities who live in Wales.
19. What we know is we need to engage these communities on their terms; we need to improve our image of how we will look after the interest of their young people, not simple to promote our own tick box mentality that we have captured another targeted person for our statistic.
20. And we must not forget that even within these communities there are ism's that exist and which we need to be able to positively challenge, particularly with regards to young minority ethnic women and their engagement in sports. And herein lies the dichotomy, were these issues to be challenged we may lose access to the communities, if we continued without challenging we are complicit with forms of discrimination. It is not surprising that such sports organisations engage with a light touch and in many cases we use gatekeepers to justify our not tackling those issues.
21. We know we have to build trust and make an effort to create new and long terms opportunities.
22. We know that there is direct correlation between fighting racism and discrimination and increased participation. We know from our communities own history, and our experience of playing in main stream and minority football, that young people play to enjoy but only if it is safe to do so. Be it in a school environment, in a youth club, or in a structured league if there is, even a perception, that players, supported or coaches are racist or that there is unfairness or bias towards one community or one group, then young people who do not 'fit in' will disengage. Creating a level playing field by challenging racism and discrimination does increase participating. Yet this is not a priority

on any of the sporting body's radar, no doubt they will promoting equality is, but there is a big difference between promoting equality and tackling and challenging racism.

23. And we would challenge this Committee to itemise the expenditure the government spends in sport on minority ethnic sport and sports clubs that are ethnically based?

24. We know that the participation of minority ethnic communities is affected by the following:

- Racism/discrimination in the classroom, school and playground;
- The lack of positive role models;
- The lack of safe playing environments;
- The unwillingness of institutions to act quickly and swiftly in tackling discrimination on off and around the playing arenas ;
- The cultural aspirations of individual families for their children's future;
- The cultural and religious beliefs of communities, and the failure of sports organisers to adapt and amend their practices;
- The constant battle young minority ethnic people face between eastern and western aspirations;
- The unwillingness by institutions to accept that participation is more important than their view that specific events for specific communities is 'apartheid';
- The unwillingness by sporting institutions to accept that to encourage participation by minority ethnic communities involved challenging and combating racism and discrimination and to foster an environment of safe playing arenas for such communities.

25. We know that a government sponsored programmes to combat racism and challenge discrimination sends a message to individual and communities that such behaviour is unacceptable. If this is then coupled with those organisations responsible for sports and their governing bodies taking the issue seriously, having procedures to tackle issues quickly, effectively and with the power to impose penalties, the battle to improve minority ethnic participation is half way there. The problem is a lack of leadership, and unwillingness to accept that racism exists, and organisations who hope the matter will go away even when it is raised with them.

26. We would be very willing to attend and answer any question the committee may have in respect of our contribution.



Sanjiv Vedi
Chair SRTRC Wales



Sunil Patel
Campaign Manager SRTRC Wales

Paper 2

National Assembly for Wales

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Inquiry into participation levels in sport in Wales

Response from : National Union of Teachers

- 1. The extent to which the Welsh Government and Sport Wales are achieving the goals set out in the *Programme for Government*, the *Creating an Active Wales* action plan and the *Vision for Sport in Wales* with regard to participation levels in sport.**

It is quite plain to see that the Government is not achieving the goals it set out to achieve in the *Programme for Government*, which was to, through Sport Wales, widen participation in sport and programmes targeted at increasing physical activity. There has been a decline in the percentage of both Primary and Secondary school children participating in sport or active recreation with a 12% decline in secondary school pupil participation from 2009 to 2011.

We would envisage that this decline could mostly be put down to pupils, mostly girls, who are in year 10 and 11 in secondary school not being engaged in being active for a number of reasons, including lack of enjoyment in the sports/activities on offer at school therefore a reluctance to continue outside school, vanity (not wanting to sweat, etc), peer pressure, and family pressures (having to work after school and at weekends). How this trend can be reversed is a very difficult one to answer but getting children active and enjoying being active is essential if they are to continue to be active after school and when they leave full time education. Being active and healthy should be a way of life and the future generation of adults can only be active and healthy if they see a need to be active and that that need can be fulfilled. If they enjoy competing in team sports such as football, rugby, netball and hockey (which are the 4 main team sports taught in schools) then there must be a clear and easy progression for them from school sport to a local club and they must be able to see this progression and be able to make use of it. There should be enough local clubs for them all to be able to join and enjoy themselves, and if this is not the case, then there must be some sort of financial assistance, guidance and advice available in order to set up a club.

The same can be said for individual sports, which includes keeping fit by going to the gym. Extra-curricular participation, and not just after school clubs, is influenced by the quality and number of facilities that are easily available in the catchment area. There are far more individual sports on offer for children to participate in than there are team sports so the needs of these children have to be addressed. The biggest reason for children not carrying on with organised sport after school and when they leave full time education is the lack of local clubs or facilities which are accessible to them. Another major factor is enjoyment, or the lack of enjoyment when it comes to drop out rates. Children need to have fun and it's essential that they enjoy

themselves when being active and choose an activity which they enjoy and get a real benefit in its participation.

Whilst the overall participation figures in primary schools is relatively positive at 78%, it would be interesting to see the geography of those surveyed in order to compare those children who live in the major towns and cities, where there are more clubs and access to facilities is better, to those that live in the rural communities of Wales, where there are fewer clubs and a reduced number of good quality facilities. It's disappointing to see that the number of children under 16 making use of the free swimming has dropped considerably since 2008/09. Part of the problem could be that quite a few swimming pools have been closed down during this period but what also must be taken into consideration is the age and gender of those who don't take advantage of the offer. It's very possible that the same group of children, girls in years 10 and 11 in secondary school, are the ones not engaging with the offer possibly due to reason such as lack of enjoyment of swimming, not being able to swim, vanity, lack of self-esteem (body consciousness) and family pressures (having to work after school and at weekends).

Focusing on increasing the number participating in structured sporting activities provided in school holidays and at weekends is good but, according to the 2011/12 figures there has been a decline in both free swims and the number participating in structured sporting activities since 2010/11. We need to know how that is progressing in 2012/13 to see if the trend is continuing and need to address it if it is.

Sport Wales' Community Strategy

The content of Sport Wales' Community Sport Strategy is very encouraging and if the priorities are met then it will have been a resounding success. However, there are two things which are a cause for concern.

Firstly, under the 'Quality Education' priority it is expected that Sport Wales will 'work closely with the education sector to ensure head teachers and governors value the importance of PE' but two of its success criteria, namely 'delivery of 2 hours of high quality PE to every young person each week' and 'every teacher trained to deliver high quality PE' are worrying. The reason they are worrying is because in the vast majority of secondary schools in Wales, pupils in Key Stage 4 receive only 1 hour of timetabled PE a week unless they choose PE as a GCSE subject. This is worrying as this is the age where, as Sport Wales' research shows, pupils get disengaged with sport. Therefore, Sport Wales and the Welsh Government should ensure that these pupils in Key Stage 4 get a minimum of 2 hours timetabled PE every week and not the 1 hour that the vast majority currently get. Also, the Welsh Government needs to ensure that all PE teachers, regardless of age and experience, have access to vital training in order that they can deliver the high quality PE that Sport Wales wants. This means that an element of funding is required in order to cover any costs (course fees, supply teachers, etc) that schools will incur in ensuring they get the training.

Secondly, the message from the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage, Huw Lewis AM, says that the Welsh Government will 'continue to support our current and future talented athletes to bring success that we can celebrate together'. He

therefore needs to ensure that national Associations, such as the Welsh Schools Athletics Association (WSAA), are allowed to continue to nurture the athletes of the future by ensuring they are properly funded to do so. The English Schools Athletics Association national championships are shown live on sky sports, and are probably paid a handsome amount for allowing them to be shown. We're not saying this should be the case here in Wales, but the national championships and Wales' participation in the subsequent under 17 Schools International Athletic Board championships against England, Scotland and Ireland should be safeguarded by means of funding or we will lose our future Commonwealth Games and Olympic hopefuls.

Whilst lottery funding of £9m over 3 years is to be greatly welcomed, Sport Wales must decide very carefully how to spend this money and ensure that it has the maximum impact on attracting children to become active and get hooked on sport.

2. The availability of datasets and statistics to measure participation levels in sport, particularly those disaggregated by equality strand and socio-economic groups.

To the best of our knowledge the only datasets which have been made know in this inquiry are the ones Sport Wales have gathered on Primary and Secondary school children participation rates.

It would be an idea for the Welsh Government, in conjunction with Sport Wales, to research the participation rates of those included in the different equality strands and more so those children who live in the deprived areas in Wales. I'm sure that the results of such a study would be eye-opening as those families with low incomes wouldn't be able to afford to pay club membership for their children, let alone purchase the equipment necessary to participate fully in their chosen activity. It is the very same families who would usually purchase low cost, processed, unhealthy food to feed their children, which ultimately leads to an increase in children being overweight or obese. This would then lead to them being less active as they find it either embarrassing, due to low self-esteem and mental well-being problems, or find it too hard, due to being overweight or obese, to be able to participate. In a way it can be seen as a vicious circle and the ones to suffer always seem to be the low income families who live in deprived areas of Wales.

3. The opportunities and barriers to sports participation that exist for different groups of people, including by equality strand and socio-economic groups.

Opportunities

Sport Wales' community Strategy is a great opportunity to increase sport participation in Wales, and if they get it right then this could have a major impact. As for specific opportunities, there is a great opportunity here to get children who come from low income families and who are living in poverty active and into sport.

Barriers

As mentioned in point two above, those families with low incomes wouldn't be able to afford to pay club membership for their children, let alone purchase the equipment necessary to participate fully in their chosen activity. It is the very same families who would usually purchase low cost, processed, unhealthy food to feed their children, which ultimately leads to an increase in children being overweight or obese. This would then lead to them being less active as they find it either embarrassing, due to low self-esteem and mental well-being problems, or find it too hard, due to being overweight or obese, to be able to participate. In a way it can be seen as a vicious circle and the ones to suffer always seem to be the low income families who live in deprived areas of Wales.

Another major barrier is the lack of provision of good quality facilities in the communities in Wales. With the climate in Wales changing where we see a lot more rain and floods, every Secondary school in Wales should have access to an all-weather surface. The wet weather must be a major headache to those schools who don't have this facility, especially when their playing fields (the PE teacher's classroom) are flooded and cannot be used. This facility should also be made available to the public outside school hours and at weekends where it can be hired and the money used to recoup some of the costs involved with running it. Only by meeting this need can those schools without this facility engage more children and ensure a higher standard of Physical Education in our schools. The Primary schools in the catchment area should also be able to make use of this facility when it's not being used as this will can hopefully catch them at a younger age and get them interested in sport and being active. It's not just football and hockey than this facility can be used for, but for many other activities as well.

4. What are the links between programmes to develop sport in Wales and other Welsh Government initiatives to increase physical activity.

We are aware, after the inquiry into child obesity in Wales, that other Welsh Government initiatives do exist in order to increase physical activity.

MEND

MEND has been in existence and going into schools since 2005 and whilst it may have had a positive impact on many children's lives, the truth of the matter is that we still have 36% of children who are overweight or obese and this figure has increased or stayed constant for a number of years now. In order to properly evaluate MEND's impact we need to know exactly what they recommend as a healthy diet, as this is the key to a child's health and well-being. They could be active 5 days a week but it wouldn't make much difference to their health if the food they ate was processed, unhealthy food (sugar and processed carbohydrates being the two main culprits). The change in dietary advice in 1983 told us all to start eating between 55-60% carbohydrates in our diet and since this change in advice obesity has rocketed in Wales and the UK. I'm sure there is a positive correlation here between the increase in obesity and the decrease in physical activity.

Cross cutting programmes for example leisure and sport related programmes such as Creating an Active Wales

Getting children active is an excellent idea for them to have a healthier lifestyle but exercise alone will not reduce obesity levels unless the children's diet is changed. With a change in diet and an increase in physical activity our obese and overweight children have a chance of losing weight and getting back some essential self-esteem and our healthier children can have an active and healthy childhood. Being healthy is a way of life and needs to be encouraged if obesity rates in our children are going to fall. Therefore a campaign encouraging both could be very beneficial. Eating the right, healthy food (real food and not processed sugar and carbohydrates) can give children more energy to burn whilst taking part in sport and other activities. Children need to be educated in order to see how and why this is the case. With this in mind, the 'eatwell' plate needs to be withdrawn from all schools and public places and replaced with advice on which real, healthy foods to eat and in what proportions. Only when this is done will the children of Wales start losing weight and get more active and hence work towards the Welsh Governments initiatives.

Tackling Child Poverty

It will be interesting to see how Sport Wales goes about tackling child poverty through community sport. I'm sure there are very many youngsters who live in poverty with the talent needed to become professional athletes in their chosen sport but need a chance to discover their talent and some guidance to learn how to nurture that talent and use it for their benefit.

5. The impact of the Olympic and Paralympic legacy, The Ryder Cup and other high profile Welsh sporting events and achievements on participation levels in Wales.

Having two professional football teams in the English Premier League in season 2013/14 will have a huge effect on participation levels in those areas, especially children wanting to participate. But, rather than waste millions of pounds in making a bid for the 2026 Commonwealth Games, Cardiff Council should look to reverse the increase in the cost of hiring park football pitches, which has been increased from £38 per match to £55 per match, as it will have a huge negative effect on established clubs who regularly use those facilities. The same can be said for rugby and cricket clubs who use the park pitches as the fee for playing rugby has increased from £20.50 to £60 and the fee for playing cricket has increased from £26.80 to £55. Many of these clubs have stated that they will not be in a position to continue as they wouldn't be able to cover the costs, as it's not just about paying for the playing and changing areas as they have to pay the referees costs, buy playing kit, nets, and other items which are not cheap to buy, and in this current economic climate, this could mean clubs folding and this would be a tragedy. The future and longevity of these clubs are the youngsters of today. If they have no clubs to join then their participation in that sport will be lost. The main reason for the unhappiness over this increase in fees is the fact that the facilities as they stand are very, very poor and clubs are reluctant to pay nearly double the fee with no improvement in the facilities. Any money, or at the very least part of the money, which could be earmarked for a bid to host the Commonwealth Games should be invested into improving the facilities currently on offer and if this was done then I'm sure the increase in fees would be viewed differently. The Cardiff Council increase could be the first step in

other councils increasing their fees for the use of park pitches and facilities. This is something which is unique to the big cities in Wales, and South Wales in particular, as in mid and north Wales nearly all Saturday league football, rugby and cricket is played on clubs own pitches, which are owned by the clubs themselves, or on school pitches.

As the steering group have now completed their feasibility studies into the 4 main work streams with regards to the bid for the 2026 Commonwealth Games and have reported back to Ministers before the Summer of 2012, it would be beneficial to know the outcome of these studies and what decision the Ministers came to after their meeting.

The initial impact of the Ryder Cup legacy was seen to be an excellent one for Newport and for golf in general as Golf Union Wales stated that 40% more boys under 18, and 60% more girls took up membership in 2011, thanks to the 'Securing the Future' Ryder Cup Legacy Fund. However, it would be good to see what those figures were for 2012. We did request information from Golf Union Wales but have been informed that they are responding directly to this inquiry so no further information was forthcoming. It would also be good to know if any funding has been given to golf clubs around Wales in order to improve their current facilities to make golf more appealing to youngsters.

The impact of the Olympic and Paralympic legacy has been minimal here in Wales. Some clubs, immediately after the Olympics, saw a large number of young people showing an interest and these have been in the sports which Team GB were successful during the Olympics, such as cycling, boxing and athletics. It would be interesting to find out what participation is like now, nearly 10 months after the Olympics ended.

The Olympic and Paralympic legacy shouldn't only be just about young people taking an interest in sport, but it should be about investing money into grass root sports by improving existing and building new facilities, and also getting more coaches involved with clubs by offering excellent coach education opportunities which are cost effective. Doing this could increase participation but it could also lead to inspiring the next generation of Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic athletes. Therefore, investment in elite, national sports, especially at school level, is also essential. The Welsh Schools Athletics Association (WSAA), who helped bring through world class athletes such as Colin Jackson, Iwan Thomas and Jamie Baulch, and assisted in the development of others such as David Guest, who is a British Decathlete, and Non Stanford, who was a Schools International Athletic Board medallist in cross country and who is now a top class triathlete, are in danger of folding as they have no funding other than what's paid to the Association from school affiliation fees. With funding in schools now being cut all the time, this is getting to be less and less and the Association will cease to exist unless the Olympic legacy is passed on and they receive funding. Allowing the Association to fade away will have a huge negative effect on athletics in Wales and with athletics being one of the most successful events for Team GB at London 2012 then this, which comes under the vision for sport in Wales' Sporting Excellence key priority, cannot be allowed to happen. I'm sure there are other national Associations in the same predicament as the WSAA and these must also not be allowed to simply fade away.

Paper 3

National Assembly for Wales

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

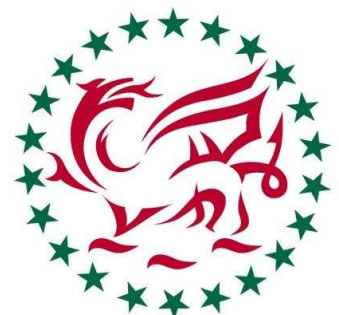
Inquiry into participation levels in sport in Wales

Response from : Welsh Local Government Association



Inquiry into Participation Levels in Sport in Wales

31st May 2013



INTRODUCTION

1. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, and the three national park authorities, the three fire and rescue authorities, and four police authorities are associate members.
2. It seeks to provide representation to local authorities within an emerging policy framework that satisfies the key priorities of our members and delivers a broad range of services that add value to Welsh Local Government and the communities they serve.
3. The WLGA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the inquiry into participation levels in Sport in Wales. In drafting this response, the WLGA has worked in partnership with The Chief Culture and Leisure Officers in Wales (CLOW).
4. Local Authorities in Wales are committed to the delivery of Sport and Physical activity both for its own sake and for the significant benefits it brings to its citizens through Community cohesion, Health and Wellbeing, Economic development and Education standards. They provide a wide variety of facilities ranging from sports halls, swimming pools, playing fields, athletics tracks etc.
5. There is a close working partnership between the WLGA, local authorities, Welsh Government and Sport Wales on the delivery of the Programme for Government, Creating an Active Wales and the Vision for Sport in Wales. It is clearly recognised by all partners that without close cooperation there would be a significant reduction in opportunities provided and a decrease in participation in Sport and Physical activity. This close working relationship was developed and became more formalised in 2012-2013 through the collaboration work instigated by the Simpson Review.
6. It was agreed by the partners that the use of a Results Based Accountability scorecard and of sharing best practice should form the basis of collaboration in particular between local authorities and Sport Wales.
7. CLOW have with Sport Wales and the WLGA created a national scorecard that ensures the relevant parties are “united behind common outcomes” in particular in terms of the impact on participation levels in sport.

8. Underpinning the national scorecard four regional scorecards are being developed in Wales, the South East, South Central, North, Mid and West. Each local authority has its scorecard that underpins the regional priorities.
9. Sport Wales with the WLGA and CLOW have developed and are piloting a new way forward for the methodology by which funding will in future be invested in local authorities by Sport Wales which will hold local authorities more accountable for raising standards and participation rates
10. In the present very difficult financial constraints local authorities have been identifying more efficient and effective delivery models for their sport and leisure services. Some e.g. Vale of Glamorgan, Bridgend and Torfaen have outsourced their leisure service to an external contractor, external trust and an internal arms length trust. Neath Port Talbot have operated under an in house arms length trust since 1996. Other local authorities after detailed options appraisals have determined that the continuation of an in-house service is their best way forward whilst other local authorities are at this time going through their detailed options appraisals and will shortly be making their decisions on their preferred delivery mechanism. In all cases the overriding factor in the local authorities decision making has not been solely financial but sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness, continuity, quality, improved facilities, improved opportunities for Sport , and increased public access have been at the forefront of their thinking and decision making.
11. Participation level is measured via local indicators and National surveys, the main ones being :-
 - Welsh Health Survey
 - Active Adults Survey (**Sport Wales**)
 - Active Young People Survey (**Sport Wales**)
 - School Sport Survey (**Sport Wales**)
 - Local Authority Partnership agreement (**Sport Wales**)
 - Wales Data unit

The dilemma with the timing of the inquiry is that the data from these surveys is not available for 2012/13 and will only become available in the autumn.

Indications from local authority data that has still to be finalised is that there has been a general increase in sports participation across Wales.

12. In respect of Sports development data this is fed into the Sport Wales research unit as a part of the Local Authority Partnership agreement. This data covers frequency of participation, analysis by age and gender. This data is being completed for 2012/13 and should be available shortly.
13. Many of the programmes in local authorities to develop sport in Wales are carried out in partnership with Sport Wales or specifically with governing bodies. e.g. Dragon Sport, 5x60, outdoor adventure, Free Swim, Disability Sport Wales, PESS, Local Development plans.
14. There are excellent examples across all Welsh local authorities on how Opportunities for sports participation have been created and barriers removed that exist for different groups of people, including by equality strand and socio economic groups.
15. All local authorities work in partnership with disability sport to create opportunities for sports participation through the insport model. The model encourages both integration of people with disabilities into main stream sport and opportunities for people with a different range of disabilities to come together to compete in teams or as individuals. Swimming is an excellent example where there are clubs for disabled participants which are linked to mainstream swimming clubs where individuals with a disability also participate.
16. Local authorities are very conscious of their need to undertake equality impact assessments as a part of their programming of facilities and opportunities. Some excellent examples of local authorities responding to their responsibility to ensure barriers associated with poverty have and are being removed are linked to sensitively delivered concessionary pricing policies offering significant discounts for family tickets and for those in receipt of benefits, e.g. the Cardiff City Council Max Active card offers a 50% concession on all leisure activities for those on benefits and through targeted marketing participation levels grew by 24% in 2012/13.
17. An excellent example of a clear link between Welsh Government initiatives to increase physical activity that has had a direct benefit to Sport in Wales is the Free Swim Initiative for under 16's. Although initially launched as a free splash the initiative has developed from encouraging increased participation to an element of more structured activity targeting non swimmers often on free school meals whose parents could not afford swimming lessons at their local pool. The children along with those attending

the free splash are linked into the local authority and welsh swimming governing body, National Swimming plan, and aquatics pathway which is seeing an increase in the number of club swimmers and which should result in more high calibre swimmers in the future. Also the children are provided opportunities to pursue other aquatic activities, e.g. surfing, sailing and sub aqua which they could not have accessed without first having the free splash opportunity, then the structured learning sessions. This particular programme also links strongly with the Key stage 2 curriculum of children swimming 25 metres by 11 years of age. CLOW have made swimming a key outcome target of all children swimming by 11yrs and the recent results of using the Welsh Government funding, targeting resources, sharing best practice has brought about ambitious and significant changes in the target number of children able to swim.

18. The results from the Sport Wales school sports survey will provide valuable information on the upturn in club membership rates and levels of participation as a result of the impact and legacy work of the Olympic and Paralympics Games.

There is clear evidence from local authorities that there has been an impact in particular through Sport Wales Community Chest grant funding for Olympic and Paralympics legacy projects.

E.g. Pembrokeshire County Council

- 59 newly trained volunteers
- 8 new junior teams
- 2 new senior teams
- 255 new junior community sport members
- 52 new senior sport community club members
- 23 additional sessions per week

E.g. Cardiff City Council

- Olympic Legacy Programme - The Road to Rio
- Cardiff Council launched its Legacy programme in February 2013, which has 3 legacy strands. Each strand is led by the relevant sector partner as identified below:
 1. Sport/Physical Activity - Leisure
 2. Health (includes Diet & Nutrition) - Public Health Wales
 3. Cultural - Arts Development
- Linking the scheme to the Free Swim Initiative for the 16 and under age group during the February Half Term helped to increase participation in FSI Structured activities by 50% compared to 2011/12.

- There has been a 20% increase in club membership in Cardiff's 19 priority sports since 2011-12.
19. The WLGA apologises for the lack of detailed performance in respect of participation in Sport in this report. As explained earlier in the response this is directly associated with the timing of the Inquiry and the main sources of data collection through the Heath survey and Sports Wales. It is anticipated that further local authority detail on participation will be available at the oral stage of the inquiry where the WLGA are pleased to be able to give further evidence.

For further information please contact:

Peter Gomer

peter.gomer@wlga.gov.uk

Welsh Local Government Association
Local Government House
Drake walk
Cardiff
CF10 4LG

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 7a

Alun Davies AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref SF/HL/1838/13

Christine Chapman
Chair,
Communities, Equality, and Local
Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1AA

64 June 2013

FUEL POVERTY ADVISORY GROUP

At the Communities, Equality, and Local Government Committee meeting on 23 May 2013 Mark Isherwood asked the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty if he would respond to a call in National Energy Action's (NEA) Fuel Poverty Monitor to reinstate the fuel poverty advisory group for Wales. The Minister advised that he would look at this issue and update members. Responsibility for fuel poverty sits within my portfolio as the Minister for Natural Resources and Food so I am replying to Mark Isherwood's question. I have copied my letter to the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty.

The decision to dissolve the former Ministerial Advisory Group on Fuel Poverty in Wales (MAGFP) was made by the former Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development. His decision was based on a number of factors including the output of MAGFP and its predecessor Fuel Poverty Advisory Group, and the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring that fuel poverty is embedded in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan and the work of the Tackling Poverty External Advisory Group (TPEAG).

I would like to seek the views of stakeholders on the need for a new advisory group on fuel poverty, particularly given that the TPEAG, the Fuel Poverty Coalition and the Nest Stakeholder Group have all been established since the original fuel poverty advisory group was set up. I am conscious that many of the Third Sector organisations that would sit on an advisory group are already represented on one or more of the existing groups. It is important, therefore, that we establish a clear need for a new group and that the group's

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CF99 1NA

Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400
Correspondence: Alun.Davies@wales.gsi.gov.uk
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remit would not duplicate any of the work being taken forward by existing groups or place an additional burden on our colleagues working in the third sector.

Peter Davies, Commissioner for Sustainable Futures, has offered to meet with NEA and other interested parties to discuss the call for a new advisory group and to look at how fuel poverty could be best represented within the TPEAG. My officials have been in discussion with Mr Davies and will support him in taking forward this meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yours ever Alun". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Alun Davies AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd
Minister for Natural Resources and Food

cc Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Agenda Item 7b

John Griffiths AC /AM
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon
Minister for Culture and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref SF/JG/1700/13

Christine Chapman AM
Chair
Communities, Equalities and Local Government
Committee

17 June 2013

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter dated 17 May, as agreed please find below further detail on the action points raised at the meeting.

During the general scrutiny session I agreed to provide further information on the issues surrounding the recent losses of heritage sites in Wales and the possibility of providing an emergency service until the time and resources are available to re-develop these sites.

A range of powers already exist for local authorities to step in to help tackle heritage assets that are at risk. For example, local authorities can use powers under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to carry out urgent works for the preservation of unoccupied listed buildings in its area and Cadw will consider providing financial support for costs incurred by the local authority that are non-recoverable. Provision of support has to be considered on a case by case basis given the limited availability of financial resources.

In addition, you will be aware from my Historic Environment Strategy that I have commissioned an options appraisal for the establishment of a Welsh Heritage Trust. Such a body could take on the management of buildings, particularly in emergency situations, or act as an advisory body. I expect to consider the outcome of the options appraisal over the summer.

I also agreed to provide further information on outreach work undertaken by theatre companies in Wales to widen participation of the arts within communities. Increasing access and participation to the arts for all the people of Wales is a key priority for the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government. The Arts Council of Wales Operational Plan for 2013-14 includes a number of targets and key performance indicators designed specifically to ensure that this is achieved. Theatre companies have an important role to play in achieving these objectives, be they the large national organisations or the smaller, local companies and a

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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huge amount of work is going on in this area. 'Taking Part' is the Arts Council of Wales publicised strategy on this matter. Additionally its expectations are outlined in the inclusion of a specific strand for participatory projects within the Lottery Guidelines for organisations and individuals. I enclose further information and examples in Annex 1.

Further to your query regarding research into the impact of the success of Cardiff City Football club and Swansea City Football club on participation levels in football as apposed to viewing sport in Wales, work continues on this and I will write to the Committee again when in a position to provide an update.

You have also asked me to provide an update on discussions with the Managing Director of Media Wales as I was due to meet after the committee meeting. During my meeting on 15 May with Alan Edmunds, Editor in Chief of Media Wales and Deputy Editorial Director of Trinity Mirror Regionals I expressed concern about the effects of Trinity Mirror's recent restructuring which could lead to weakening an already diminishing industry.

I was given reassurances that Trinity Mirror is committed to maintaining its Welsh titles and the restructuring will not impact on its distinct Welsh content including coverage of politics, news and sport across Wales. There has been significant investment in its website WalesOnline and there has been an increase in the numbers visiting the site.

During the Committee meeting Janet Finch-Saunders AM raised concerns about the future of the *North Wales Weekly News*. During my meeting and in subsequent correspondence to my officials Trinity Mirror stated that there was no threat to the newspaper or of it being taken over by the *Daily Post*.

In your letter you have also requested further information on the following of which I have responsibility for:

- Information on meetings with religious denominations in Wales to discuss the practical problems associated with selling and re-development of chapels and churches in Wales and in particular the co-operation between government departments, Cadw and planning departments in local authorities;
- Active Travel Bill - update on where local authorities are in producing their two maps (current walking and cycling provision and establishing a long-term plan for their networks);
- An update on the timescale and delivery plan of the Task and Finish Group on Schools and Physical Activity;
- How we are endeavoring to ensure that play is separate from organised recreation and sport.

I attach this information at Annex 2.

I trust that I have addressed the Committee's queries in full and I look forward to working closely with you in the future.

Yours,



John Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon
Minister for Culture and Sport

Further information and examples of outreach work undertaken by theatre companies in Wales to widen participation of the arts within communities

Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru

The company has significantly developed its community outreach programme in the last two years. A strong example was *C'laen Ta*, a project with residents of Peblig, Caernarfon, a Communities First area. This was a partnership between Galeri Caernarfon and ThGC inspired by the play *Sgint*. ThGC with members of the community over an extended period on a piece of theatre derived from the experiences of community members. Community members were responsible for all elements of production, under the mentorship of professional practitioners (including Bethan Marlow and Sarah Bickerton). Community members played the parts, assisted in the management of stage, costume, set design and marketing. The final work was shown as a promenade theatre piece on the estate.

National Theatre Wales (NTW)

Its programme of one-off performances and debates was revamped to generate four democratically-selected participatory events in the four corners of Wales, with up to 1,000 people voting each time for their chosen event. This format of using performance and debate to unlock and own local stories and questions is a pioneering model of creative social agency.

National Theatre Wales' TEAM moved into an ambitious new phase in 2012/13. TEAM is the company's network of community members who champion NTW's work within their local areas. The TEAM scheme won extended funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to expand the staff, build TEAM on a nationally networked level, produce a year-round programme of events and workshops, and the creation of TEAM panel to act as an advisory board to the executive and staff team. NTW's TEAM programme has become an internationally celebrated model for leadership, advocacy and participation in the arts.

Sherman Cymru

Sherman Cymru's Creative Learning team runs a range of projects for people of all ages and levels of experience whether looking for a performance or training opportunity. In addition to regular groups and workshops the company also holds special events to attract new participants as well as actively seeking opportunities to work with partners from the arts community and the voluntary, public and private sectors.

Company 5 is an RSC Openstages funded initiative for people aged 18 – 80, who share a common interest in theatre and performing, but who may have no or little experience. Meanwhile, Sherman Cymru's Outreach and Schools Programme is committed to engaging with local communities and schools ensuring that they are at the heart of what Sherman Cymru produces.

Through Sherman Cymru's Youth Theatre (four groups spanning ages 10-25 years old) and Sherman Sherbets (ages 4-9), the company strives to nurture young people's creativity and self expression through the power of drama and theatre, working from a devised model of practice to ensure all performances are crafted from the participants' own ideas.

Mess Up The Mess Theatre Company

Hidden Harm was an original piece of theatre created by young people in Llanelli based on their experiences as the children of alcoholics and drug addicts. MUTM worked alongside young people from Barnardo's Carmarthenshire Young Carer's Service, young people from MUTM's own drama projects and professional artists to create, stage and tour a professional production for youth audiences raising awareness of young people's experiences of substance misuse in the home. 216 young people (aged 12- 17) took part in the project, and the final performances played to a total audience of 1,510.

Information on meetings with religious denominations in Wales to discuss the practical problems associated with selling and re-development of chapels and churches in Wales and in particular the co-operation between government departments, Cadw and planning departments in local authorities.

My officials in Cadw have been involved in a range of discussions over the last few months with stakeholders regarding the adaptation and re-use of listed places of worship. This includes religious denominations, local authorities, Housing Justice and colleagues in the Welsh Government Housing and Regeneration department – these meetings are set to continue. As well as participating in an on-going working group to discuss these issues, Cadw intends to prepare new guidance in 2014 for the conservation, care and conversion/modification of historic places of worship which will be informed by the discussions with a range of stakeholders.

Issues around Libanus Chapel, demolition and de-listing

These issues came up in discussion at Committee and I wanted to provide you with a note setting out the situation in terms of the role of the Welsh Government / Cadw.

Libanus Chapel

Officials understand from the City and County of Swansea Council that what remains of the fire damaged listed building is seen by some as an eye sore that should be demolished.

The Council is responsible for administering the legislation concerned with listed buildings. The next steps concerning the future of the fire damaged building are therefore a matter for Swansea Council and the owner, rather than my officials in Cadw. In instances of fire damage, the Council should normally consider with the owner whether any urgent works are necessary while the future of the building is being considered and operate closely with the fire service and police in case of suspected arson. It is a matter for the owner to consider the future of the site and this could include possible options such as rebuilding the property, retaining the remains or complete demolition with any necessary listed building consents being obtained from the Council. My officials would be pleased to be a party to any pre-application discussions between the Council and owner if that was thought to be helpful.

The owner has been advised that any further demolition would require lbc and he confirmed that he would not demolish the remainder of the building. Following the fire in January 2012, the fallen masonry was cleared from the public footpath and left on site with the boundary secured with herras fencing.

The chapel site has two main problems which have so far stalled any redevelopment or re-use of the site. Firstly the site is land-locked and without any vehicular access as a result. Secondly, there is a Victorian water culvert of approximately 2m diameter running immediately under the building which will severely affect any reuse proposals.

However, I understand that there has been further complaint recently regarding falling masonry on to the public footpath. From the resultant inspection on 23 May, the Council considered that the building has deteriorated to the extent that it presents an immediate danger to the public. In view of this it has instigated emergency action under section 78 of the Building Act 1984. The owner has been instructed to reduce the height of the walls on all elevations to a safe height. The owner has been advised of the constraints in terms of the listed building status and will be storing all relevant materials accordingly.

Given the ongoing complaints about the condition of the site, the Council has commissioned Purcell Architects to scope and cost immediate issues such as Urgent Works and longer term sustainable reuse. An initial report is awaited and will be used to discuss options with owner.

Demolition and Listed Building Consent

The demolition of any listed building is an option of last resort and requires listed building consent from the local planning authority. Each application is considered on its merits in the light of the Welsh Government's Land Use Planning Policy – *Planning Policy Wales* - and circular guidance which explain the need to protect a listed building's historic and architectural character. In line with the circular guidance, applications for lbc need to be supported with strong evidence to justify the proposed works and this should extend to an examination of any less intrusive alternatives, where these are available.

While it is an objective of the Welsh Government's policy to secure the conservation and sustainable use of historic buildings, there will very occasionally be cases where demolition is unavoidable. Listed building controls ensure that proposals for demolition are fully scrutinised and justified before any decision is reached. In determining applications for total or substantial demolition of listed buildings, authorities should take into account the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from its continued use, the adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use and the merits of alternative proposals for the site.

Cadw's Role in Listed Building Consent

Procedurally, a Council is able to refuse listed building consent without reference to my officials in Cadw, although there is a right of appeal against any refusal to the Welsh Ministers, in practice, the Planning Inspectorate. However, if a Council is minded to grant listed building consent it must firstly notify Cadw so that the application can be considered for call-in and determination by Welsh Ministers. Applications that are called-in are those which give rise to exceptional significance or controversy.

Delisting

There is no statutory right of appeal against listing but my officials in Cadw are always happy to review past decisions in the light of new evidence that was not available at the time of listing. Requests are considered in light of published circular guidance which explains that any evidence must relate to the special architectural or historic interest ascribed to the building and not to its current state of repair. If any objection to listing relates to the building's condition, the cost of repairing or maintaining it, or for plans for redevelopment, the appropriate application should be made under the listed building consent procedures.

Listed Building Statistics

Some 30,000 buildings across Wales have been protected through listing by Cadw as nationally important buildings of special architectural or historical interest. 493 of these are listed as Grade I; 2,127 listed as Grade II* and 27,343 listed as Grade II.

Buildings are listed in three grades which reflect their relative importance at the national level. Grade II listed buildings represent those that are of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them; grade II* listed buildings are important buildings of more than special interest and grade I listed buildings are exceptional. Grade I and II* listed buildings represent the top 10% of all listed buildings in Wales.

There are currently 3153 listings in Wales related to religious buildings. The vast majority are churches and chapels but occasionally, other structures such as gates or religious statues will also be listed. There are 214 listed Grade 1, 525 listed Grade II* and 2414 listed Grade II.

There are 874 listed chapels in Wales, 41 listed chapels in Swansea. Of the 874 listed chapels, there are 12 at grade 1, 74 at grade II* and 788 at grade II.

Active Travel Bill - update on where local authorities are in producing their two maps (current walking and cycling provision and establishing a long-term plan for their networks)

Cardiff, Swansea and Newport have all produced maps of existing cycle routes in their areas. As far as I am aware, no local authorities have produced an integrated network map. At the moment local authorities are not required to produce maps, as the legislation has not yet been passed by the Assembly.

We are working with local authorities and the WLGA in developing guidance to support the delivery of the active travel Bill, so local authorities will be aware of what mapping is required and when it will need to be delivered.

The vote on general principles of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill was on 4 June, and Stage 2 began on 5 June. The Bill is anticipated to receive Royal Consent in November, and is provisionally due to come into force in early 2014.

An update on the timescale and delivery plan of the Task and Finish Group on Schools and Physical Activity

The Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group chaired by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson is due to publish its report very shortly. The Minister for Education and I will consider the report's recommendations and respond in due course. The group's role is to make innovative and practical recommendations on further developing the role of schools in increasing levels of physical activity in children and young people.

How we are endeavoring to ensure that play is separate from organised recreation and sport

"Creating a Play Friendly Wales" the Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on assessing for sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, clearly sets out the separation between play and organised recreation and sport. The play sufficiency assessments required under the new duty prioritise freely chosen play opportunities as set out in the Welsh Government Play Policy. They also need to cross reference to other assessments and provision of opportunities for structured recreational activities covering, leisure, sport and culture. This is in recognition of the importance of all these opportunities in children's lives and to avoid duplication by utilising existing information.

The Welsh Government approach fits with the recent General Comment on the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 31 on children's right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

Agenda Item 7c

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau
Petitions Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Christine Chapman AM
Chair of the Communities, Equality and
Local Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Our ref: P-04-439

12 June 2013

Dear *Christine*

The Petitions Committee is currently considering the following petition which was submitted by Coed Cadw Cymru and collected 5,320 signatures.

We believe that the ancient, veteran and heritage trees of Wales are a vital and irreplaceable part of the nation's environment and heritage.

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide greater protection for them, for example by:

Placing a duty on the new Single Environmental Body to promote the conservation of such trees by providing advice and support for their owners, including the grant aid where necessary;

Amending current Tree Preservation Order legislation to make it fully fit for purpose in protecting ancient, veteran and heritage trees, in line with proposals by Coed Cadw (the Woodland Trust);

Incorporating the database of trees recorded and verified through the Ancient Tree Hunt project as a dataset in any successor to the Wales Spatial Plan, recognising these as 'Trees of Special Interest' and providing this information to Local Planning Authorities in Wales so that it can be incorporated into their GIS system, for information.

The Committee considered this petition at our meeting on 4 June and discussed correspondence from Natural Resources Wales. A copy is enclosed.

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ffôn / Tel: 029 2089 8393
E-bost / Email: William.powell@wales.gov.uk

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

We thought this would be a good opportunity to highlight the petition to you, in advance of your likely consideration of the Heritage (Wales) Bill.

Additionally, we are writing to the Environment and Sustainability Committee in advance of their likely consideration of the Planning (Wales) Bill and Environment (Wales) Bill.

If you would like any further information on this petition, please contact the Committee Clerk at naomi.stocks@wales.gov.uk or on (029) 2089 8393.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill', followed by a comma.

William Powell AC / AM
Cadeirydd / Chair

Enc: Correspondence from Natural Resources Wales dated 8 May.



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales**

William Powell AM
Chair,
Petitions Committee,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1NA

Your ref: P-04-439

08 May 2013

Deus William,

Thank you for your letter seeking my views on the petition submitted by Coed Cadw calling for greater protection for ancient, veteran and heritage trees across Wales. The issues raised by Coed Cadw are matters that Natural Resources Wales takes seriously. Natural Resources Wales is committed to the sustainable management, use and enhancement of Wales' trees and woodlands as a key delivery partner of the Welsh Government's Strategy for Woodlands and Trees.

Whilst the legislation regarding Natural Resources Wales' functions did not place additional duties on us in the area of woodland and tree protection, we are working closely with the Welsh Government to explore how this might be best achieved. As the Welsh Government has indicated, there are opportunities in the planned Environment, Heritage and Planning Bills for improvement of tree protection legislation, management and advisory work. We are listening to our many interested stakeholders, including Coed Cadw, and we will continue to work closely with them and others, including teams in Cadw and the newly established forestry policy team in the Welsh Government, to ensure that we effectively contribute our collective expertise to these processes.

As stated in our 2013-2014 Business Plan, Natural Resources Wales will continue to deliver the commitments set out in Forestry Commission Wales' Corporate Plan 2012-2015. This includes action for trees and woodlands in rural and urban settings and working with a broad range of stakeholders and partners. We will continue to encourage public involvement with woodlands for example through recreation, enterprise and the provision of learning opportunities in woodland and about woodland for people of all ages.

As part of the development of our Corporate Plan for the next three years, there will be an opportunity for interested stakeholders to contribute their views on our future priorities, including the management, conservation and protection of trees and woodland.

Yours sincerely,

Emyr

EMYR ROBERTS

Prif Weithredwr, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Chief Executive, Natural Resources Wales

emyr.roberts@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Natural Resources Wales,
Ty Cambria, Newport Road, Cardiff CF24 0TP

Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
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Agenda Item 7d

Our Ref/Ein Cyf:
Your Ref/Eich Cyf:
Date/Dyddiad:
Please ask for/Gofynnwch am:
Direct line/Llinell uniongyrchol:
Email/Ebost:

11th June 2013
Naomi Alleyne
029 20468660
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WLGA • CLILC

Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

RECEIVED

18 JUN 2013

Dear Christine,

I was disappointed to hear discussions at the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on 5th June regarding the non attendance of representatives from the WLGA and NHS CEHR as part of the Committee's inquiry into the future of equality and human rights in Wales. I would like to put the record straight and ensure that Committee members are aware of the correct situation.

As noted by the committee, the WLGA and NHS CEHR chose to submit joint evidence in recognition of the close links between our two organisations and the similar ways in which local government and health bodies are affected by equality legislation. In keeping with this, both organisations would have valued the opportunity to attend the committee to provide joint oral evidence. However, the invitation to attend the committee meeting was only extended to the NHS CEHR. When this was queried with the committee clerk, the WLGA were informed that the committee were interested in a health perspective. The WLGA were respectful of the committee's preference and subsequently offered any further information or assistance that may be required. None was requested.

I also wish to reiterate that the fact the WLGA was not present is absolutely no reflection of the value we place on equality and human rights issues and indeed the written evidence submitted and the examples included highlights the positive nature of our evidence. The evidence sets out how local government and health are advancing equality through their services and demonstrates our commitment to furthering this agenda. I hope this message is not lost as a result of the lack of representation at committee.

I would be grateful if this letter could be shared with members of the Committee as the WLGA feels that this fact should have been highlighted at the committee.

Yours sincerely

Steve Thomas CBE
Chief Executive

Steve Thomas CBE
Chief Executive
Prif Weithredwr

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www.wlga.gov.uk

The NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights

Canolfan y GIG ar gyfer Cydraddoldeb a Hawliau Dynol



Paula Walters
Director

Christine Chapman AM
Chair, Communities, Equality and Local
Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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18 June 2013

Dear Ms Chapman

Inquiry into the future of equality and human rights in Wales

I am writing to express my disappointment on viewing the discussion that took place at the Committee's evidence session on Wednesday 5th June 2013. Whilst the collaborative nature of the response submitted by the WLGA and NHS CEHR was acknowledged positively the matter surrounding our non-attendance at the session was not accurately reflected.

Firstly, Committee Services informed the WLGA that they would prefer only the CEHR to attend an evidence session. Upon clarifying this, we were advised that the Committee would welcome a Health perspective. Whilst this did not seem to respect the joint response, I understood the position and immediately confirmed my willingness to attend and further asked to be informed of any specific areas members of the Committee would like us to cover in more depth. I received a reply saying that this information would be forthcoming prior to the session but I did not receive anything.

Secondly, I have unfortunately torn my ankle ligaments and a couple of days before the meeting was signed off work by my GP for a fortnight and advised to rest. My office contacted Committee Services the day before the session to let them know I was now unable to attend and that I would be happy to reschedule. My office was informed that there was no need to reschedule as the Committee had our written submission.

I considered asking the WLGA to take my place at short notice but decided not to in view of the initial request we had received from Committee Services. As I had personally led on the response with the WLGA I did not consider it appropriate to ask a member of my team to attend alone which is why I made the offer to reschedule.

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The WLGA and NHS CEHR have a long-standing commitment to promoting equality and human rights and have worked jointly on matters of interest and to ensure we use our resources effectively. I believe both agencies have a solid reputation; stretching beyond Health and Local Government and across the Welsh public sector. The evidence provided in our submission demonstrates the high level of commitment and the focus we have on improving services for patients, users and their families.

I hope this letter provides the Committee with a full explanation of events.



Yours sincerely

PAULA WALTERS

Director, NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights