

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 23 February 2016

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

Steve George – Committee Clerk

Kath Thomas – Deputy Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

1 Introduction, apologies and substitutions

(Pages 1 – 31)

2 New petitions (09.00–09.30)

2.1 P-04-672 End Use of Welsh Language

(Pages 32 – 34)

2.2 P-04-673 Call for all Welsh Political Parties to Offer Everything Bilingually

(Pages 35 – 36)

2.3 P-04-674 Say NO to Dyfed

(Pages 37 – 41)

2.4 P-04-675 Cover the Cost of the Bedroom Tax in Wales

(Pages 42 – 46)

2.5 P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in
Wales

(Pages 47 – 49)

2.6 P-04-677 Equal Access to Welsh Language

(Pages 50 – 56)

2.7 P-04-678 Infirm Supports

(Pages 57 – 74)

2.8 P-04-679 Remove the Welsh Bacallaureate Qualification

(Pages 75 – 77)



3 Updates to previous petitions (09.30–10.30)

Economy, Science and Transport

- 3.1 P-04-658 The Brimmon Oak
(Pages 78 – 90)
- 3.2 P-04-565 Revive Disused Railway Lines for Leisure
(Pages 91 – 92)
- 3.3 P-04-416 North-South Rail Services
(Pages 93 – 96)
- 3.4 P-04-486 Act Now and Help Save the High Street Shops
(Pages 97 – 98)
- 3.5 P-04-363 Town Centre Improvement Scheme for Fishguard
(Pages 99 – 101)
- 3.6 P-04-594 Cilmeri Community Council Appeal for The Prince Llywelyn Monument
(Pages 102 – 103)

Education and Skills

- 3.7 P-04-576 Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday in Term Time
(Page 104)
- 3.8 P-04-606 Ensure Schools Exercise their Statutory Powers Under Regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 Without Interference or Bias.
(Pages 105 – 111)
- 3.9 P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools
(Pages 112 – 117)

Health and Social Services

- 3.10 P-04-603 Helping Babies Born at 22 Weeks to Survive
(Pages 118 – 120)
- 3.11 P-04-456 Dementia – This Could Happen to you
(Pages 121 – 122)
- 3.12 P-04-452 Equal Rights for Tube-fed Youngsters
(Pages 123 – 125)

3.13 P-04-424: Retain Services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital
(Pages 126 – 127)

3.14 P-04-624 That Foster Carers be Permitted to be Registered with More Than
One Local Authority
(Pages 128 – 130)

Natural Resources

3.15 P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent
Closure
(Pages 131 – 132)

3.16 P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on Common Land
(Pages 133 – 134)

4 Petitions Proposed for Closure

(10.30-11.00) (Pages 135 – 141)

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-04-672 End Use of Welsh Language

This petition was submitted by Chris Neilsen, having collected 12 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Scrap the compulsory expensive provision of Welsh language by public sector and put the millions wasted into front line services.

As we are aware, Wales is the poorest country in western Europe, devolution has been a disaster to anyone living outside of Cardiff, our public services are a mess and Wales cannot afford this daft novelty language.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Newport East
- South Wales East



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-672
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00005/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 January 2016

Dear William,

I am writing in response to your letter of 6 January seeking my views on a petition presented to the Petitions Committee regarding the use of the Welsh language by the public sector.

The Welsh Government believes that the Welsh language is an integral part of our culture and society. This is reflected, for instance, in the recent Wellbeing of Future Generations Act made by the National Assembly which includes 'A thriving Welsh language' within the seven National Wellbeing Goals. These goals were thoroughly consulted upon with the people of Wales through a 12 month National Conversation on the Wales We Want campaign.

The Welsh Government appreciates the financial pressures on public bodies. The Welsh language standards will shortly replace the Welsh Language Schemes currently operated by most public bodies in Wales that were developed under the 1993 Welsh Language Act. We would expect those who are required to comply with the requirements of the standards to do so with minimal effort, as most standards relate closely to the requirements already found in current Welsh Language Schemes.

The standards include duties to be placed on organisations to offer individuals the opportunity to specify the language (Welsh or English) in which they would wish to communicate with the organisation. This would be documented so that future communication is made in the language of choice, resulting in improved efficiency and ultimately reduce waste.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
YP.PrifWeinidog@cymru.gsi.gov.uk • ps.firstminister@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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 Draft Budget for 2016-17 was published on 8 December and reflects the Welsh Government's focus on the services which mean the most to the people of Wales. This includes nearly £300m extra for the Welsh NHS and £230m new capital investment to support public service infrastructure.

The full draft budget along with a narrative outlining Welsh Government priorities can be found here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/funding/budget/final-budget-2015-16/?lang=en>

Yours sincerely

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

CARWYN JONES

Agenda Item 2.2

P-04-673 Call for all Welsh Political Parties to Offer Everything Bilingually

This petition was submitted by Aaron Davies, having collected 12 signatures.

Text of the Petition We are calling on the Welsh Government to legislate that all political parties and their candidates that are standing for election (general/national/local) should offer everything bilingually (Welsh/English). This means leaflets, newsletters, websites (and so on) of individual candidates, groups of the party and the main party.

Some political parties offer this service already, some candidates also offer this service, but not all.

We are calling on all political parties to ensure that Welsh speakers have equal rights to information as non Welsh speakers have.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Aberconwy
- North Wales

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-673
Ein cyf/Our ref LA -/00010/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 6 January, addressed to the First Minister, regarding the call for Welsh political parties to provide information bilingually. The First Minister has asked me to respond.

Political parties are not included under the provisions of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 as organisations that could be subject to Welsh language standards. This means that what the petition calls for would not be within the current scope of the Measure. Official documents at elections, of course, must be bilingual.

Yours sincerely,
Leighton Andrews

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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

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

Agenda Item 2.3

P-04-674 Say No to Dyfed

This petition was submitted by Bob Kilmister, having collected 877 signatures.

Text of the Petition

We the undersigned are fully prepared to see a reform of local government in Wales but reject the proposal to recreate the former hugely unpopular Dyfed authority which was abolished in 1996. Welsh Government should learn the lessons of history and not try to impose a solution that the three Counties involved all reject.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-674
Ein cyf/Our ref LA -/00014/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

21 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 11 January regarding a petition received by the Petitions Committee from Mr Aaron Davies in respect of the Welsh Government's proposals for the merger of existing Local Authorities in west Wales.

Plans to reform Local Authorities in Wales are set out in the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill, which was published for consultation in November. The proposed new areas are based on mergers of existing local government areas. Mergers are very much less disruptive for Local Authority staff, continuity of service, property and continuing liability issues than any other form of structural change. Our proposals are to reform Local Government and extend well beyond boundaries. They are about the nature of local government itself, its relationship with the communities it serves, the role of elected members and how it manages its performance. A merger between Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire would, for example, help the integration of health and social care in the Hywel Dda Local Health Board area and bring together an area which has some significant common features in terms of rurality, local economy and, in much of the area, use of the Welsh language.

Doing nothing is not a viable option. The scale of the financial challenge combined with an aging population and increased public demand and expectations mean we are beyond the point where collaboration and shared services on their own could deliver sustainable local government and services. Transformation is the only viable option.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Leighton.Andrews@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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

Pack Page 38

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 consultation on the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill closes on 15 February 2016. Comments made by signatories of the petition presented to the Petitions Committee will be noted and will be taken into careful consideration, along with all other responses, as part of the consultation process.

The consultation will present the next Welsh Government with the opportunity to make an early decision on how it wishes to proceed. This will be with the benefit of a developed legislative proposition, assisted by a full understanding of the views of stakeholders.

Best wishes,

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

Leighton Andrews AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Minister for Public Services

P-04-674 Say NO to Dyfed – Petitioner to the Committee. 4.02.16

Please find attached some of the reasons supporting this petition.

The Council Tax bill could rise by over 20%. For 2015–2016, the average county council element of Band D Council Tax for each county is:

Carmarthenshire £1,076

Ceredigion £1,070

Pembrokeshire £801

So, households in Pembrokeshire pay £801 a year on average. For ‘Dyfed’ as a whole the average is £981. That’s an extra £180 – more than £3 per week. the government says that it will save money, but why should Pembrokeshire pay more to bring back Dyfed? We say no. Let’s keep Pembrokeshire and make savings here.

The Minister has not said how this issue will be dealt with, though he did acknowledge its existence.

Pembrokeshire people would have less say and much less accountability

We’ve already seen the impact on local hospitals of decision making moving out of our County. The same could happen with Council services. The Minister suggests that this is a good reason for the proposal. The Health Board has been a total failure and services have declined while costs have spiralled.

When Dyfed existed last time we had District Councils in place to take some local decisions. The minister seems to suggest that we will have area boards that will do the same role.

The Pembrokeshire brand is valuable.

Pembrokeshire is much better known than Dyfed. The unique Pembrokeshire brand is very important to local tourism and food producing businesses.

Who knows where Dyfed is outside of the three Counties? Why endanger it? Centralisation in Carmarthen is not the answer for Pembrokeshire. Let’s work to improve Pembrokeshire Council rather than scrapping our County all together.

Joint working but retaining local accountability is the answer.

We need to collaborate with our neighbours. Local government across Wales has to change for the better and Pembrokeshire is no exception. We need to reorganise the management of council services to save costs while, at the same time, delivering a high standard of service.

The argument in favour of Dyfed seems to be that centralisation in Carmarthen is the magic formula. However, many people might be surprised to learn that there are already 69 joint working arrangements in place between Pembrokeshire County Council and other Councils.

These range from joint procurement of telephony and computers to sharing duty officer services, where each of the three counties provides cover for the whole area for one week in three. Therefore, it's clear that many cost savings can be achieved while retaining Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire as separate counties.

The same strategy is being followed in other parts of Great Britain. For example, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire have some joint working arrangements in place. Yet, there's no sign of the Westminster Government calling for those two counties to be merged.

Quite rightly, Pembrokeshire Council is working hard to increase the number of joint working projects. What has been achieved so far is just the tip of the iceberg compared to what is needed and, indeed, to what is possible.

Although Pembrokeshire residents pay a very low rate of Council Tax compared to other areas, Pembrokeshire Council has been guilty of wasting money by, for example, paying excess salaries to council officers. This is changing but much more needs to be done.

Thanks

Bob Kilmister

Agenda Item 2.4

P-04-675 Cover the Cost of the Bedroom Tax

This petition was submitted by Jamie Insole, having collected 193 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Following the recommendation of the National Assembly's own Public Accounts Committee, Cardiff & South Wales Against the Bedroom Tax, Shelter Cymru, Welsh Tenants, TPAS Cymru & the Church in Wales calls upon the Welsh Government to allocate the necessary funds to cover the cost of the bedroom tax in Wales as has been achieved in Scotland.

Cardiff & South Wales Against the Bedroom Tax (C&SWABT) is a tenant led, grassroots campaign committed to fighting the 'bedroom tax'.

Our experience indicates that the financial burden of the bedroom tax continues to fall predominantly upon the sick, disabled and the most financially vulnerable members of our community. Currently, approximately 33,000 households face the impossible choice of finding extra-money they do not have or 'downsizing' to smaller homes that do not exist.

Over the course of 2013 and 2014, social tenants in Wales were made subject to 5136 suspended possession orders. Dramatic cuts in discretionary housing payment, combined with the perfect storm of further welfare reform can only see more people facing insurmountable debt and eviction threats.

We are fully aware of the budgetary challenges posed by central government underfunding. However, in our view the cost of not intervening will be measured both in terms of thousands of evictions and the irreversible toxification of the Welsh social housing sector.

Welsh Government spends a lower percentage of its expenditure on housing than either Scotland or Northern Ireland. It is essential that the housing budget is expanded so that the DHP top-up does not come at the expense of other vital housing services. In Scotland, no tenant pays the Bedroom Tax. We call upon Welsh Government to show the same leadership, act upon the Committee's recommendation and take tens of thousands of Welsh tenants out of poverty and misery.

Additional information

On July 24th, the Welsh Assembly's own Public Accounts Committee recommended "a cost/benefit analysis of mitigating the full impact of the removal of the spare room subsidy through discretionary housing payments, as the Scottish Government chose to do."

Following publication, a coalition of sector agencies and high-profile individuals, including, the Archbishop of Wales and Tenant Participation called upon Welsh Government to find the funds to take tenants out of this charge.

Cardiff & South Wales Against the Bedroom Tax has already worked with its partners, Welsh local authorities and sector Leaders to embed best practise and lift hundreds from the bedroom tax; either through exemptions in law or tribunal appeals.

The campaign has also succeeded in staving off over 30 evictions.

However, against a background of escalating central funding cuts and their impact upon support services, it is our settled view that the current impasse is not sustainable.

Best estimates indicate that the total cost to Welsh Government would not exceed £17 million.

It is now time to act!

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Swansea West
- South Wales West

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchgu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-675
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00038/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk
seneddpetitions@assembly.wales (Clerking Team)

19

January 2016

Dear Bill

Thank you for your letter of 11 January, regarding the petition received by your Committee concerning the Bedroom Tax in Wales.

The Bedroom Tax, also known more neutrally as the Housing Benefit Size Criteria, was introduced into the Social Rented Sector by the UK Government in April 2013. Since its inception, there have been calls for the Welsh Government to follow the example of Scotland to fully mitigate the impacts of the Bedroom Tax. They have achieved this by having the Discretionary Housing Payments cap removed and topping up that fund.

The Welsh Government does not agree with this reform. We have had to prioritise specific mitigating actions and policy changes to support those worst affected by the impacts of the UK Government's welfare reforms generally. This action forms part of The Welsh Government's wider strategy on tackling poverty.

The Bedroom Tax provisions are by no means the only aspect of welfare reform to impact negatively on people in Wales. Whilst the UK Government retained responsibility for changes to Housing Benefit, it transferred responsibility for the *Discretionary Social Fund* and the *Independent Living Fund* to the Welsh Government. It also abolished Council Tax Benefit in April 2013 and transferred responsibility for a new scheme to provide Council Tax Support to the Welsh Government, along with a 10 per cent reduction in funding. It was incumbent on us to give priority to addressing the impact of those schemes which had become its direct responsibility.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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

Pack Page 45

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.

Department for Work and Pensions statistics for August 2015, demonstrate around 30,000 claimants in Wales were affected by the Bedroom Tax in the social rented sector, losing around £14 a week on average. Based on these statistics, intervention from the Welsh Government is estimated to cost around £22 million per annum. Making up this shortfall needs to be considered in light of the knock-on effects on our other mitigating actions. A long term view of the costs and benefits is needed since this constitutes an ongoing annual commitment.

We have already entered an annual commitment of the same magnitude on Council Tax Reduction, supporting over 300,000 households through maintaining entitlement to Council Tax support at an annual cost of £244 million from 2013-14 to 2016-17 (£222 million was transferred to The Welsh Government for 2013-14).

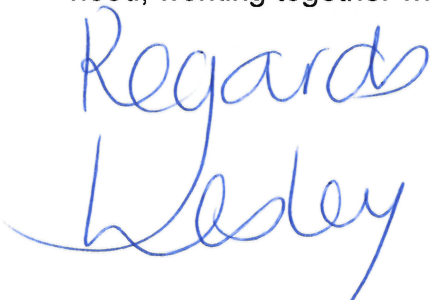
There would have been a significant opportunity cost in spending around £20 million per annum on making good the shortfall for Housing Benefit recipients. This would have been around £20 million per year not spent on independent advice services and investment to prevent homelessness. In 2014-15, the additional £2 million of funding provided to frontline advice services enabled organisations to respond to 30,000 requests for information and advice and secured almost £6.5 million in increased income gains for people.

We provided around £3 million to prevent homelessness through the Homeless Prevention Fund to support the work of Local Authorities and partners between April 2011 and March 2015. Monitoring data shows between April 2011 – March 2014, just under 5,100 private sector landlords and around 7,850 tenants have been provided with advice and services for the first time through this funding.

Furthermore, the Explanatory Memorandum to the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 demonstrates there is an additional cost of at least £2,000 for each household where prevention of homelessness is not successful, and other studies show the wider costs on the public purse including health, crime and social care costs can lead to additional costs of over £10,000. Funding of the order of £20 million per annum would have involved reductions in other programmes which prevent homelessness and promote independent living, including those who are most likely to be adversely affected by the UK Government's welfare reforms in general, such as lone parents and disabled people.

From our research programme and other evidence, I am well aware of the disproportionate impact of the UK Government's welfare reforms in Wales. The impacts of these reforms are not spread equally, with households already around the poverty line, families with children and disabled households expected to be amongst the hardest hit.

Unfortunately, we cannot fill all the gaps left by the UK Government's welfare benefit changes and reducing budgets. However, in spite of a £1.4 billion cut to the Welsh Government's budget since 2010, we continue to do all we can to support those most in need, working together with our partners to deliver our priorities.



Lesley Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Agenda Item 2.5

P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales

This petition was submitted by Councillor Sion Jones, having collected 10 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I present this petition to you as a starting point in the campaign to establish a Welsh language champion in our communities in Wales. The role would be a voluntary one, based in the community, and the champion would be appointed to promote the use of the Welsh language in Wales and to support developments in our communities.

The language champion would lead on issues with regard to the language, which would include having a role within primary and secondary schools and within parish and town councils, as well as close engagement with county councils and county councillors.

The champion would be supported by the Welsh Language Commissioner to carry out the role's functions and to ensure that communities in Wales are aligned with local and national policies in Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Arfon
- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-676
Ein cyf/Our ref:FM -/00024/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

27 January 2016

Dear William Powell,

Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales

I am writing in response to your letter dated 12 January with regards to petition P-04-676 Establish a Welsh Language Champion in our Communities in Wales.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on the issues raised in advance of your first consideration of the petition.

The Welsh Government currently funds numerous organisations to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language across the communities of Wales. These organisations include the Mentrau Iaith, Merched y Wawr, the Young Farmers Clubs, Urdd Gobaith Cymru and the network of Papurau Bro. In total it is estimated that over 3,000 individuals volunteer on a regular basis within our grant funded organisations to support and strengthen the use of the Welsh language on a community level.

The Mentrau Iaith and Urdd Gobaith Cymru are examples of our grant funded organisation that currently undertake the duties noted in the petition with regards to working with local primary and secondary schools. They also work strategically with Local Authorities with the aim of ensuring a prosperous future for the Welsh language.

I do, however, believe that there is a scope for community and town councils to consider appointing a Welsh language champion within their structures. The voluntary duties could include responsibility for ensuring that the vitality of the Welsh language is mainstreamed throughout their area of work.

Yours sincerely

CARWYN JONES

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
YP.PrifWeinidog@cymru.gsi.gov.uk • ps.firstminister@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Agenda Item 2.6

P-04-677 Equal Access to Welsh Language

This petition was submitted by Remigijus Šiaučiūnas, having collected 45 signatures.

Text of the Petition

Welsh language should be as accessible as English language is. Sadly, it is not the case. I am talking from my own experience. I moved to Wales and I would like to learn at least a little bit of Welsh. It is relatively easy to find a free English class and it is impossible to find a free Welsh language class.

The Equality Act states that no one should be treated less favourably than another just because of his or her nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, religious or philosophical belief or absence of religion or belief.

Learning Welsh should be as accessible as learning English to anyone, including the first generation immigrants.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-677
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00061/16

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

seneddpetitions@assembly.wales

21 January 2016

Dear William

EQUAL ACCESS TO WELSH LANGUAGE

Thank you for your letter of 12 January with regards to petition P-04-677 Equal Access to Welsh Language from Regigijus Šiaučlūnas.

Thank you for the opportunity to give my views on the issues raised in advance of your first consideration of the petition. The provision of Welsh for Adults courses for people of all backgrounds is important to the Welsh Government and this was considered in the report of the Welsh for Adults Review Group published in 2013:

“Learners and prospective learners from minority ethnic and immigrant groups are also targeted and examples were seen of good practice in targeting these groups and exemplary examples of success amongst some learners. However, these groups are not targeted in the same way as in the area of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).”

Welsh Government officials are in discussion with regards to the parallels between Welsh for Adults and ESOL provision and ESOL providers are encouraged to incorporate some Welsh language training into their classes. However, it is important to note that Welsh for Adults course fees are currently determined by each individual provider.

In May 2015, I announced the establishment of a new national centre to be responsible for the strategic development of Welsh for Adults to the future. The University of Wales Trinity

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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.

Saint David is hosting the new centre and is in the process of developing its strategy for the future. The challenges that the new centre will need to address include increasing learner numbers, targeting new learners, responding to learners' needs and continuing with efforts to make fees consistent across Wales in order to ensure the lowest possible fee and equity for learners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis'.

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Equal Access to CYMRAEG (the Welsh Language)!

We have a bookcase at Cardiff Central Library. Books from the European Union. Although it's Caerdydd, not a single book is in the medium of Cymraeg. It is a central library in the capital of Wales.

European Union publishes books in Welsh. Next to the Cardiff Central Library bookcase, there is a book I obtained in London at a trade fair. It's published by the same European Union. It's free. It's in Welsh.

The Cardiff Central Library European Union bookcase case is not an accident. It's been like that for a while. A little while ago I even asked the library staff, if they had any titles in the medium of Welsh.

The Equality Act states that no one should be treated less favourably than another just because of his or her nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, religious or philosophical belief or absence of religion or belief.

Caerdydd, occupied: <https://www.facebook.com/caerdyddoccupied/>

I cannot get rid of the impression that many people involved in Welsh language matters in Caerdydd merely want the Welsh language (Cymraeg) to die quietly.

I came to Caerdydd on 10/10/2015 hoping to travel around Cymru and even learn a little bit of Cymraeg. I already knew some things about the history of Cymru and Cymraeg.

Much of this information was a shock for me, when I found it: the castles, extortion, discriminatory policies applied towards the Welsh, Welsh Not etc.

Even the word Welsh or Welch. The Welch regiment.

- "To swindle (a person) out of money laid as a bet (see welsher). Hence welshing and Racing".
- "To fail to carry out one's promise to (a person); to fail to keep (an obligation)".

Welsher or welcher:

- "A bookmaker at a race-meeting, who takes money for a bet, and absconds or refuses to pay if he loses".

My Oxford English Dictionary. I even developed an idea of translating a Lithuanian poem. I am a Lithuanian-English translator/interpreter. Just a literal translation, no poetry.

Lithuanian and Cymraeg have some historical parallels. Lithuanian was also once a sublanguage, a language of commoners, not worthy, looked down, frowned upon.

I lived in London for more than ten years and it became somewhat boring. I had visited all the places that I wanted. I did not even go out much in the last years.

It did make financial sense to move out of London, too: higher pay in some places outside London and smaller rent. Better quality of life.

I chose Cymru. It's closer. It's mostly unknown to me, unlike Alba. It's a good place to spend a few years before going back to Lithuania.

Learning a little bit of Cymraeg was a glitch. I knew that Caerdydd was not the most Welsh place in Wales. I knew about general attitude to languages and foreigners in the UK.

I am a foreigner myself. Lithuanians may still be the second most criminalised by London Metropolitan Police nation after Jamaica and ahead of Ireland.

The best-paid interpreters in the UK make less money than an unskilled labourer in construction with a full-time job.

Language Show in London has no place for any language apart from seven or eight imperial languages, be it a language from the British Isles or a language of immigrants.

Many interpreters are women and foreigners. Two factors that would affect any income. Women and foreigners, just like the majority of sex workers.

It was unpleasant that most people in Caerdydd who I met did not want to know anything about Cymraeg.

What I did not expect was the attitude that I encountered with the Cymraeg speakers. Cymraeg is not a priority and what not.

In London there are plenty of free classes to study English. There are some in Caerdydd too.

I inquired where I could find some people who are learning Cymraeg and where I could learn some Cymraeg too.

The library (Llyfrgell Caerdydd) gave me a brochure with a few quite expensive classes, but my intention wasn't to gain a degree or anything.

I simply wanted to learn a little. Menter Caerdydd was another lead. It did not get me very far though. Indeed my entire journey could have ended there.

I visited Menter Caerdydd web site. It's not very intuitive. I clicked on "Adults" in the end and found Welsh Learners' Coffee Morning ("The Mochyn Du") and Clonc yn y Cwtsh.

Once you click on any of these two links, there is an option to phone Menter Caerdydd for more information, which I did.

I was immediately convinced that unless I was ready to part with a substantial amount of money, there would be no Cymraeg for me.

I was told that Welsh Learners' Coffee Morning and Clonc yn y Cwtsh were for people who are already proficient in Cymraeg and that there were no self-help groups for people like me.

I did not want an education class; I merely wanted to find some people who speak Cymraeg, who are learning to speak Cymraeg, who like Cymraeg.

It felt extremely lonesome without knowing anyone who did. How would I practice my Cymraeg?

I visited Welsh for Adults in Cardiff University, Y Mochyn Du, Clonc yn y Cwtsh, a Cymraeg group in Theatr Sherman, a group in Whitchurch or Yr Eglwys Newydd.

I found some groups where I could meet with some people speaking Cymraeg. I did not find any free classes.

I live in Y Rhath and on Newport Road we have Canolfan Y Drindod (Trinity Centre Cardiff), a wonderful place that provides support for refugees and asylum seekers.

Including free English classes. As far as I am concerned free Welsh or Cymraeg classes would make a perfect sense. "Everyone has the right to a nationality" (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, Article 15 (1)).

The Equality Act states that no one should be treated less favourably than another just because of his or her nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, religious or philosophical belief or absence of religion or belief.

I shared my idea about free Cymraeg classes with others in the above mentioned groups and I even visited Canolfan Y Drindod. They have a very busy schedule.

Some others did not think that Cymraeg was a priority. For a while I give up.

Picture:

<https://www.npted.org/schools/elrs/Examples/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=72>



Caerdydd, occupied: <https://www.facebook.com/caerdyddoccupied/>

Agenda Item 2.7

P-04-678 Infirm Supports

This petition was submitted by Maggie Macleod, having collected 20 signatures.

Text of the Petition

I am at a loss to understand why, two years of appealing to the people who have the power to solve problems has thus far failed to solve what is a minor adjustment needed to enable me, a 77 year old female with mobility difficulty due to arthritis of both hips/knees, to travel via the community car. Two cars purchased for the very purpose of (elderly and disabled) which I have need lacks grab handles to enable the front seat passenger to clamour onboard. My File of contacts include the car manufacturer who was quite prepared to post grab handles, a Cardiff firm also were prepared to do the fitting (surely Swansea has equal experts!)

I therefore call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that vehicles used by community transport schemes are fitted with grab handles as a minimum.

Additional Information

I was and am prepared to cover the cost of fitting – the estimate being £200. So make this appeal in one last endeavour to enable me visit the doctors' surgery, main need and to have some social contact. At present my contact is via the internet for shopping etc. If commercial taxis, by law, have to have grab handles, then a similar criteria should apply to community cars.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Gower
- South Wales West



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-678
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00143/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

26 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 12 January regarding petition P-04-678 calling for all vehicles used by community transport schemes to be fitted with grab handles as a minimum.

Any vehicle used by community transport providers would have to meet any requirements imposed by the construction and fitness of vehicles regulations in the first instance, including any post-market adaptations. These are not a devolved matter and compliance is overseen by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

I will ask my officials to refer Mrs Macleod's concerns to the Community Transport Association in Wales so that the Association may investigate further and respond to Mrs Macleod direct, with a copy to you.

Edwina Hart

Oct 29th

2015

FIRMITIES and Aid-s

FAO

C. Christie
Comm. Transport Officer
Swansea Security Council

I became a resident in Pontarddulais a little over five years ago. Advancing years (I am in my 79th year) and mobility problems being the reason, no stairs or steps to climb. I learned to use a community car scheme and used it to shop locally and when the need arose for visits to the doctor. I also used the service to obtain library books. The car scheme operates Monday to Friday. The car drivers are volunteers again in the advanced age group. Even in my early days of using the cars I was experiencing difficulty because of the lack of grab handles. I passed comment on the lack and the return comment 'others have complained'. This then was the beginning of my education on the issue. My last outing in the community car was more than three years ago and was such an embarrassment because I was desperately trying to grab on to anything which would aid me in transit. I learned that commercial taxis by law, have grab handles in their vehicles. I also learned a little on the 2010 Access law.

To have the situation rectified my contacts were numerous and varied which can be inspected by the file I have and had to put together because the issue became more complicated than I ever could have imagined. Sadly and unfortunately for me the main obstruction was at the most local level. My frustration increased with every reply from those to whom I appealed for help. There are so many organizations with the interest of the wellbeing of the elderly and yet, none with a solution.

I bought two pieces of equipment advertised as an aid to the problems experienced by elderly ease of passage into a vehicle, I offered the purchases to the organizer of the community car scheme for them to be independently tested. The offer was refused, I offered to pay for grab handles to be installed. The initial difficulty was one which could and should have been so easily resolved. Even the car manufacturer offered to post grab handles to the car scheme.

The two community cars are advertised as mobility friendly and have wheel chair and ramp access. However some of us do not require wheelchair. Furthermore a grab handle is all we need to retain a degree of independent control. In some instances wheelchair access only, can add unnecessary stress.

We in Pontarddulais are fortunate in that we have such a service. Not all communities are so served. If one of the lasting lessons of this unfortunate lengthy episode is to be taken onboard then it has to be at the level prior to funding being granted. Information gleaned by me included 'inspection of the vehicles was extensive' (Welsh Assembly) Oops inspector someone has never been witness to a disabled person make use of grab handles.

Maggie Macleod (no prefix)

I could cry just received a letter via AM office which does not help me move forward. Can anyone understand my helplessness? Need to attend doctor's surgery for check up on my thyroxin level blood sugar Can and blood pressure. My blood pressure reading at the moment would not be low! I received a letter via AM office (July), last paragraph reads as follows -A new vehicle is to be purchased by the car scheme by the end of this year and will need to be suitable for all users of the service. Therefore it will have to have a grab rail in order to adhere to the guidelines for accessibility or else future funding will be effected. Heaven forbid that should be so. If someone would only listen no need for new car just install grab handle. The excuse made from the car scheme - a grab handle would interfere with the airbag. The roof is not the only spot a grab handle can be fitted. I bought and offered two pieces of equipment which is an aid for older people to get in and out of vehicles. I could cry. I want a little of independent living, to discuss with my physician, to visit a social place where people gather for coffee etc .I shop online needs must. Runs a poor second to an outing. Although by having two hips and two knees in need of replacing long excursions are not possible.

EDWINA HART AM
National Assembly Member for Gower

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

OurRef: EH.tr.McCleod.7.14

08/07/2014

Dear Ms McLeod

Accessibility to Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme

Mrs Hart has asked me to write to you with information regarding the issues you raised in relation to accessibility to Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme.

Mrs Hart understands that the previous vehicle used by the scheme was replaced by the vehicle that you have not been able to use as it has not got a grab rail. Mrs Hart has been advised that a new vehicle is to be purchased this year by Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme and that the vehicle should have an appropriate grab handle. Council officials have advised the Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme that vehicles need to be appropriate to the needs of the users and that if appropriate vehicles are not used then there could be funding implications for the car scheme in the future. Local Authorities need to take full account of the provisions contained in the Equality Act 2010 and all associated regulations and guidance regarding the accessibility of vehicles to disabled people when awarding grants.

Local authorities should seek to promote accessibility through the provision of more accessible vehicles and to pay particular attention to vehicle standards that meets the needs of people with impaired mobility. While, there is currently no universal requirement for community transport providers to be part of a quality assurance scheme or for their drivers to undertake disability awareness training as part of their Certificate of Professional Competence. Mrs Hart is aware that The Community Transport Association offers members Driver Certificate of Professional Competence Training. As part of that programme, the CTA offers a course counting towards training focusing on safe transportation of people with disabilities on small passenger carrying vehicles.

The CTA also operates a charter mark scheme. The Standards have been written to confirm that organisations gaining the award are working in accordance with legislation and best practice within the voluntary sector. Vehicles operated by the organisation are assessed as part of the quality charter mark scheme.

Welsh Government officials are looking at proposals to strengthen the guidance of local authorities and eligibility criteria on which awards to Community Transport Organisations is made.

I trust that this information is of interest to you. To recap, a new vehicle is to be purchased by the car scheme this year and it will need to be suitable for all users of the service. Therefore it will have to have a grab rail in order to adhere to the guidelines for accessibility or else future funding will be effected.

I will keep your name and address on file and may send you information on matters that might be of interest to you. However, please contact my office if you would prefer me not to do so.

Contact: Thomas Rees Office Assistant for Edwina Hart AM

We

Transcript of email received at 16.40 10th November 2014

Subject Community Car scheme

Reference number 14 11 1 0 000021

Subject Reasonable Adjustment Duty

Dear Maggie Macleod

As promised in our call we discussed an issue where you are at a disadvantage when using pont ar
community car scheme. It appears that the passenger seat does not have a support
handle. As you suffer mobility issues this places you at a substantial disadvantage compared to a
person without your condition.

Disability is one of the 9 protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act a
disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long term and
adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out everyday activities. Substantial would mean
anything more than minor or trivial, long term would mean that the condition has lasted at least a
year or is looking to last that long. And everyday activities would be things such as making food,
walking or communicating with others.

Under the Equality Act a service provider has a participatory duty to make reasonable adjustments
to eliminate any disadvantages had by a disabled service user. If the lack of an auxiliary aid or
physical feature is what places you at a disadvantage, the duty would be triggered and should
include making the necessary change to eliminate the disadvantage that you are faced with.

The only occasion where a service provider can justify not making an adjustment would be if they
can successfully show why the request is unreasonable. This may be the case if the adjustments
that you ask for is something that the service can not reasonably access.

I hope this is useful information to support the letter that you are sending to your AM. Please do not
hesitate to return to us further for further advice or to update us on your progress.

Regards

Equality Advisory Support Services

EDWINA HART AM
National Assembly Member for Gower

A.210
Bae Caerdydd
Caerdydd
CF99 1NA

A.210
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA



Cynulliad National
Cenedlaethol Assembly for
Cymru Wales

Our Ref:EH.rj.McLeod.M.11.14.3.

19 November 2014

Dear Ms McCleod,

Re: Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme

I write to acknowledge receipt and thank you for your letter dated 10 November 2014. I can confirm your understanding of our conversation at the surgery on Friday 7 November 2014; in that during a recent discussion with a representative of Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme a member of my staff was told that the PCC would not be changing its vehicle/vehicles by the end of this year. I can also tell you that officials in my ministerial department will be drawing up and issuing new guidance for community car schemes and accessibility/

Yours sincerely

Edwina Hart AM

I will keep your name and address on file and may send you information on matters that might be of interest to you. However, please contact my office if you would prefer me not to do so.

Contact: Rosemary Jones, Office Manager for Edwina Hart

v



Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL

Adeiladau Cambrian
Sgwar Mount Stuart
Caerdydd CF10 5FL

18 November 2014

Our Reference: 201400809

Dear Maggie

As we discussed during our conversation today, in order to raise the issue you've raised with bodies such as the Welsh Government and Swansea Council, I may need to show that I have your explicit consent to act on your behalf. If you could therefore sign the enclosed consent form and return it to me in the envelope provided, I would be grateful.

As soon as I've had the opportunity to make enquiries on your behalf, I will contact you again to discuss these matters further.

Thank you once again for raising this issue with the Commissioner's office.

Yours sincerely

Tomos Jones

Case Worker – Protection and Scrutiny Team

Older People's Commissioner for Wales





Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL

Adeiladau Cambrian
Sgwar Mount Stuart
Caerdydd CF10 5FL

02 December 2014

Our Reference: 201400809

Dear Maggie

Please find enclosed a copy of the letter which I have today sent to the Pontarddulais & District Community Car Scheme.

Once I receive a response to my letter, I will contact you again to discuss the issues further.

In the meantime, if you have any additional queries; please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

Tomos Jones

Case Worker – Protection and Scrutiny Team

Older People's Commissioner for Wales





Pontarddulais & District
Community Car Scheme
The Old Clinic
Dulais Road
Pontarddulais
Swansea
SA4 8RH

Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL
Adeiladau Cambrian
Sgwar Mount Stuart
Caerdydd CF10 5FL

02 December 2014

Our Reference: 201400809

To whom it may concern

I am writing on behalf of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales; who is tasked within law for ensuring that the rights of older people in Wales are respected.

The Commissioner's office has recently been contacted by an individual who wishes to make use of the Pontarddulais & District Community Car Scheme, but has been unable to do so as the cars used aren't adapted to meet the needs of their disability. Being able to access the scheme in this instance would be a real benefit as it would not only allow them to live a more social and outgoing life, but to also attend medical appointments which can be of an urgent nature.

I'm in no doubt that the community car scheme is a valuable asset to those who use it, and that the volunteers who give their time to this service can only be commended. However, the Equality Act places a duty on service providers to make reasonable adjustments which would eliminate any disadvantages that could prevent a disabled person from accessing the service. I understand that in this instance it is the lack of a suitable grab-handle which is preventing access to the cars used, and it is these sorts of limitations which the Equality Act seeks to address.





Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL

Adeiladau Cambrian
Sgwar Mount Stuart
Caerdydd CF10 5FL

02 February 2015

Our Reference: 201400809

Dear Maggie

I'm writing following our previous telephone conversation. As I explained at the time, it was my intention to discuss the issues you'd raised with Disability Wales to try and clarify how the Equality Act 2010 applies in this circumstance. I have now had the opportunity to speak with Disabilities Wales, and I have also discussed the matter with the Equality Advisory Service. During these conversations, I discussed your circumstances, the nature of the car scheme, and the actions taken by Mr Richards of the Community Car Scheme in exploring these issues.

I was informed that the fact that the Car Scheme does already offer a fully adapted car would in most likelihood place them in compliance with the Equality Act. Whilst there is a duty under the Act to anticipate the needs of service users with protected characteristics, there is some flexibility within this and the Act recognises that not all needs can be anticipated. Additionally, I was informed that the actions taken by Mr Richards in discussing the possibility of installing grab handles with the car's manufacturers, and the obstruction this might cause for the airbags, could be justified in itself as a reason not to install the handles.

I realise that this information will be disappointing to you, and it is of course frustrating that the car scheme is currently unable to install the adaptations which would allow you to make use of their service. I will therefore be writing a further letter to Mr Richards of the Community Car



Commissioner Sarah Rochira,
Cambrian Buildings,
Mount Stuart Square,
Butetown,
Cardiff CF10 5FL



24th April 2015

Dear Commissioner,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter received by me in the month of July 2014. I would have hoped that the letter would mean that at last I could make use of the community cars for this town and surrounds. One of your staff handled the 'the case'. However this was not to be because of a getout provided for in the wording of the discrimination act of 2011.

I have repeatedly attempted to state that a wheelchair and ramp are not helpful for me, in fact to attempt to use these devices would add to my discomfort and stress because of the multiple health conditions. Not only for would my needs should be considered also the wellbeing of the voluntary drivers of the vehicles who are themselves elderly. If commercial taxis are, by law compelled to have grab handles then the same criteria should be met by a community taxis service.

In two months time I will have reached the age of seventy seven, *and dislike that I am housebound for the want of a solution. I have repeatedly tried to make of a remedy, firstly by offering to pay for the installation of grab handles, then by purchasing enablers which allows for car access for the infirm and elderly. Advancing technology has allowed that I can shop online and therefore extends the time I can spend in independent living.*

We the user pay for the service, others have mentioned the lack of grab handles but have not had to be so reliant on the service as myself. In two weeks time to go to the polls to use our democratic right to vote, I wish to do just that and not by proxy, in person and for the present the only means I have to do that is to order a commercial taxi and for the taxi to wait until I have placed my X to transport me home.

I would like to believe that through the medium of your office I will have a solution that befits the needs of persons such as myself. Yes I am now becoming increasingly frustrated and angered despite my numerous pleas to organizations and Bodys listed as helpers in such circumstances.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maggie Macleod".

MAGGIE Macleod (no prefix)



BYRON DAVIES
Member of Parliament for Gower

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA



9 June 2015
Our Ref: ZA14093

Dear Ms McCloud,

PONTARDDULAIS COMMUNITY CAR SERVICE

I refer to your recent enquiry to these offices regarding the above service.

As I understand, although one of the cars is fitted for wheelchair users, you feel that this is inadequate for your purposes. You felt that a 'grab' bar would be better suited.

Unfortunately, modern cars now have airbags in the front passenger's position and the placing of a 'grab bar' on the front panel would be contrary to Health and Safety Regulations.

The opportunity to use the wheelchair facility to access the vehicle and allow you to enjoy life outside your home, is still open to you. You would not need to use a wheelchair in the street, but purely for access purposes.

I trust this information is of assistance to you. If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

H. Byron Davies
Member of Parliament for Gower

31st Aug ust 2015

The search for a grab handle and escape from the 24/7 house confinement. One would
... that going to source would be an easy route to a solution. one would think!
... it could be very close to a solution but for the inability of a Giant car
manufacturer to join the dots. Just because something is not done ie grab handles
fitted to Renault Kangoo range which includes the model Lic. no. CU 11 EPE used by
the local community car scheme, does not mean an adjustment should be excluded. A
car service workshop in Cardiff has indicated they could do the work for the sum of
£200 and yes I would willingly pay said sum to have the independence of movement.
... When I made the short journey to take the kittens to a vet the part of the trip that
was stimulating, enjoyable was looking out on building and places which I would
have previously ignored as being drab. My first outing in five months.

So despite contact with two of Renault employees I failed to penetrate the its not done
and therefore cannot be done. A car repair unit in Llanelli is prepared to do the work
at the princely sum of £35 I have to supply grab handle, To be or not to be that's the
rub. I can view Renault grab handles for sale via e-bay but hesitate to make an offer :
would need someone far more savvy than me on the technical of what's what.

I had contacted one of the persons involved in the community car scheme in the late
autumn of last year and I was to led to believe that a new car would be bought in
January which to quote 'I can assure will have a grab handle'. I waited until mid
January to renew contact with this person only for my freedom hopes to be dashed -
no money...

I would suggest it is not no money, it is lack of Will.

Mrs M Macleod



Date - 11th February 2016

Your reference - P-04-678.

Dear Mrs Macleod,

I have been requested to write to you by the Public Transport Division of the Welsh Government regarding your concerns raised with the National Assembly for Wales petitions committee.

Firstly, in order to fully address your concerns outlined in the petition, I will outline the position with regards to community car schemes which operate across the whole of the UK.

Currently the legal basis for the operation of community car schemes is under car sharing legislation as set down Public Passenger Vehicle Act of 1981, Section 1 (4) (a) (b). As you are aware this means that community car schemes are outside the scope of the Private Hire / Taxi Licensing regimes. Across the UK community car schemes operate differently, however what they all have in common is that they must be run on a not-for-profit basis and must only use volunteer car drivers. By far the majority of these schemes are run by volunteers using their own cars. The volunteers receive mileage reimbursement but this must only cover the vehicle's operating costs (it cannot include other costs such as drivers wages or office overheads). It is illegal for the schemes to charge additional overheads as they would no longer be within scope of car sharing legislation. Many community car schemes do not get any funding and are run entirely by volunteers.

For many older people community car schemes provide a lifeline and as such we feel that the legislative framework under which it operators

should be protected. If the legislation was to change those schemes that rely on volunteers using their own cars would cease to exist. Thousands of vulnerable and isolated people across the UK, especially in rural areas, would be left without access to any transport. Nonetheless in response to your concerns I assure you that CTA encourages all community car schemes, as a matter of best practice, to seek solutions to ensure accessibility needs are met as far as possible.

Secondly, I was asked to investigate your specific complaint which was with regards to a scheme which receives funding from the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG). The BSSG funding is provided by the Welsh Government and administered through local authorities. As result of the funding it receives the scheme must take "*... full account of the provisions contained in the Equality Act 2010 and all associated regulations and guidance regarding the accessibility of vehicles to people with disabilities*".

Further investigations made me aware that the specific scheme to which you were referring was Pontarddulais Community Car Scheme, which is a scheme that purchases and uses its own cars. I therefore investigated your specific complaint and summarise my findings as follows:-

- Pontarddulais car scheme registered a request from you for the instalment of a grab handle into the car to help you get in and out.
- The scheme states that following approaches to three dealerships (from which the vehicles were purchased) and Allied Mobility they came to the conclusion that they could not fit grab handles in any of their vehicles. The scheme also states they were informed that installing a grab handle retrospectively could potentially be dangerous and could lead to the car scheme being liable if an accident was to occur.
- You raised your complaint to City and County of Swansea (who administer the BSSG funding). As a result a local authority officer informed Pontarddulais car scheme that they must ensure they are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. The officer informed them that if the scheme did not comply with your accessibility requirements then they risked the withdrawal of their funding.
- In December 2015 Pontarddulais car scheme purchased a new, four seat, accessible car (a Citron Berlingo) from GM Coachwork. This new car has two grab handles to help passengers get into the car and also has an integrated step to assist people. The scheme states they have informed you of the new developments and you should have also received information as to when the car is available as well as booking information.

As a result of my investigation I can conclude that Pontarddulais Car Scheme is now fully compliant with the terms and conditions of the BSSG funding. It could be the case that your petition, which was received on the 21st September 2015, was superseded by the purchase of the new vehicle. I therefore hope you feel that your complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with and that the accessibility issues have been duly resolved. Although I acknowledge that it has taken a long time to bring this matter to conclusion for which I would like to express my apologies.

If you have any further difficulties or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely



Siân Louise Summers-Rees
CTA Director for Wales

cc. William Powell AM, Chair of Petitions Committee, committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

Owen Williams-Jones, Public Transport Division, Welsh Government, Owen.Jones-Williams@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Agenda Item 2.8

P-04-679 Remove the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

This petition was submitted by Jago Lewis, having collected 378 signatures.

Text of the Petition

At a time when young people are told that they must excel in core curriculum subjects such as English, Maths and Science the Welsh Baccalaureate takes up time that can be used to concentrate on these areas. The Welsh Baccalaureate is a pointless qualification that serves no real purpose to a student's future. The Welsh Baccalaureate qualification could easily be removed or replaced by a citizenship course. The removal of Welsh Baccalaureate could also help improve grades as it would allow students to focus on real GCSE's and A Levels and will relieve students of added pressure.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Islwyn
- South Wales East

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P—04-679
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00096/16
William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk
seneddpetitions@assembly.wales

26 January 2016

Dear William

Thank you for your letter dated 19 January concerning a petition for the removal of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification.

The new Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification was rolled out for first teaching in September 2015 following a wide consultation with stakeholders including universities. This followed a comprehensive Review of Qualifications for 14-19 year olds in Wales, which made 42 recommendations for improving the qualifications system. The review was based on a large body of evidence and on discussions with stakeholders and experts from across the UK and beyond. The changes that have been made to the Welsh Baccalaureate are in line with these recommendations, and will deliver a high quality and well respected qualification.

I firmly believe that the new and more rigorous Welsh Baccalaureate is a qualification that all learners will benefit from studying, through its focus on the development of valuable life skills that will help learners to progress to further/higher education or to secure employment.

I would like to see the Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate with all its benefits becoming universally adopted across Wales by 2020 although it is not compulsory for Post 16 learners.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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 new Welsh Baccalaureate with the fully graded A* to E Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate at its heart will affect university entrance for 2017 entry. Universities are currently considering their positions for 2017 and the information will be in their prospectuses and websites in the early spring of 2016. Early indications are very positive with the majority of universities prepared to accept the new Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate and to treat it as an 'A' level for entry requirements purposes. I am also very pleased by the recent decision of Cambridge University to also include it, as appropriate, in their offers for 2017 entry.

I hope that you find this information helpful in consideration of the petition.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis'.

Huw Lewis AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau

Minister for Education and Skills

Agenda Item 3.1

P-04-658 – The Brimmon Oak

This petition was submitted by Mervyn Lloyd Jones and Rob McBride, having collected 4,730 signatures.

Text of Petition

We, the undersigned, call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to adhere to the recommendations of the appointed arboricultural specialist's report that it commissioned as part of the environmental assessment for the much needed A483 Newtown bypass.

This would result in the preservation of one of the most significant 'Natural Monuments' of Montgomeryshire, whilst facilitating the economic revival of the County Town. People from Montgomeryshire, across Wales and indeed the wider world are aware that sustainability has always been the 'central organising principle' of the Welsh Government since the National Assembly was created in 1999.

The safeguarding of the Brimmon Oak as part of the historic A483 Newtown Bypass will be a demonstration of the Welsh Government's commitment to preserving our birth right for the Wellbeing of Future Generations.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref p-04-658
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00327/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

01 February 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 21 January regarding petition P-04-658 to safeguard the Brimmon Oak in relation to the A483 Newtown bypass.

We are aware of the concerns regarding the Brimmon Oak and this was discussed in detail at the Public Local Inquiry. The Inspector considered the veteran tree would not be under threat from the construction of the scheme but care in the detail of design and supervision of the works near the veteran oak is essential.

The Inspector accepted the Welsh Government's proposal to adjust the carriageway away from the tree and only carry out minimal work within the 15 metre tree root protection zone, as recommended by arboricultural specialists and British Standards.

I can assure you that care will be taken in the detailed design and supervision of the works near this tree.

Edwina Hart

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.edwina.Hart@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

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.

Senedd Petitions Committee
Chamber and Committee Service
National Assembly for Wales

Monday 8th February 2016

Dear Sirs

**RE: PETITIONS COMMITTEE 23.02.16
PETITION SUBMITTED BY MR MERVYN LLOYD JONES
THE BRIMMON OAK TREE
A483/A489 NEWTOWN BYPASS**

With regard to the above, I am writing with additional information that I wish to be considered at the petition committee meeting on the 23rd February 2016.

Whilst I appreciate that the Welsh Assembly Government have stated that they will adjust the carriageway away from the tree and only carry out minimal work within the 15 metre tree root protection zone, I do not feel that this is satisfactory or that the tree will be suitably safeguarded.

The Welsh Government report on the tree carried out by Jerry Ross (B.Sc. F.Arbor.A Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant) proposed the use of a 'geotextile reinforced solution' to ensure any compacting ground works were moved further away from the tree. This would obviously be of a certain benefit but I do not feel that the distance is sufficient and that the tree could still be endangered. The proposed solution suggested that the edge of the carriageway would be 15.31 metres from the centre of the tree. However, the kerb line would only be 14.31 metres from the centre of the tree and the toe of the earthworks would be 11.06 metres away. I understand that there was a suggestion not to have any soil stripping or ground excavation works but from the diagram included with the report (attached for your reference), even the subbase of the road would be less than 14 metres from the tree.

To add to this, the proposed fence line is a mere 5 to 6 metres from the tree. The fencing along the scheme is going to be badger proof fencing which requires a mesh to be buried into the ground. With the fence only being 5 to 6 metres from the centre of the tree, a critical part of the root system will be endangered.

Prior to the Public Inquiry for the proposed scheme, we had been informed that a tree survey had been undertaken by the WAG team. However, during the duration of the Inquiry it came to our attention that a sufficient report had not been carried out and I was requested to allow them access on to my land just 2 days before the end of the inquiry to allow for a suitable survey to be undertaken. I truly feel that no attention had been paid to the tree prior to this and feel the Inspector should have had this important information at an earlier stage.

During the inquiry, it was also mentioned that the tree had no designations or protection. However, the tree was registered with the Woodland Trust in 2009 as an 'ancient tree'. Local planning authorities would have an obligation to protect this and I feel that the Welsh Government should also do the same.

As part of the inquiry process, I had instructed the land agent acting on my behalf to prepare and submit an alternative route. The route proposed simply moved the carriageway no more than 20 metres north and consequently further away from the tree. There was no major realignment to the initial route. The WAG simply asked for no more than a sketch map of our alternative route and as we are not structural engineers, that is what was submitted. We were of course open to negotiation and had a realistic approach that a compromise could have been met. However, it would appear the design team took a very literal approach to our proposal and rejected it on the grounds of cost. I would have been very happy to discuss a suitable alternative with the designers. The ground the other side of the road is in my ownership so no other parties would have been affected. Even a realignment of 10 metres north would save this veteran oak tree for generations to come. I understand the restrictions of the gas pipe running to the north of the scheme but I fully believe that there is room to move the carriageway in order to protect the tree.

As I hope you can understand, I am by no means opposed to the bypass. Nevertheless, I am passionate that I protect the landscape that my family have farmed for generations. My family have been the caretakers of this farm, and the tree, since the 1600's and as the current occupier of the land, I intend to carry on protecting it for the future generations. The Brimmon Oak is an integral and stunning feature of the local landscape and I feel that the proposed alignment of the new bypass will put the tree in serious jeopardy. On a scheme that is approximately 5.6 kilometres long, I see moving the carriageway northbound by a matter of a few metres to be a rather minimal request with potentially minimal implications.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to deliberate the petition and this additional documentation from myself.

Yours faithfully

Mervyn Lloyd Jones

Enc.

The Brimmon Oak

The Brimmon Oak, Lower Brimmon Farm, Newtown, Powys

We, the undersigned, call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to adhere to the recommendations of the appointed arboricultural specialist's report that it commissioned as part of the environmental assessment for the much needed A483 Newtown bypass.

This would result in the preservation of one of the most significant 'Natural Monuments' of Montgomeryshire, whilst facilitating the economic revival of the County Town. People from Montgomeryshire, across Wales and indeed the wider world are aware that sustainability has always been the 'central organising principle' of the Welsh Government since the National Assembly was created in 1999.

The safeguarding of the Brimmon Oak as part of the historic A483 Newtown Bypass will be a demonstration of the Welsh Government's commitment to preserving our birth right for the Wellbeing of Future Generations.

Dear Sirs,

With regards to the above joint petition (P-04-658) that was submitted to the WAG petitions committee on 2nd October 2015 and the recent reply from Edwina Harts office. (EH/00327/16)

I feel that it needs further clarification with regards to the 15 Metre tree root protection zone.

Where the wording is...

*The Inspector accepted the Welsh Govt's **proposal** to adjust the carriageway away from the tree and only carry out minimal work within the 15 metre tree root protection zone, as recommended by arboricultural specialists and British Standards. ...*

Is this a NEW proposal that was put to the inspector since the petition was launched?

Minimal work within the 15M RPZ:

I am also very concerned about the phrase 'minimal work' and what this means exactly? We would be very reluctant to have any work carried out within a 15 metre distance form the tree.

Badger proof fencing:

I am aware that a Badger proof fence is needed along the whole length of the bypass and we would have to have this fence taken well away from the 15 m mark as it would entail deep excavation which could if carried out closer damage the trees roots.

Soil spills & Heavy Plant:

It would be very desirable to ensure that there would be no soil heaps or heavy plant vehicles placed within a distance of say 25 metres or more from the tree, thus avoiding any chance of compaction of the roots/soils nearby. This again would need planning and close supervision once construction starts.

Secure fencing:

Needs to be of a more permanent construction than plain Heras fencing which can be moved. It needs to be permanent and have a locked access with keys held by land owner Mervyn Lloyd Jones

Water flow & Drainage:

Minimal disturbance and alteration to water flows need to be considered, which I am hoping they have been.

As has been stated on many occasions there is plenty of scope for the bypass to be slightly moved north of the tree and this presents the opportunity for positive reporting aswell as positive outcome for the tree and development.

Yours faithfully, Rob McBride

Page 84

Trees are complex living organisms, which are susceptible to damage from a wide range of physical agents or activities. Trees do not heal, damage caused to a tree will remain for the rest of its life. Even minor damage may set up circumstances leading to serious long term decay (NJUG, 2007).

Existing trees are an important factor on construction sites, whether on or near the working areas, and trees are a material consideration in the UK planning system. This British Standard (BS 5837:2012) is intended to assist decision-making with regard to existing and proposed trees in the context of design, demolition and construction. Root systems, stems and canopies, with allowance for future movement and growth, need to be taken into account in all projects, including those that do not require planning permission (BSI, 2012).

Where tree retention or planting is proposed in conjunction with nearby construction, the objective should be to achieve a harmonious relationship between trees and structures that can be sustained in the long term. The good practice recommended in this British Standard (BS 5837:2012) is intended to assist in achieving this objective (BSI, 2012).

The tree survey might identify the presence of veteran trees on the site. The implications of their presence on the use of the surrounding land should be assessed at the earliest possible stage of the design process. Where such trees are to be retained, particular care should be taken in the design to accommodate them in a setting that aids their long-term retention (BSI, 2012). Whilst veteran trees typically provide a range of niche habitats, they are especially valuable if ancient, due to their scarcity and high habitat values for associated species of fungi, lichens and saproxylic invertebrates, including some which are rare or endangered and occur only where such trees have been continuously present for centuries. Particular care is needed regarding the retention of large, mature, over-mature or veteran trees which become enclosed within the new development. Where such trees are retained, adequate space should be allowed for their long-term physical retention and future maintenance. (BSI, 2012).

The Brimmon Oak is a veteran/ ancient tree with a very high historical and cultural value. From its girth the tree is estimated to be 500 years old. In accordance with British Standard 5837:2012, the Brimmon Oak is categorised as an 'A3' tree, which according to the Standard is "Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)" (BSI, 2012). British Standard 5837 states that "The constraints imposed by trees, both above and below ground should inform the site layout design" and that "Certain trees are of such importance and sensitivity as to be major constraints on development or to justify its substantial modification" (BSI, 2012). I would suggest that a 500-year-old tree (e.g. The Brimmon Oak) that is historically and culturally important to not just Wales, but also internationally, deserves to be accorded protection that is recognised as best practice in the UK e.g. British Standard 5837:2012.

As trees can affect and be affected by many aspects of site operations, during the conception and design process the project arboriculturist should be involved in ongoing review of layout, architectural, engineering and landscape drawings. All members of the design team should be made aware of the requirements for the successful retention of the retained trees and should make provision for these throughout the development process (BSI, 2012). This last paragraph is

taken directly from BS 5837:2012. It is disconcerting that for such an important tree, that the provision for the protection of the Brimmon Oak tree through the planning process including the inquiry has not happened and even now, after the Welsh Government has been made aware of the issues surrounding the Brimmon Oak tree through the submission of the petition, the tree is threatened by proposed works within the trees Root Protection Area (RPA).

A Root Protection Area (RPA) is a layout design tool indicating the minimum area around a tree deemed to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability, and where the protection of the roots and soil structure is treated as a priority (BSI, 2012). Note that I have highlighted the word minimum and protection of roots and soil structure. The British Standard recognises that tree roots very often extend much further than the RPA, but the RPA is the minimum area to be protected, not the maximum area. The Ancient Tree Forum, a charitable organisation comprised of the UK's leading experts in the management and protection of ancient and veteran tree, actually recommends a larger RPA than BS 5837:2012 for ancient and veteran trees, as old trees are much more susceptible to changes in their rooting environment than younger trees, including mature trees. I use the analogy that younger humans are more able to resist and cope with diseases and conditions than older people. The BS 5837:2012 recommends that trees RPAs are based on the size of the stem diameter multiplied by twelve, whilst specialist experts recommend that for ancient and veteran trees that the RPA is increased by three, resulting in a RPA of fifteen times the stem diameter.

Contrary to popular belief, the root system of a tree is not a mirror image of the branches, nor is there usually a 'tap root'. The majority of the root system of any tree is in the surface 600mm of soil, extending radially in any direction for distances frequently in excess of the tree's height. Excavation or other works within this area are liable to damage the roots (NJUG, 2007). Even roots less than 10mm in diameter may be serving the fine roots over a wide area. The larger the root severed, the greater the impact on the tree (NJUG, 2007).

Guidance for establishing and enforcing RPAs for trees on construction sites, as opposed to agricultural land, is given in British Standard 5837:2012). This represents a compromise, as construction would generally not be practicable if the entire rooting area of every tree were to be protected. There is, however, often scope for providing a larger RPA than would normally be provided under BS 5837. A radius of 15 times the stem diameter at breast height, or five metres beyond the edge of the tree's canopy, whichever is the greater, is recommended. The boundaries of an RPA for one or more veteran trees on a construction site should be decided according to the principle of erring on the side of caution. The rationale is that veteran trees have special value and are particularly vulnerable to the disturbance that inevitably results from a fundamental change of land use, such as construction (Lonsdale, D (Ed), 2013).

The Welsh Government statement on the on the effects of the A483/A489 Newtown Bypass on the ancient/ veteran Brimmon Oak includes the following statements from the projects arboriculturist Jerry Ross "Given the age of the tree and the results of the ground penetrating radar survey it is recommended that the full 15m root protection area is applied. The approach proposed above does not fully comply with this maximum distance for a root protection area but there

is some scope within the Scheme fenceline, as incorporated in the draft Orders, to marginally move the carriageway alignment further from the tree by approximately 1.2m by modifying the earthworks slopes to the north and south of the carriageway, therefore ensuring the full 15m root protection zone as stated in BS5837:2012 can be achieved” (Welsh Government, 2016). The revised plans, which reduces the encroachment of the earthworks within the tree’s minimum RPA of 15 m to 12.26 m is commented on by the project’s arboriculturist, Jerry Ross, who states that “I should emphasise that in view of the importance of this individual tree, my strong inclination would be to err on the side of caution by maintaining a complete construction exclusion zone of 15 metres. However, provided the implementation of the above proposals can be carried out under the terms of a detailed arboricultural method statement that will ensure that the operations required within the tree's nominal root protection area (RPA) of 15 metres can be accomplished with minimal impact on the rooting environment, it is my opinion that it is most unlikely that the well being of the veteran oak will be significantly affected”. It should be noted that project arboriculturist yet again wanted to keep the protection of the tree’s RPA to the minimum required by the British Standard and that he cannot discount that the wellbeing of the tree will not be significantly affected. This implies that the wellbeing of the tree will detrimentally affected and that significant harm cannot be 100% discounted.

The Welsh Government report shows an image of the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) image of the tree’s root system. It shows significant roots extending out to 14 m from the centre of the tree’s stem. It does not show many roots extending much further than this. However, the Welsh Government report does not give the whole picture with regards to GPR. Smaller roots of between 1 cm (www.treeradar.com) and 5 cm (www.treeradar.co.uk) are not picked up by GPR and for soils with a high clay content near the ground surface, GPR is not very effective (www.treeradar.com). Therefore, it would be expected that smaller feeder roots, which are essential for life, will extend beyond 14 m and in high probability, even further than the BS 5837:2012 15 m RPA.

Raising of soil levels within trees RPAs more often than not (depending on soil type) will lead to compaction damage to the underlying soil. Tree roots take in oxygen and dispose of carbon dioxide. This process is called the gas exchange process and it is essential for trees and other plants. When soil is compacted, for example by additional soil or other materials being placed over them, this usually causes soil compaction. Soil compaction prevents the gas exchange process and results in the death of affected roots, which eventually can lead to tree death or the tree blowing over in high winds. A recent high profile example of this is the Pontfadog Oak, which was one of the oldest oaks in Britain. This tree blew over, as a result of root death attributed to the compaction of the soil within its RPA. The Welsh Government report does mention compaction as being a result of the grade change in soil levels, however it does not say what the consequences are.

The revised proposed encroachment into the tree’s BS 5837:2012 RPA to the toe of the earthworks is 2.74 m and to the top of the earthworks is 1.99 m, with the larger incursion being the equivalent of 18% of the tree’s lateral RPA and to the

smaller encroachment being 13% of the lateral RPA in the direction of the road. Bearing in mind that the tree is highly likely to have feeder roots extending further than 15 m and that the minimum lateral BS 5837:2012 RPA length is 15 m, these encroachments will cause damage to the tree. Also bearing in mind the age of the tree and its inability to respond to damage and changes in its root environment, as with any ancient tree, I predict that not adhering to the British Standard RPA will be damaging to the tree. I cannot discount that this damage will not result in the tree's demise in the long term.

One item that is referenced in the Welsh Government report, but which has not been properly explained, despite requests for information on this, is the proposed installation of a fence even closer to the tree's stem than the other works already described. There is potential for significant harm to the tree's root system from installing a fence within the tree's RPA, from loss of roots from digging post holes to loss of an entire root system beyond the fence, if the fence is dug into the ground, such as is common with fencing used to prevent badgers from straying onto highways. I have grave concerns with regards to the proposed fence, especially so as no specification has been provided.

To summarise, the proposed ground works within the Brimmon Oak's Root Protection Area is in breach of both the British Standard Institute and Ancient Tree Forums recommendations and is likely to result in damage to the tree that could result in its long term decline and eventual demise. Therefore we urge the Welsh Government to ask its contractors to redesign the bypass so that the tree is protected by a root protection area of at least 15 m when measured from the centre of the tree's stem.

References

NJUG, 2007. Volume 4 - NJUG Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus. National Joint Utilities Group.

Lonsdale, D (Ed), 2013. Ancient and other Veteran Trees: Further Guidance on Management. Ancient Tree Forum/ Tree Council/ Woodland Trust.

BSI, 2012. Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations. The British Standards Institute.

Welsh Government, 2016. Welsh Government Statement on: Veteran Oak Tree, Lower Brimmon.

Moray Simpson M.Arbor.A, HND & HNC Arboriculture & Woodland Management, ND & NC Arboriculture

Professional Arboriculturist & Ancient Tree Forum Associate Board Member

09/02/2016

Note: I have assessed the Welsh Government report and have written this statement as an interested third party and as a volunteer. I have not received payment for doing so.

Please quote our reference when replying

Your Ref:
Our Ref: JN/AW/ New/Jon.R/1/CP



Date: 9th February 2016

Senedd Petitions Committee
Chamber and Committee Service
National Assembly for Wales

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Sirs

**RE: PETITIONS COMMITTEE 23RD FEBRUARY 2016
THE BRIMMON OAK TREE
A483/489 NEWTOWN BYPASS**

Please note that we act on behalf of the owners of Lower Brimmon Farm with regard to all matters relating to the Newtown Bypass.

As you are aware, Mr Mervyn Jones has passionately submitted a petition to the Petitions Committee with regard to the protection of an ancient oak tree on his land. The Brimmon Oak, as it has become known, is a veteran oak tree that forms a significant historic feature on what is currently a stunning landscape and has a long standing association with both the family, and the farm. Our client and his family before him, have cared for the land and tree since the 1600's and quite rightfully, Mr Jones wants to continue to protect the landscape for the future generations of the family and for the benefit of the local population.

I understand you are aware of the situation with regard to the alignment of the bypass and so I won't repeat any correspondence already submitted by Mr Jones. However, as part of the Inquiry, I was instructed to submit an alternative route proposal with the intention of safeguarding the Brimmon Oak. My proposal consisted of moving the carriageway northbound by no more than 20 metres.

During the Public Inquiry, and after a last minute tree report was undertaken by the Welsh Government, it was proposed that advanced geo-technical engineering would be a practicable solution to restrain the extent of the ground works required for the construction of the new road. It is suggested that the nearest edge of the compacted sub-base and top soil strip would be the recommended 15 metres from the tree (as suggested by BS 5837). However, it is highly likely that contractors will have to work in an area less than 15 metres from the tree and thus increasing the risk of damage to the root system. In addition to this, a boundary fence for the scheme would have to be installed at a distance of no more than 6 metres from the tree. It is proposed that the boundary fence will be mammal proof and require a mesh to be buried into the ground. I would imagine that this would have a detrimental impact to the root system within the root protection area.

The alternative route proposal that we submitted would remove any risk of the roots being damaged and would require no work or construction traffic within the root protection area. The inspector commented in his final report that "*The alternative would pose no threat of disturbance to the roots of the veteran oak*

103 Beatrice Street / Oswestry / Shropshire / SY11 1HL
Tel 01691 659658 Fax 01691 676144 Email oswestry@dmpropertyconsultants.com
www.dmpropertyconsultants.com

Davis Meade Property Consultants is the trading name of
Davis Meade Property Consultants Limited a company incorporated in England No. 6897243

Pack Page 89

Regulated by RICS

CHARTERED SURVEYORS / LAND AGENTS / AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS



whilst the scheme would need to be engineered to fully avoid conflict with the roots". I understand that reduced engineering would be required had our alternative been accepted.

The inspector went on to say that the alternative proposal would meet the scheme objectives.

It is with these points in mind that I strongly believe that the very minimal realignment of the carriageway to the north would remove any risk to this ancient part of the landscape. Given the scale of the scheme, I believe that the alternative proposal would be a negligible change to the proposed scheme and feel that the Welsh Government dismissed it without either negotiation or discussion with the landowner.

Moving the bypass to the north would have also had a tangible benefit to Lower Brimmon Farmhouse, which is one of the nearest residential properties to the bypass.

Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge this letter and I dearly hope that full consideration will be given to the benefit of protecting this ancient tree for the future.

Yours faithfully

James Neame

James Neame
Davis Meade Property Consultants Ltd

Agenda Item 3.2

P-04-565 Revive disused railway lines for leisure

Petition wording:

The Welsh Government should look turning the hundreds of miles of disused railway lines (axed under Beeching) into high quality cycle/walk ways. The lines cover the whole of Wales and this scheme would: encourage healthy activities and lifestyle; provide a safe way to travel for those who want a green alternative; provide safe cycling for children and encourage use for going to school, clubs etc; reduce traffic on our roads; boost Welsh tourism especially by cyclists and walkers; enable the establishment of a vast number of varied, small businesses along the routes – shops, B&B etc. Rural areas will benefit. The potential good for the health of the population of Wales and its economy is unlimited and the return in this investment can be understood before it even starts.

Petition raised by: Albert Fox

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 17 June 2014

Number of signatures : 14

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-565
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/05325/15

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

26 January 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 15 December 2015 regarding the Sustrans study on reopening disused railway tunnels.

Sustrans prepared two reports which were published on our website in December. They can be found at the following link:

<http://gov.wales/topics/transport/walking-cycling/activetravelact/implementation/?lang=en>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edwina Hart".

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.edwina.Hart@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

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

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

Agenda Item 3.3

P-04-416: North-South Rail Services

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to work with Arriva Trains to increase the number of direct express rail services between Holyhead and Cardiff.

Petition raised by: Neil Taylor

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 19



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-416
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/02831/15

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

2 July 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June enclosing the petitioner's further comments regarding North-South rail services.

The pattern of commuting services for North Wales is oriented towards travel eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening reflecting passenger demand. That said, there are commuting options available for passengers travelling in both directions.

We continue to invest in additional services and capacity for North Wales, which include benefits for commuters. Network Rail are due to complete the £44m North South Journey Time Reduction scheme this year which enable faster journeys between Cardiff and North Wales.

There have been a number of timetable enhancements in recent years that have also improved the overall provision of train capacity in North Wales. In relation to the additional capacity provided by the recent introduction of the loco-hauled services, this is not limited to those services alone but has also enabled longer trains to be deployed on fourteen further services by a related cascade of other rolling stock.

I understand that stakeholders will have aspirations for further enhancements to services. I will continue to consider these, but will of course have to be mindful of budgetary consideration and, increasingly, the shortage of suitable available trains currently available.

We are engaging with rail user groups about their views on further enhancements, particularly with relation to specifying the next Wales and Borders franchise and modernisation of the North Wales network.

Edwina Hart

P-04-416 North-South Rail Services – Petitioner to the Committee. 29.01.16

My position has not changed. People in north Wales need more than one direct express service to Cardiff. The more devolution we get the more all Wales meetings we have. The overwhelming majority are held in Cardiff. At present the normal service is made up of 3 stopping services tacked together being – north Wales coast, the marches and S E Wales to Cardiff.

What is need is an express service stopping main stations in north Wales plus Chester, Wrexham and Shrewsbury Times both ways need to allow people to attend meetings in Cardiff and return in a day without getting up losing hours of sleep.

Cofion Cynnes/Kind Regards

Neil Taylor

Agenda Item 3.4

P-04-486 Act Now and Help Save the High Street Shops

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to provide support for independent traders in our towns by extending the small Business Relief Scheme to a greater number of businesses.

We would like to see a scheme that is similar to the one operating in Scotland where commercial properties with a rateable value of up to £18,000 get relief of between 25% and 100% on a sliding scale.

We believe that the Welsh Government's decision to postpone the revaluation of businesses from 2015 to 2017 does not allow the impact of the economic downturn in the High Street to be reflected in the business rates.

Petition raised by: Keith Davies

Date petition first considered by Committee: 4 June 2013

Number of signatures: 12

P-04-486 Act Now and Help Save the High Street Shops- Petitioner to the Committee. 03.02.16

Petition Committee.

I would like to continue to pursue the Petition, as the problem on The High Street Shops has not been resolved. I have been waiting to see if there will be more help to the High Street Retailer. When the Issue of the Business Rates is resolved, I am hoping that part or all the Business Rates will stay with the local authority, which should give them a financial reason, to make sure the shops on the High Streets remains open.

Keith Davies

Petitioner

Agenda Item 3.5

P-04-363 Town Centre Improvement Scheme for Fishguard

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, request that the National Assembly supports the call on the Welsh Government to work with Pembrokeshire County Council to ensure that investment is made in a Town Centre Improvement Scheme for Fishguard, including pedestrian and traffic management measures. Such an Improvement Scheme must improve the viability and sustainability of the Town and make it fully accessible for all residents and visitors, including those with mobility and other disability needs.

Petition raised by: Councillor Bob Kilmister

Date petition first considered by Committee: 7 February 2012

Number of signatures: 1,042

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-363
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/02841/15

William Powell AM
Chair - petitions committee

SeneddPetitions@Assembly.Wales

2 July 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June regarding the petition for a town centre improvement scheme in Fishguard.

We are currently finalising projects to be taken forward this year and will be considering a project to change the existing parking layout at Golden Mile to provide a single coach drop off/ pick up point for day visitors to Fishguard. We are also working with the Fishguard and Goodwick Chamber of Trade and Tourism and Fishguard and Goodwick Town Council on their plans to visually enhance the town.

With regard to congestion in the centre of Fishguard, any scheme proposed for Chimneys Link will be led by Pembrokeshire County Council. The Council will also be responsible for ensuring that appropriate funding is in place for such a scheme to progress.

Edwina Hart

P-04-363 Town Centre Improvement Scheme for Fishguard – Petitioner to the Clerking Team. 04.02.16

I would like this petition to continue as so far nothing has been achieved.

The problem still exists and the petition is as relevant now as when it was presented.

Regards

Bob

Agenda Item 3.6

P-04-594 Cilmeri Community Council Appeal for The Prince Llywelyn Monument

Petition wording:

Due to the National importance of our Prince Llywelyn Monument we, the Community of Cilmeri call, on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- Install locational signage boards, incorporating a brown signage battlefield icon, to denote the historical significance of our village, on the A483 at both main road entrances to the village;
- Work in partnership with Powys County Council, Cilmeri Community Council and CADW to help maintain the famous monument, so that visitors can enjoy our national historical amenity in a safe and befitting environment;
- Help identify resources to implement, in a phased manner, the Lloyd Brown Interpretation Plan (January 2013), commissioned by CADW.

Additional Information:

The interpretation plan highlights the fact that Llywelyn was the last native Welsh Prince to fall in battle, marking the effective end of the powerful dynasty of Gwynedd, which played an important role in forging a sense of Welsh nationhood and identity.

Petitioner: Cilmeri Community Council

First considered by the Committee: 23 September 2014

Number of Signatures: 305

P-04-594 Cilmeri Community Council Appeal for the Prince Llywelyn Monument - Petitioner to the Clerking Team. 09.02.16

I am writing on behalf of Cilmeri Community Council to confirm that the council wishes to keep the petition live.

They are currently awaiting a date to meet with a representative of WG regarding additional signage for the monument.

Regards

Coralie Gittoes-Blower

Clerk to Cilmeri Community Council

Agenda Item 3.7

P-04-576 Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday During Term Time

Petition Wording

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to review the guidance to Local Authorities on head teachers being able to authorise absence for family holidays during term time. Many families from poor backgrounds can only afford to go on holiday during term time, as holidays are about 60% more expensive during the holiday period. Also, many families where parents work are unable to take time off during the school holidays. Holidays can be extremely educational, giving the children awareness of the world in which we live.

Petition raised by: Bethany Walpole-Wroe

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 15 July 2014

Number of signatures: 1008 – An associated e-petition has collected over 10,300 signatures.

P-04-606 Ensure schools exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 without interference or bias.

Petition wording

We ask the National Assembly for Wales to ensure that schools are free to exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 without interference from bodies such as regional educational consortia and local authorities and without threat of penalisation through school inspection, performance judgement and banding processes.

Local authorities in Wales and their consortia are recommending that schools do not exercise their statutory powers under the above legislation leaving more families exposed to the threat of penalty notices under the Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 than would have been otherwise. These recommendations are made on the basis that they can improve attainment despite the lack of evidence that absence of the type allowed under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 results in poorer attainment.

Currently schools in Wales can be penalised through inspection, performance judgement and school banding processes for authorising legitimate absences such as sickness, family holidays or other events or instances which enable families to participate fully in a normal, private family life.

These recommendations and processes bias schools against the authorisation of legitimate absence and make schools reluctant to exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010. This can damage the home/school relationship and child well-being. Where a family disagrees with a decision to refuse authorisation of absence on the grounds of equality, human rights

or child well-being there is no independent route of appeal. Where a family disregards a decision to refuse authorisation of absence the issue of a penalty notice and potential criminalisation can result. There is an economic impact on the Welsh tourism and leisure industry which provides employment and income to many of our families.

Additional Information

Regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 gives schools the discretionary power to authorise up to 10 days absence during a school year for family holidays and more than 10 days absence in exceptional circumstances.

Schools are being advised against exercising this power by their local authorities. They are feeling pressured to improve school attendance figures by Estyn, the education and training inspectorate for Wales, who can penalise them if attendance falls below a certain level.

The drive to improve attendance is based on an assumption that it will improve educational attainment. This is an over-simplification of a very complex issue. Attendance and attainment are linked but a causative relationship is not proven. Research shows that absence for family holidays does not affect attainment at primary school level, and a small degree of absence is unlikely to have any effect at secondary school level. ("A Profile of Pupil Absence, 2011, DfE").

A school's refusal to authorise an absence which is allowable under the law can seriously damage the home/school relationship, particularly if the family believe that the absence is important to their child's well-being and take their child out of school anyway. The family can receive a penalty notice (fine) or be criminalised.

There are many legitimate reasons why children and families need the flexibility to be absent from school during term time which include difficulty obtaining annual leave during school holidays, important family events, geographical remoteness from non-resident parents, grandparents and

extended family. Families employed in the Welsh tourism and leisure industry have felt a significant economic impact from the English term time holiday ban this year. The Good Childhood Report 2014 identified school as only ONE of the ten aspects of life with the greatest influence on child well-being. Family, home, finances, friends, health and choice were among the others.

Petitioner: Pembs Parents Want a Say / Rhieni Pembs eisiau cael dweud

First considered by the Committee: 9 December 2014

Number of Signatures: 812 electronic signatures

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-576 & P-04-606
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/00154/16

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

2 February 2016

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 27 January following the Petitions Committee's latest consideration on holidays in term time.

I am very grateful for the Committee's continued interest in ensuring that we maintain high levels of school attendance so that we give our children and young people the very best chance of achieving their full potential. I know you will agree it provides an essential foundation for improving learning and attainment.

Having received responses from all local authorities I am considering what further action might be required in light of our recent work with them. The additional information that you have passed on from the petitioners is helpful and we will of course bear it in mind when we are considering how we might strengthen arrangements for pupil attendance.

I should though take this opportunity to clarify a point of accuracy. The petitioner has made reference to persistent absence thresholds. The figures provided relate only to England. The persistent absence threshold in Wales is 20%. We all have a responsibility to ensure that guidance referred to is applicable to Wales. I'm sure you will agree that, on occasion, this is why some of the issues surrounding holidays in term time have arisen.

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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-04-576 – Allow Children in Wales to Have a Family Holiday During Term Time – Petitioner to the Clerking Team. 21.01.16

Dear all,

Firstly I wanted to thank you for your support with this petition to date. I am really impressed with the system and how much we have managed to achieve so far.

I understand that following this week's meeting, the petition is due to be closed. However, we have some concerns that the blanket ban policy is still in place in many areas, despite the Minister's assertions that only the head teacher should decide and that this should be done on a case-by-case basis. I have attached a letter received by parents at one school. I have also just received a message from someone else which says:

In the school that my children attend everyone gets a fine if they take them out for more than 5 days. At least 7 parent's that i know of have had fines in the last couple of months which is a lot as there are only 50 children at the school.

I asked whether they could request absence and the mother said:

Everyone asked for time off in a letter to the head teacher but everyone still got a fine. £60 per child per parent and as far as I'm aware this still stands in the school. But in the school a few miles away no one is getting a fine and I know children that have had 2 weeks of with no fine.

I don't yet know the extent of this situation, therefore I would very much appreciate more time to work that out.

Kind Regards,

Helen

PEMBROKESHIRE PARENTS WANT A SAY

pembspwas@gmail.com

William Powell AM
Chair – Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

27th January 2016

RE: P-04-606 Ensure schools exercise their statutory powers under regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010 without interference or bias.

Dear William,

Many thanks for the assistance of the Petitions Committee with the above petition.

We listened to the Committee discuss the petition on 19th January with interest. We understand that a decision was made to close the petition on the grounds that the subject of the petition had been dealt with and the current concerns raised on the topic in our letter to the Committee of 11th January were considered "related matters" or "secondary issues".

We are requesting that the petition remain open on the grounds that the potentially unlawful issue of FPNs for "regular non-attendance at school" is not a "secondary issue" and our concerns that fines may be issued unlawfully was clear from the start.

In our original petition text we stated:

"Where a family disregards a decision to refuse authorisation of absence the issue of a penalty notice and potential criminalisation can result."

In the additional information supplied with the petition we elaborated:

"A school's refusal to authorise an absence which is allowable under the law can seriously damage the home/school relationship, particularly if the family believe that the absence is important to their child's well-being and take their child out of school anyway. The family can receive a penalty notice (fine) or be criminalised. "

As we have discussed previously the costly nature of legal proceedings exclude the vast majority of Welsh families from seeking redress through our judicial system for FPNs which may have been issued unlawfully.

If the Petitions Committee cannot pursue these issues under the text of the current petition we would be very grateful for their advice regarding the most effective routes for families to take to address the series of concerns raised in our letter of 11th January 2016. Certainly the failure of systems which allowed local authorities to influence head teacher's against exercising their statutory powers for so long is a matter of grave concern and one which is likely to have ongoing and far reaching consequences.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Douglas
Pembrokeshire Parents Want A Say

Agenda Item 3.9

P-04-522 Asbestos in Schools

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put measures in place to ensure that parents and guardians of children across Wales can easily access information about the presence and management of asbestos in all school buildings.

Given the health risks associated with the presence of asbestos in public buildings, we believe parents and guardians across Wales have the right;

- to know if asbestos is located in their school;
- to know whether, where asbestos is present, it is being managed in line with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
- to access that information easily online

Petition raised by: Cenric Clement-Evans

Date Petition first considered by Committee: 10 December 2013

Number of signatures: 448

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/02220/15
William Powell AM
Assembly Member for mid and west Wales
Chair - Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff
CF99 1NA

22 December 2015

Dear William,

Following my attendance at the Petitions Committee on 24 November, I have been asked to clarify whether asbestos management in schools is included in governor training programmes, and provide further information on the membership of the Working Group for Wales including the draft terms of reference.

Asbestos training is not included in mandatory governor training. However, our Asbestos Management in Schools Guidance, which was published in May 2014, has been produced to ensure that head teachers, governors and other members of the school management team are aware of requirements in respect of asbestos management procedures and legislation.

The guidance includes a section on training requirements, which states that under the Regulations, information, instruction and training is required for anyone whose work could foreseeably expose them to asbestos, and those who supervise them. This includes staff and maintenance people who may become exposed to asbestos while carrying out their normal everyday work. It is also stated that any training needs to be appropriate for the work and the roles undertaken by individuals. On this basis, a Duty Holder may offer training to Governors if applicable to their roles.

I have also attached the draft terms of reference for the Asbestos Management in Wales Working Group. The main objective of the Working Group is to ensure that our guidance on the matter of asbestos in schools remains both current and appropriate; and to review the development of new approaches in England and how they may apply to Wales. The working group comprises representatives from NHS Wales, Public Health Wales, HSE Wales and the Welsh Government.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0300 0603300
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0300 0604400
Correspondence.Huw.Lewis@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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 next meeting of the Working Group has been scheduled for the end of January 2016, at which time the draft terms of reference will be formalised.

I hope you find this clarification helpful.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis', written in black ink.

Huw Lewis AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

The purpose of the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group is to ensure that Welsh policy and guidance in this field remains current and appropriate for schools in Wales, and also to review the new approach being implemented in England.

2. Duty and Responsibilities

The Group will ensure that the policy for Asbestos Management in Schools in Wales is regularly reviewed. When necessary the group will update guidance so that it remains robust for schools in Wales. The Group will also periodically review approaches in England and where appropriate, make recommendations for adoption in Wales.

The specific functions of the Group are:

- review the current guidance for Asbestos Management in Schools and update when and if required;
- review and discuss the ongoing work of the English government in the Asbestos Management in Schools field; and
- make recommendations where appropriate for new policy strands in this field.

3. Governance

The Working Group will be chaired by the Programme Director for 21st Century Schools and Education Programme. The Welsh Government reserves the right to deputise other Working Group members where appropriate.

4. Frequency of assessments/meetings

The group will meet regularly (quarterly) to discuss current guidance for Wales and review ongoing work/approaches in the Asbestos Management in Schools field.

5. Working Group Membership

Members of working group will be expected to:

- Offer their views, and those of their representative organisations, on issues relating to all aspects of Asbestos Management in Schools;
- Contribute to discussion on current guidance in Wales, and new approaches in England, along with appropriate recommendations where required; and
- Provide feedback to and from their representative body on the work of the working group, which respect to promotion of current policy and available guidance.

Members will be nominated by their representative organisation based on their ability to represent their organisation. The working group will comprise the following sector representation:

Assessor	Policy Area
HM Principal Inspector of Health and Safety	Operational Policy, HSE Wales
Team leader, Public Administration and Education team	Public Health Unit, HSE Wales
Policy Advisor, Asbestos Policy	Health and Chemicals Division, HSE

and Delivery	Wales
Health Protection Team representative	NHS Wales
Environment Health Senior Policy Official	Welsh Government, Public Health (advisory capacity)
Policy Lead	Welsh Government, 21 st Century Schools and Education Programme
Programme Director	Welsh Government, 21 st Century Schools and Education Programme
Head of Capital Funding	Welsh Government, 21 st Century Schools and Education Programme

Members will have regard for The Seven Principles of Public Life (**The Nolan Principles**):

- **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits themselves, their family, or their friends.
- **Integrity**
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness**
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty**
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership**
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and examples.

6. Termination of Working Group Membership

Membership of the working group is terminable by either party, in appropriate circumstances. A breach of any of the terms of the Constitution, including the Seven Principles of Public Life, will be considered an appropriate circumstance for the termination of membership.

7. Quorum

The Asbestos Management in Schools working group shall be quorate when four members representing all stakeholder groups, are present.

If less than four members are present, the business may still take place. Decisions will only be made subject to the receipt of written assessment of those group members who are not present.

DRAFT

Agenda Item 3.10

P-04-603 Helping Babies Born at 22 Weeks to Survive.

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- change the guidelines so that babies born after 22 weeks and who show signs of life are given appropriate medical care; and
- In changing these guidelines ensure that they include a guarantee that a Paediatrician will review and weigh every baby born after 22 weeks who shows signs of life immediately after their birth so that parents and clinicians can make informed decisions based on the individual baby's chance of survival.

Petitioner : Emma Jones

First considered by the Committee: 25 November 2014

Number of Signatures: 2,543 electronic signatures and 216 paper signatures collected. Total: 2,759



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Dr Ruth Hussey CB, OBE
Prif Swyddog Meddygol/Cyfarwyddwr Meddygol, GIG Cymru
Chief Medical Officer/Medical Director NHS Wales

William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee

28th January 2016

Dear Mr Powell

Petition P-04-603 Helping babies born at 22 weeks to survive

Thank you for your letter of the 19 November with regards to Petition P-04-603 Helping babies born at 22 weeks to survive, and I apologise for the late response.

As informed previously, the Welsh Government has tasked the Maternity and Neonatal networks to review current evidence and develop updated guidance on this issue. The Maternity and Neonatal Networks have jointly developed a document, 'Care at the margins of viability', which was presented at both the September and October steering committees of the maternity and neonatal networks, with a draft document being presented at the Neonatal Steering Group on the 6 November 2015. The document is currently being consulted on with staff at the various neonatal services in Wales prior to being finalised and published.

The guidance will be based on current British Association of Perinatal Medicine guidance using evidence from medical literature and professional consensus.

As part of this work, feedback is also being sought from parents and BLISS (charity working to provide the best possible care and support for all premature and sick babies and their families), on both the guidelines and parent information leaflets.

As you will be aware, Ms Emma Jones, the petitioner, met with Dr Heather Payne, Senior Medical Officer for maternity and child health, and Edward Rees, Head of Obesity Prevention and Children's Health, on the 18 February 2015 to discuss her petition and Dr Payne held a follow up meeting with Ms Jones on the 12 October 2015 in order to gather her comments on the development of the draft document. Emma's comments were fed back to the Maternity and Neonatal Networks who are responsible for the issuing of the guidance.



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Dr Payne has followed up on her meeting with Ms Jones and apologised for the time it is taking to develop the guidance document. Arrangements are also being made for Ms Jones to meet with the Network leads, accompanied by Dr Payne, so that she can formally provide feedback on the draft report, especially on how best to support mothers who deliver early and how they communicate with parents.

I hope this reassures the committee that the Welsh Government has already provided Ms Jones with an opportunity to input to the development of the document and that her input will continue to be of value to the process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Hussey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'H' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

DR RUTH HUSSEY CB, OBE

cc: David Rees AM, Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee

P-04-456 Dementia – This Could Happen to you

Petition wording:

We, the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:

- i. Bring to an end the discrimination against dementia sufferers in Wales who apply for N.H.S. Continuing Care Funding, by allowing for the cognition category of need (known as the "domain") to go up to the level "Severe" in the Welsh version of the Decision Support Tool. This would bring it in line with the English version; and
- ii. Direct Local Health Boards to implement the National Framework for N.H.S., Continuing Care Funding correctly in terms of patient eligibility and without regard to budgetary constraints.

Petition raised by: Helen Jones

Date petition first considered by Committee: 19 February 2013

Number of signatures: 1413

P-04-456 Dementia – This Could Happen to you – Petitioner to the Committee. 30.01.16

No, I do not wish to close this petition.

Issues surrounding Dementia are still of vital importance in Wales and the petition and data surrounding it is being shared on social media. There are still people fighting the very flawed system and it's my opinion that there are people who are benefitting from reading its contents.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Jones

P-04-452 : Equal Rights for Tube-fed Youngsters.

Petition wording:

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ensure that funding is made available to ensure that the vital equipment and services required by tube-fed children and young people are made available to them.

For example, equal rights for tube-fed youngsters in the Caerphilly County Borough Council currently fall between 2 defined categories of need. The Aneurin Bevan Health Board say as they are not Continuing Health Care (CHC) children – 'only tube-fed' – they cannot fund the vital equipment and services we need. Caerphilly Social Services also say they cannot help as these children 'have significant health needs'. These definitions exclude and therefore discriminate against Tube-fed Youngsters and we demand an investigation into this practice in Caerphilly. Whilst our Youngsters do not 'qualify' for help from either Health or Social Services in the Caerphilly Borough we still have a Youngster with 24/7 care needs – the same as a newborn – often with disabilities due to a life-threatening illness.

Additional Information:

Our Youngsters need a 'label' in order to be able to automatically access funding for vital equipment and services. At present inter-departmental financial wrangling takes place on request for anything for a Tube-fed Youngster and this should not involve Parents / Carers. We just need the help for our Youngsters as quickly as possible. We ask that a quick, common-sense, long-term solution be achieved for our Youngsters and for the sake of the health and wellbeing of their Parents / Carers.

Petition raised by: Dr Tymandra Blewett-Silcock

Date petition first considered by Committee: 29 January 2013

Number of signatures: 142

P-04-452 Equal Rights for Tube-fed Youngsters- Petitioner to the Committee. 29.01.16

Hi there,

My last response was to say whilst our Direct Payment fight was successful almost 2 years ago – to get PA help for a tube-fed child we still face a position where our daughter is not CHC so if she needs new equipment/services there will still be the CCBC 'fight' to decide who will pay for this vital help we need in the future. This taking place between Health + Social Care.

So whilst we got publicity to show how there is no definition for this '3rd type of child' when asking for help and whilst Health + Social Care may say they will 'endeavor to look at each child on an individual basis and work together' it remains to be seen if this is the case when she next needs help....?

Thanks, Tymandra

Dr Tymandra Blewett-Silcock

Director, POPSYP (Parents of Partially Sighted and Blind Youngsters)

Agenda Item 3.13

P-04-424 : Retain services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital

Petition wording:

We the undersigned call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to halt the decision to move all CT2 Doctors from Neath Port Talbot Hospital in the autumn, without prior consultation with the public. This decision will mean that acute medical services will not be provided at the Hospital, and patients will be forced to travel to Morriston in Swansea, or the Princess of Wales in Bridgend for such services. Neath Port Talbot hospital is a state of the art, PFI hospital, and the people of this area want such vital services to be retained at Neath Port Talbot hospital.

Petition raised by: Carolyn Edwards

Date petition first considered by Committee: 2 October 2012

Number of signatures: 193 signatures. Associated petitions collected over 5000 signatures

P-04-424 Retain Services at Neath Port Talbot Hospital – Petitioner to the Committee. 01.02.16

Thank you for your email regarding the above. I thought the petition must have been closed. Locally very little is happening but your correspondence has prompted myself and colleagues to re think this.

Our inclination, in view of the problems within the health service and the pressures on Morriston Hospital to provide services in a timely fashion to medical emergencies, is to keep the petition open.

There may well be a change of government after May and if this is the case the situation may well be revisited.

I will also be writing to the chief executive of ABM trust for an update.

Thank you

Carolyn

Agenda Item 3.14

P-04-624 That Foster Carers be Permitted to be Registered with More Than One Local Authority

Petition wording

We, the undersigned, believe that the National Assembly for Wales should ask the Welsh Government to take the following actions to support foster carers:

That foster carers be permitted to be registered with more than one Local Authority , to reduce the money spent unnecessarily by LAs to Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA).

This would enable foster carers who are not being fully utilized by their Local Authority, and have empty rooms i.e. they may be registered to care for two Looked After Children but have only one in placement, to provide places for children from adjoining local authorities where there may be an excess of children coming into Social Services to be Looked After:- this is where the mismatch of funding occurs - whereby if there is no place available with FCs, the LA will outsource the placement to an IFA.

Additional Information

In view of the Williams report, when Councils merge any FCs with availability for space will become available to their adjoining LA, if they were registered to do so. Initial savings ahead of the implementation of local authority mergers a "Dual LA Registration" would further cut costs, and allow for cost effective, quality care for Looked After Children coming into the Care System. For example, if Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen implemented a FCs Dual Registration, it would mean that any child coming in to be Looked After would have double the pool of FCs to be matched with (skills, availability, current placements, ability to transport to school are all part of the matching process), thereby elimination the need for the far more costly use of IFAs.

Lead petitioner: John Watkins

First considered by the Committee:

Number of signatures: 159 online signatures.

P-04-524 That Foster Carers be Permitted to Register with More Than One Local Authority. Petitioner to Clerking Team – 09.02.16

Morning Kathryn

Yes I would still like to keep the petition open, I have added a link to the Welsh Government's statistics, which show private fostering is again on the increase and I still believe, that Government can make savings, if councils are allowed to share their foster carer's.

<http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2015/151021-private-fostering-2014-15-en.pdf>

Yours Gratefully

John Atkins

P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure

Petition wording

We call upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to reverse the decision of Natural Resources Wales to close the Cwmcarn Forest Drive indefinitely on 2nd November 2014.

Additional Information

NRW have stated that the Cwmcarn Forest Drive will be closed indefinitely in November and that this is necessary because of the infection of the Japanese larches in the forest. I am not convinced as there are inconsistencies with NRW approach. There are ample harvest roads which can be used to facilitate removal of the trees. What needs to be removed via the drive could be done during its annual winter closure; however NRW say that removing the trees will not be completed until 2018 and after this the drive may not reopen due to funding issues. Other forest parks are only facing minimal disruption to their facilities as a result of tree removal. To single out users of the drive is unfair and unnecessary when other users will face only temporary disruption. We should save the drive for its users, many of whom are elderly, disabled and from our ethnic minority and immigrant communities. This deprives those people who are our most deprived of their main facility for health and well being.

Petitioner : Robert Jeffrey Southall

First considered by the Committee:

Number of Signatures: 2,392 electronic signatures and 602 paper signatures. Total 2,994

P-04-605 Save the Cwmcarn Forest Drive from Indefinite or Permanent Closure- Petitioner to the Committee. 04.02.16

Hi Kathryn

We have certainly made a great deal of progress on the matter of the closure of the Drive and NRW have now publically stated that they will work with us. For an update on this please see here:

http://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/14230546.---Open_door---policy_on_future_of_Cwmcarn_Forest_welcomed/

I think that it will now be appropriate to close the petition and I would like to thank you, the committee members and staff for all the assistance you have provided with this matter.

The petition achieved everything I hoped it would.

Very best regards

Rob Southall

Chair, Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive

Agenda Item 3.16

P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey

Petition wording

We call upon the Welsh Government to examine ways to prevent the destruction of amenities on common land, including for example the Marian Common in Llangoed, Ynys Môn.

Petition raised by: JE Futter

Petition first considered by Committee: 15 November 2011

Number of signatures: 156

**P-04-343 Prevent the destruction of amenities on common land – Anglesey –
Petitioner to the Clerking Team. 04.02.16**

Dear Kathryn

Thank you very much for getting in touch regarding the petition.

I attended the petitions committee on the 11th November 2013, where I was asked to contribute verbally along with my wife and Councillor Lewis Davies. I felt that there was a very positive response and because of that I assumed that further action would be taken by the Assembly to strengthen the laws surrounding the use of common land.

Unfortunately I heard no more about it.

Recently the same developer that had caused the initial problems on the common, submitted building plans for an area of land which he owns and which abutted the common. These plans required access across the common with the surfacing of a new access road. These plans have subsequently been refused on highways matters by Anglesey County Council.

The developer still drives vehicles across the common, and it is my understanding that it is illegal to do so. The original tracks which the developer created (which had not existed before) have not been reinstated to the original common and now create problems of water run off for a dwelling nearby.

Therefore, I consider that the issue of this and all common land in Wales is still very much under threat and I would like the Assembly's Petition Committee to consider that the petition be kept open and that the Assembly should consider ways of making sure that common land in Wales is better protected under the law.

Regards

Tom Pollock

Paper from the Committee Clerk

Date: February 2016

Petitions Proposed for Closure

Purpose

1. This paper asks the Committee to consider a list of inactive petitions for possible closure.

Background

2. At its last meeting the Committee agreed that, in anticipation of the end of the current Assembly, the secretariat would prepare a list of inactive petitions that should be considered for possible closure at the Committee's next meeting.

3. A list of petitions proposed for closure is attached to this paper along with when they were first and last considered and a brief synopsis of the reason for proposing closure. In all cases, the Committee secretariat has tried to contact the petitioner to find out if there is any reason why the petition should not be closed. Except where indicated otherwise, no response has been received from petitioners on the list.

4. It is proposed that all the petitions on the list should be closed. However, it is possible that some petitioners may yet respond. As a safety net, if petitioners respond in time for consideration at the Committee's final meeting, and ask that the petition should remain open, these petitions will be brought back to the Committee's final meeting for further consideration.

Action

5. The Committee is invited to consider the list of petitions proposed for closure and, subject to paragraph 4 above, consider whether they should be closed.

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

Petition Number	Title	First Considered	Last Considered	Reason for Recommending Closure
P-03-150	National Cancer Standards	09.07.08	11.11.14	Health and Social Care Committee Report on the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan was debated in Plenary on 10/12/14
P-03-313	The Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs)(Wales) Reg 2011	25.01.11	29.11.11	Inactive
P-04-319	Newtown Traffic Petition	21.06.11	30.6.15	Scheme progressing. Update on current status sought from WG. Committee Members have indicated previously that they are content for the petition to be closed.
P-04-322	A call to revise Cadw's hold upon churches	21.06.11	19.03.13	Inactive
P-04-338	Petition on the sale of the Vyrnwy estate by Severn Trent Water	11.10.11	11.10.11	Inactive
P-04-339	Enforcement of Animal Welfare Standards in the Puppy Farming Industry in	11.10.11	13.03.12	Inactive

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

	South West Wales.			
P-04-354	Public statement of support for Bradley Manning	10.01.12	27.03.12	Inactive
P-04-393	Llanymynech and Pant Bypass Action Group	29.05.12	03.02.15	Inactive – unable to make contact with petitioners
P-04-438	Shopping Access	20.11.12	18.06.13	Inactive
P-04-448	Improve Sexual health services for Western Vale	29.01.13	03.02.15	Inactive
P-04-451	Save the Royal Glamorgan Hospital Services	29.01.13	04.06.13	Inactive
P-04-454	Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role	29.01.13	28.04.14	Contacted petitioner who indicated that he is content to close the petition.
P-04-494	Robotic assisted laparoscopic prostatectomy must be made available to men in Wales now	16.07.13	20.10.15	Have written to the petitioner on a number of occasions, most recently on 5 February. No contact from petitioner since March 2015.
P-04-527	Campaign for a Special Cancer Drug Fund in Wales	21.01.14	10.03.15	Inactive – have written to the petitioner on a number of occasions, most recently on 29 January. No contact from petitioner since the petition was first considered in January 2014.
P-04-545	Aneurin Bevan Hospital	29.04.14	15.07.14	Inactive – have written to the

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

	Procedures			petitioner on a number of occasions, most recently on 29 January. No contact from petitioner since June 2014.
P-04-550	Planning Powers	13.05.14	14.07.15	Close – contacted petitioner who responded stating that the matter is still very much a live one, however he could not see any merit with tying up valuable Assembly Committee time with keeping this petition open.
P-04-558	E-CIGARETTE BAN FOR UNDER 18s	17.06.14	17.06.14	Inactive since first consideration – however LCM regulating age for sale of e-cigarettes agreed by the Assembly in February 2014.
P-04-571	Treating Pernicious Anaemia	15.07.14	22.09.15	No contact with petitioner since August 2015
P-04-579	Reinstate funding for Skomer Island's Guillemot monitoring	23.09.14	02.06.15	Inactive
P-04-580	Restrictions on Donating Blood	23.09.14	09.12.14	Inactive
P-04-582	Much Needed Change to the Rules in our Schools with Regards to Head Lice and	23.09.14	25.11.14	Inactive

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

	Nits			
P-04-588	Charter for Children and Fathers	23.09.14	22.09.15	Petitioner responded indicating that he is content to close the petition. His additional comments on the petitions process have been circulated to Members separately.
P-04-591	Fair Funding for Local Government	23.09.14	20.01.15	Close – contacted petitioner who responded asking to close the petition as long as the settlement stays the same
P-04-614	Support the Arriva Trains Wales First Class Service	03.02.15	12.05.15	Inactive – no contact with petitioner since October 2014
P-04-615	A Fair Student Loan Payment in the Final Year of Training	03.02.15	12.05.15	Inactive – no contact with petitioner since January 2015
P-04-617	Stop the Wholesale Hiving off of Public Libraries to the Voluntary Sector	24.02.15	14.07.15	Inactive – no contact with petitioner since May 2015
P-04-618	Protection of Banking Services in Vulnerable Communities	24.03.15	02.06.15	Last action to forward petitioner's comments to Minister for forwarding to Financial Inclusion Strategy Group. Contacted petitioner to ask if he wishes to continue with petition – no response received
P-04-626	De-Trunk the A487 Road	24.03.15	08.12.15	Committee previously indicated it was

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

	Through Penparcau, Trefechan & Aberystwyth			minded to close the petition as difficult to see what further action they could take in this Assembly. Contacted petitioner on 20/1/16 - no response as yet.
P-04-627	Improve Commuter Trains in North Wales	24.03.15	16.06.15	Inactive
P-04-640	Bring Down the Age of Smears to 18	30.06.15	06.10.15	No contact from the petitioner since September 2015
P-04-642	Save the Filter - An Established Youth Stop Smoking and Prevention Service	14.07.15	22.09.15	<p>Contacted petitioner who responded as follows: "Following discussions with the Welsh Government we have secured temporary and partial funding for The Filter project and therefore would like to close this petition.</p> <p>We'd like to pass on our sincere thanks to the committee for their time in looking at our petition."</p>
P-04-644	The Future of Further Education	30.06.15	08.12.15	Contacted petitioner who responded "Many thanks for all your help with our petition, but we have taken the

List of Petitions Proposed for Closure

				decision to close the petition at this stage.”
P-04-647	Change the Adult Ticket Age from 16 to 18.	14.07.15	14.07.15	Inactive - no response from the petitioner since the petition was submitted.