

## Agenda – Petitions Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 10 March 2020

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Ross Davies – Deputy Clerk

0300 200 6565

[SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales](mailto:SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales)

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

(Pages 1 – 47)

### 2 New petitions

#### 2.1 P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations

(Pages 48 – 54)

#### 2.2 P-05-942 The Golden Hour when Suffering a Stroke – Ambulance Response Times to be recategorised from Amber back to Red Status

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#### 2.3 P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog

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#### 2.4 P-05-944 Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales

(Pages 71 – 80)

#### 2.5 P-05-945 The Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales

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### 3 Updates to previous petitions

#### Economy and Transport

#### 3.1 P-04-667 Roundabout for the A477/ A4075 Junction

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3.2 P-05-907 Change the speed limit in Cemaes to 30mph

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## **Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs**

3.3 P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable

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## **Housing and Local Government**

3.4 P-05-864 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture

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3.5 P-05-927 Changing Places toilet facilities

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3.6 P-05-871 Make baby and toddler changing available in both male/female toilets

(Pages 127 – 128)

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## **Equality**

3.8 P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate.

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3.9 P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households

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## **Health and Social Services**

- 3.10 P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently  
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- 3.11 P-05-857 Create a national task force for children's mental health  
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- 3.12 P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled  
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- 3.13 P-05-926 To Provide a Chronic Fatigue Department in Wales  
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## **Education**

- 3.14 P-05-877 Children's used uniform scheme  
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- 3.15 P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas  
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- 3.16 P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools  
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- 3.17 P-05-932 Education On Food Allergies In Schools & Mandatory EPI PEN Training  
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## **4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:**

Item 5

## **5 Discussion of the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's report on CCTV in Slaughterhouses**

- 5.1 P-04-433: CCTV in Slaughterhouses

5.2 P-05-916 Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

(Pages 185 – 187)

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# Agenda Item 2.1

## **P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations**

This petition was submitted by Claire-Louise Walker having collected a total of 100 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

An article published on 31 July 18 stated that 178,000 operations in Wales were cancelled in the last 2 years (2016-2018), 70,000 due to non clinical reasons. 90,000 were cancelled in 2017/18.

In 2012 my son passed away, he was placed on the waiting list for an emergency tonsillectomy in September 2011 the first operation was cancelled because of no HDU bed being available, the second and third was cancelled by ourselves because Dylan was not well enough. The fourth and final operation was cancelled because of no HDU bed being available this was scheduled to take place the day he died.

An investigation concluded that had he had the operation he would have made a full recovery.

We are now fast approaching almost a decade since his death and Cardiff and Vale health board assured me that changes had been put in place. It has become apparent given these diabolical high figures that nothing has changed.

I call upon Vaughan Gething, and the Welsh Assembly to put changes in place to ensure that the number of cancelled operations are dramatically reduced. I personally find these figures disgusting.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

# P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2020  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2020

Reference: RS20/11539

## Introduction

**Petition number:** P-05-940

**Petition title:** Reduce cancelled operations

**Text of petition:** An article published on 31 July 18 stated that 178,000 operations in Wales were cancelled in the last 2 years (2016-2018), 70,000 due to non-clinical reasons. 90,000 were cancelled in 2017/18.

In 2012 my son passed away, he was placed on the waiting list for an emergency tonsillectomy in September 2011 the first operation was cancelled because of no HDU bed being available, the second and third was cancelled by ourselves because Dylan was not well enough. The fourth and final operation was cancelled because of no HDU (High Dependency Unit) bed being available this was scheduled to take place the day he died.

An investigation concluded that had he had the operation he would have made a full recovery. We are now fast approaching almost a decade since his death and Cardiff and Vale health board assured me that changes had been



put in place. It has become apparent given these diabolical high figures that nothing has changed.

I call upon Vaughan Gething, and the Welsh Assembly to put changes in place to ensure that the number of cancelled operations are dramatically reduced. I personally find these figures disgusting

## Background

The data on cancelled operations quoted by the petitioner comes from a September 2019 news article published in [WalesOnline](#). That article is itself based on figures obtained from local health boards (LHBs) in Wales through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Conservative Party in Wales.

BMA Cymru [responded to the figures](#) at the time, claiming that underfunding, insufficient staff and hospital beds, and gaps in staff rotas had contributed towards the numbers of cancellations, and called for 'a funding solution that provides appropriate numbers of beds, invests in more staff and takes into account the rising demands on the NHS in order to provide patients with the level of care they expect and deserve'.

Data on the number of cancelled operations (referred to as Postponed Admitted Procedures or PAPs) in Wales is not routinely reported or published, either at LHB or all-Wales level. However, the PAP figures are still collected monthly by LHBs and submitted to the NHS Wales Information Services (NWIS). The figures for individual LHBs are also included in the performance reports that are considered at LHBs' Board meetings, although these meetings do not necessarily happen on a monthly basis.

Table 1 below shows the total number of PAPs and reason for postponement:

**Table 1: Total Postponed Admitted Procedures, NHS Wales**

	Reason for postponement	2015/16	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (See Note)
All Wales	Clinical	9,450	9,361	10,179	7,445
	Non-clinical	33,982	38,278	37,120	31,295
	Patient	41,067	42,525	43,363	31,677
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84,499</b>	<b>90,164</b>	<b>90,662</b>	<b>70,417</b>



Source: NWIS supplied data

Note: 2019/20 data covers April-December 2019

A procedure is classed as postponed if it does not take place on the date specified. A procedure can be postponed from the date on which the patient received the initial appointment (which could be three weeks or more prior to the procedure taking place) to the day the procedure is actually due to take place.

The categories of the reasons for postponement are as follows:

- **Clinical:** these cover those procedures postponed by the health board for reasons such as the hospital reporting the patient as unwell, the patient being unsuitable for day surgery or the patient not following pre-operative guidance;
- **Non-clinical:** these cover procedures postponed by the health board due to reasons such as the unavailability of a bed, equipment or staff, or to operating list over running;
- **Patient:** these cover the patient not attending, the patient being unavailable or unwell, or the patient saying they no longer wanted the procedure.

Not all postponed procedures result in a slot being lost, as there are usually patients on short notice lists who are able to come in and fill that particular slot. In addition, where a patient postpones a procedure as they are unavailable, this can be up to three weeks prior to the procedure taking place; that slot will then be offered to the next available patient on the list.

Table 2 shows the number of elective (non-urgent) admissions in each of the following years.

**Table 2: Total number of elective admissions, NHS Wales**

	2015/16	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (See Note)
<b>Total</b>	334,340	330,170	342,002	187,280

Source: NWIS supplied data

Note: 2019/20 data covers April-December 2019

## Welsh Government response to the petition

The Welsh Government's response passes on the Minister's condolences to the petitioner on the loss of her son and recognises what a difficult time it must have been for both her and her family.

The response also acknowledges the distress to a patient which having a planned operation cancelled causes, and notes that:

- Any patient that has their operation postponed on more than one occasion by the hospital for non-clinical reasons with less than eight days' notice, should receive their operation within 14 days, or at their earliest convenience;
- There is a target in place for LHBs in Wales to reduce the number of short notice postponements by 5% year on year;
- When hospitals postpone operations, it is always done as a last resort and to ensure patient safety is maintained;
- Nearly half of all reported postponements in Wales are due to patient reasons, which is borne out by the figures in Table 1.

The response also notes that during times of pressure on health services, LHBs will need to balance the needs of emergency demands whilst maintaining a focus on more routine and non-urgent care. Hence, clinical staff will assess and treat on the basis of the urgency and severity of the clinical needs of each patient.



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00061/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

14 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 8 January on behalf of the Petitions Committee about Petition P-05-940 Reduce cancelled operations.

Firstly, please pass on my condolences to Ms Walker on the loss of her son, I appreciate how difficult a time this must have been for her and her family.

The Welsh Government recognises the distress having a planned operation postponed has on a patient. For this reason, there is a commitment whereby any patient that has their operation postponed on more than one occasion by the hospital for non-clinical reasons with less than eight days' notice, should receive their operation within 14 days, or at their earliest convenience. There is a target in place for Health Boards in Wales to reduce the number of short notice postponements by 5% year on year.

In times of pressure, it is important for Health Boards to balance the needs of emergency demand and patients, whilst maintaining a focus on normal and routine services, and they will assess patients based on clinical urgency, which is for the relevant consultant to decide. When hospitals postpone operations, it is always done as a last resort and to ensure patient safety is maintained.

Whilst the report in question concentrated on hospital postponements, every year, nearly half of all reported postponements in Wales are due to patient reasons. It is therefore important for patients to let organisations know when they are unable to attend appointments, so that those slots can be offered to other patients.

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

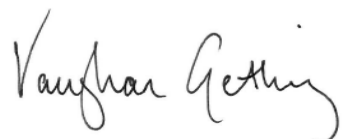
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

# Agenda Item 2.2

## **P-05-942 The Golden Hour when Suffering a Stroke – Ambulance Response Times to be recategorised from Amber back to Red Status**

This petition was submitted by Ralph Rees having collected a total of 117 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

Current Welsh Assembly Policy has categorised Ambulance Response Times to a Stroke Victim to the "Amber" Category– meaning there is NO SET Response Time Target to meet or achieve.

This Petition requests that the Response Time Target for a person suspected of suffering a stroke be recategorised and return to the "Red" Category, thereby ensuring that any stroke victim has the quickest possible Ambulance Response.

There is a well known fact of the "Golden Hour" which is the most critical 60 minutes in getting the much needed and relevant medical assistance to anyone suffering a stroke. Every single person in Wales should not have this "Golden Hour" jeopardised through having to wait for an "Amber" Category Response Time for an Ambulance.

Give Stroke Victims the Response Times they deserve and require – Make it a Red Response Time Target Today.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

# P-05-942 Ambulance response times for stroke patients

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2020  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2020

Reference: RS20/11773

## Introduction

**Petition number:** [P-05-942](#)

**Petition title:** The Golden Hour when Suffering a Stroke - Ambulance Response Times to be recategorised from Amber back to Red Status.

**Text of petition:** Current Welsh Assembly Policy has categorised Ambulance Response Times to a Stroke Victim to the "Amber" Category- meaning there is NO SET Response Time Target to meet or achieve.

This Petition requests that the Response Time Target for a person suspected of suffering a stroke be recategorised and return to the "Red" Category, thereby ensuring that any stroke victim has the quickest possible Ambulance Response.

There is a well-known fact of the "Golden Hour" which is the most critical 60 minutes in getting the much needed and relevant medical assistance to anyone suffering a stroke. Every single person in Wales should not have this "Golden Hour" jeopardised through having to wait for an "Amber" Category

Give Stroke Victims the Response Times they deserve and require - Make it a Red Response Time Target Today.



# Background

## The Clinical Response Model

In October 2015 the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) moved to a new way of delivering and measuring how emergency ambulance calls are responded to. The clinical response model divides 999 calls into three types:

**Table 1: Clinical Response Model**

Call type	Definition	Example
RED	<b>Immediately life threatening</b> calls. These calls will be subject to both clinical indicators and a time based standard requiring a minimum attendance at 65% of these calls within 8 minutes.	Respiratory/cardiac arrest/choking.
AMBER	<b>Serious, but not immediately life threatening.</b> These calls will include most medical and trauma cases. Amber calls will receive an emergency response. A response profile has been created to ensure that the most suitable clinical resource is dispatched to each amber call. Patient experience and clinical indicator data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the ambulance response.	Cardiac chest pains/stroke./fracture
GREEN	<b>Neither serious or life threatening.</b> Green calls are ideally suited to management via secondary telephone triage.  Health care professionals often require an urgent transfer from low acuity care to a higher acuity facility. These transfers are coded as green and undertaken within a timeframe agreed with the requesting professional.	Fainting – recovered and alert/minor injuries/earache.

Source: [WAST submission to Health, Social Care and Sport \(HSCS\) Committee general scrutiny session, 2020](#)

## Categorisation of stroke

The ambulance service response to a stroke can be different according to the type and severity of the stroke, as well as the circumstances relating to individual patients. [The Stroke Association](#) describes the three different types of stroke:

- An ischaemic stroke is caused by a blockage cutting off the blood supply to the brain. This accounts for 85% of all cases;
- A haemorrhagic stroke is caused by a bleeding in or around the brain;
- A transient ischaemic attack or TIA is also known as a mini-stroke. It is the same as a stroke, but the symptoms only last for a short amount of time.

## The 'Golden Hour'

The 'golden hour' is a general concept in emergency medicine which sets out that a patient with certain acute conditions including stroke has 60 minutes to receive definitive care, whereas later intervention morbidity and mortality can increase significantly. There is a significant and substantial range of research, evidence and guidance on the diagnosis, treatment and management of the different types of stroke. This contains a variety of views on the type and timing of treatment for different types of stroke; many evidence the value of the 'golden hour', but there are some differing views as to whether this timescale is appropriate for all stroke types and service responses.

NICE's Quality Standards for Stroke in Adults indicate that patients with acute stroke receive brain imaging within 1 hour of arrival at the hospital if they meet any of the indications for immediate imaging. Research in Critical Care Nursing recommends implementation of an acute ischemic stroke protocol and an acute stroke team to complete brain imaging and other tests within the golden hour. The Stroke Association state that anyone with a suspected stroke should have a brain scan, within one hour if possible, as a scan can help doctors decide on the right treatment.

Current NICE guidelines on the diagnosis and management of stroke and TIA in recommend admission of everyone with suspected stroke directly to a specialist acute stroke unit after initial assessment. Similarly, the National Clinical Guideline for Stroke (2016, p.43) published by the Royal College of Physicians state that patients experiencing a haemorrhagic stroke can deteriorate quickly and should be admitted directly to a hyperacute stroke unit for urgent specialist assessment and monitoring.

At the same time, according to NICE and the Stroke Association, for most people experiencing an ischaemic stroke, thrombolysis needs to be given within four and a half hours of the start of stroke symptoms.



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In their oral evidence to a Health Social Care and Sport Committee [general scrutiny session in January 2020](#), WAST confirmed the need for differing responses to haemorrhagic – which is potentially significantly more clinically serious – and ischaemic stroke:

Severe haemorrhagic strokes,...will present, very often, differently, and under those circumstances, they would often tip into the red category, and, of course, then, you would have to get them to a neurosurgical unit and ensure that they are scanned prior to treatment. (para.38)

WAST also reported that (para.44), although there is no response time standard for amber calls, the ideal response time for a patient in what they term the Amber 1 category is around 20 minutes and around 30 to 40 minutes in their Amber 2 category.

## The Amber Category Review

In November 2018, in response to concerns about Amber performance WAST published [A review of calls to the Welsh Ambulance Service categorised as Amber](#).

WAST, as with many other emergency services in the UK and abroad, use a set of protocols containing key questions and instructions for the call handler to provide a standardised way of classifying the type and medical urgency of the call. WAST use the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS), which has approximately 1,900 codes that can be generated in response to the caller's answers.

Of these calls, 62% fall in the Amber category. Amber 1 codes make up around 14% of these and include such things as recent strokes (within 4 hours) and chest pain. Amber 2 codes account for around 48% of the codes and covers such things as falls and less-recent strokes (over 4 hours).

According to the [Amber Category Review](#) (p.26), this does not mean that all those contacting ambulance services who believe they, or someone with them, is experiencing a stroke will be prioritised in the stroke protocol or as Amber; other symptoms such as unconsciousness may mean that the call is categorised as another condition with a higher priority code, such as Red. The system prioritises the urgency of a call comparative to others, and the decision is then made as to what type of response or vehicle is needed.

The Review set out a number of key findings, including:

- The prioritisation of calls is complex, but there are a range of different responses depending on the patient's condition;
- The public felt that it was important to get the best response for their condition, even if this was not the quickest;
- The clinical response model is a valid and safe way of delivering ambulance services, and the public support the model's principles;
- The length of time waiting for an ambulance response in the Amber category does not appear to correlate with worse outcomes.

The Review also recommended a programme of engagement to ensure clarity on the role of emergency ambulance services and how calls are prioritised and categorised. In January 2020, the Minister for Health and Social Services, announced the establishment of an Ambulance Availability Taskforce to lead work in a number of areas, including building on progress made against the Amber Category Review. WAST have reported (p.10) continued concerns around Amber performance, with response times higher than in 2018.

## Evidence from elsewhere in the UK

Following a review of ambulance service standards by the University of Sheffield, in 2017 NHS England put a new set of ambulance emergency targets in place for England. These are based around four categories; life-threatening illnesses or injuries, emergency calls, urgent calls and less urgent calls. Stroke patients tend to be included within the 'emergency' category, which has a performance target of 18 minutes.

The Scottish Ambulance Service (Board Quality Indicators Performance Report pp.11-15) reports against a five-tier system of Purple (target time of below 6 minutes), Red (target time of below 7 minutes), Amber, Yellow and Green (the latter three have no target response time). Suspected stroke patients tend to be included in the Amber category.

## Welsh Government response to the petition

The Welsh Government's response highlights that the Welsh clinical response model was devised by leading clinicians and places a greater focus not just on the timeliness of the response, but also on the quality of care people receive and ensuring that stroke patients are transferred to the most appropriate setting for their treatment.:

This is why the Welsh Ambulance Service aims to respond to patients with new onset stroke as quickly as possible by dispatching a suitable emergency ambulance vehicle under blue light driving conditions which is capable of transporting them immediately to a specialist stroke team to begin the treatment they require.

The response also stresses that the cause and clinical severity of conditions can vary and will require call handlers to categorise the call accordingly, which means the criteria within the response model may not always be applied rigidly, unless circumstances and clinical condition support this.

For example, heart attacks and strokes may be categorised within the Red or the Amber category according to their relative clinical severity.

Finally, Welsh Government also confirm that, in line with one of the recommendations of the Amber Category Review, the Review Implementation Programme has been working with the Stroke Association, Community Health Councils and partners from within NHS Wales to develop new measures that 'give greater context to ambulance response times to people who have a stroke'. This work is intended to support the design of time-based measures for stroke, which the Minister expects to be published 'in early 2020'.



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00244/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

20 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 27 January on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding the categorisation of ambulance calls relating to stroke.

I expect all patients who access the ambulance service to receive a timely response commensurate with their clinical need and for all patients in Wales to receive the care they require within the timescales set out by the accepted clinical guidance for specific conditions.

The committee will be aware that the new clinical response model for ambulance services in Wales introduced in October 2015, prioritises calls according to a patient's relative clinical need to ensure those with the greatest need for an immediate response, in immediately-life threatening situations, are prioritised to receive the fastest response in order to maximise their chance of survival. The model was devised by leading clinicians and places a greater focus not only on the timeliness of the response, but also on the quality of care people receive.

When someone suffers a stroke, the quicker they arrive at a specialist stroke unit, the quicker they will receive the specialist treatment they need. This is why the Welsh Ambulance Service aims to respond to patients with new onset stroke as quickly as possible by dispatching a suitable emergency ambulance vehicle under blue light driving conditions which is capable of transporting them immediately to a specialist stroke team to begin the treatment they require. The Welsh Ambulance Service has put in place strong clinical guidance that must be followed for all suspected stroke patients. This ensures that actual and potential stroke patients are transferred to the appropriate settings within the clinically agreed guidelines.

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

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

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

It is important to consider that the cause and clinical severity of conditions can vary and will require call handlers to assess a patient's condition and circumstances and categorise the call accordingly. As such, the criteria for the categorisation of calls will not always be rigidly applied unless the patient's clinical condition and individual circumstances support this. For example, heart attacks and strokes may be categorised within the Red or the Amber category according to their relative clinical severity.

Following publication of the clinically-led review of the Welsh ambulance service Amber response category, in November 2018, the Amber Review Implementation Programme (ARIP) team has been working in consultation with Community Health Councils, the Stroke Association and its patients groups, and NHS Wales partners to develop new measures that give greater context to ambulance response times to people who have a stroke.

The Stroke Association has agreed to become a 'publishing partner' and to support the design of time-based measures for stroke which I expect to be published in early 2020.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

## Agenda Item 2.3

**P-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog**

This petition was submitted by Carron Jones having collected 2,595 signatures online and 2,855 on paper, a total of 5,450 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We are asking the Welsh Government to take urgent action to ensure that tangible improvements are made to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog following the tragic and devastating accidents that have occurred there in the last two years.

We must make sure that a definite change is made to the road so that such disasters do not happen again.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales

# Petition: Improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2020  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2020

## Research Briefing:

Petition Number: P-05-943

Petition title: We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog

Text of petition:

We are asking the Welsh Government to take urgent action to ensure that tangible improvements are made to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog following the tragic and devastating accidents that have occurred there in the last two years.

We must make sure that a definite change is made to the road so that such disasters do not happen again.

## Background

The A487 trunk road forms part of the north-south network of trunk roads linking Fishguard in Pembrokeshire with north Wales. A map of the Welsh trunk road network is [available here](#). This petition refers to a section of the road between Gellilydan and Maentwrog in Gwynedd.

The Welsh Government is the highway authority for the Welsh trunk road and motorway network, including the A487. Maintenance and operation of the A487 north of Cardigan is the responsibility of the [North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent](#). The Welsh Government is responsible for the safety of the trunk road network.

The [Road Safety Foundation](#), a UK road casualty reduction charity, is a partner of the [European Road Assessment Programme \(EuroRAP\)](#), an international not for profit association whose purpose is to promote safer roads. The Road Safety Foundation publishes annual reports on

British EuroRAP road safety results. These include risk maps for major roads in Britain which may give you an indication of the relative level of risk on the A487.

The [2019 UK EuroRAP report](#) includes the risk map for Wales on page 47. You will note that the A487 is assessed a “low–medium risk”. The methodology is described on page 46 as follows:

...The risk is calculated by comparing the frequency of road crashes resulting in death and serious injury on every stretch of road with how much traffic each road is carrying. For example, the risk on a road carrying 10,000 vehicles a day with 20 crashes is ten times the risk on a road that has the same number of crashes but which carries 100,000 vehicles.

While the A487 as whole is assessed as low–medium risk, as outlined in [this media article](#) there have been a number of fatal accidents on the stretch road of the road identified in the petition in recent years.

## Welsh Government action

The Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales’ letter to the Chair, dated 12 February 2020, sets out that work at this location to improve road safety began on 3 February 2020. Work includes:

...signing and safety barrier work ...[a]... new 40mph speed restriction...[and]...speed measuring equipment.

The letter also outlines that road surfacing work will be taking place and that the Welsh Government is:

...currently investigating the nature of the existing surfacing in order to decide on the exact requirements for new surface.

As published on the Welsh Government’s website, the [A487 Trunk Road \(Gellilydan, Gwynedd\) \(40 mph speed limit\) Order 2020](#) came into force on 13 February 2020.

## National Assembly for Wales action

Although this particular section of the A487 has not previously been discussed by the Assembly, the Committee has considered a number of petitions relating to other sections of the road. Your predecessor Committee of the fourth Assembly also received petitions on the A487. These have included petitions relating to different sections of the road calling for:

- [The introduction of a mandatory 40mph speed limit on the A487 at Blaenporth Ceredigion](#);



- [The de-trunking of sections of the road;](#)
- [A Reduction of the speed limit in Penparcau;](#)
- [Speed calming measures in Tre-Taliesin;](#) and
- [Road safety improvements between Cardigan and Aberystwyth.](#)

In 2018, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM, previously a Member of the Petitions Committee [stated that](#):

...the A487 is one of our big problems in terms of our trunk road network in Wales. The A470 and the A487 together form the north-west to the south routes and, frankly, the A487 is worse than the A470 in terms of the villages it goes through, and it needs addressing.

Ken Skates AC/AM  
Gweinidog yr Economi, Thrafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-943  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00312/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

12 February 2020

*Dear Janet,*

Thank you for your letter of 27 January regarding Petition P-05-943, to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog.

I can confirm that work at this location started during week commencing 3 February. This current phase of work includes signing and safety barrier work and will take 2 to 3 weeks to complete. The new 40mph speed restriction will be in place when this work is finished. Speed measuring equipment has already been installed and we will be monitoring this over the coming months to ascertain compliance with the new limit.

We will also be undertaking surfacing work on Oakeley Drive in the coming months. This will include the laying of high friction surfacing and improved road markings. We are currently investigating the nature of the existing surfacing in order to decide on the exact requirements for new surface.

*Yours ever,  
Ken*

**Ken Skates AC/AM**  
Gweinidog yr Economi, Thrafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales

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

**Pack Page 69**

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-05-943 We call on the Welsh Government to take urgent action to secure improvements to the A487 between Gellilydan and Maentwrog, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 28.02.20**

Dear Committee members,

I wanted to start this petition as I lost my best friend\first cousin who felt more like a Sister on this road in July 2019. I feel that something should have been done before this accident occurred as my friend Sioned Wyn lost her Sister, Daughter and Dog a year and a half prior to this accident. I've never experienced pain like I have for the last 7months without Fflur and don't want any more families to experience such loss and pain as we both have. Carron.

This petition has been started as we don't want this road to destroy any more lives. On 11-1-2018 mine and my family's lives we're destroyed forever. We lost my Beautiful Sister Anna Wyn Williams who was only 22, my beautiful daughter Mili Wyn Ginniver, who was only 6 months, and my beautiful dog Celt, who was only 2. I was critical in Stoke hospital and my family almost lost me too. The pain of losing them is the worst pain in the world and I know pain as my body was so badly damaged, but nothing will ever compare to the loss of my loved ones. Exactly a year and 6 months later Fflur, another beautiful young lady, lost her life. This is why me and Carron (Fflur's Cousin) have come together to start this petition. Our lives have been destroyed forever. We don't want any other family to feel this pain. Sioned.

Kind regards

Sioned and Carron

# Agenda Item 2.4

## **P-05-944 Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales**

This petition was submitted by Dr Mihela Erjavec having collected a total of 953 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

In recent years commuters along the North Wales Coast have seen a reduction in rush hour train services despite paying some of the highest train fares (when measured per mile) in the UK.

These cuts to services have already resulted in a reduction in the numbers of passengers using North East Wales railway stations as more and more commuters are forced to drive adding to congestion on the A55.

Transport for Wales now plan to cut the only direct evening rush-hour rail service between Bangor and Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn and Flint, the 17:16 service from Bangor. This will force commuters to change trains at Llandudno Junction, where they will have to wait over an hour for a connection.

The cancellation of this train service goes totally against Welsh Government policy in a number of respects:

- 1) It will result in increased greenhouse gas emissions by forcing people from public transport into their cars, at a time of a “climate emergency”.
- 2) It will deny access to Bangor University by those living in some of Wales' most deprived communities.

We therefore call on the Assembly to force a rethink on TfW and to ensure the rail service in North Wales is sufficiently frequent and affordable to encourage commuters off the roads and onto the trains.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

## Petition: Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2020  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2020

### Research Briefing:

Petition Number: P-05-944

Petition title: Reverse the cuts to commuter train services in North East Wales

Text of petition:

In recent years commuters along the North Wales Coast have seen a reduction in rush hour train services despite paying some of the highest train fares (when measured per mile) in the UK.

These cuts to services have already resulted in a reduction in the numbers of passengers using North East Wales railway stations as more and more commuters are forced to drive adding to congestion on the A55.

Transport for Wales now plan to cut the only direct evening rush-hour rail service between Bangor and Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn and Flint, the 17:16 service from Bangor. This will force commuters to change trains at Llandudno Junction, where they will have to wait over an hour for a connection.

The cancellation of this train service goes totally against Welsh Government policy in a number of respects:

- 1) It will result in increased greenhouse gas emissions by forcing people from public transport into their cars, at a time of a "climate emergency".
- 2) It will deny access to Bangor University by those living in some of Wales' most deprived communities.

We therefore call on the Assembly to force a rethink on TfW and to ensure the rail service in North Wales is sufficiently frequent and affordable to encourage commuters off the roads and onto the trains.

## Background

In the summer of 2018 the Welsh Government awarded a 15 year contract to deliver the Wales and Borders rail franchise to KeolisAmey, trading as TfWRailServices. The franchise is managed on the Welsh Government's behalf by its transport delivery body, Transport for Wales (TfW). TfWRailServices began to operate Wales and Borders rail services in October 2018.

[National Rail timetable changes in Britain](#) take place twice yearly in May and December of each year. The most recent timetable change took effect on Sunday 15 December 2019. The [TfWRail website includes details](#) of the December 2019 timetable changes made by the operator. This identifies Cardiff to Holyhead services as being among the “most significantly affected”. In terms of “changes to train times”, the website includes the following information:

### **Why have services between Cardiff to Holyhead been affected so much by this timetable change?**

As well as the need to accommodate the retiming of the South Wales to London services, we have also had to amend the timetable for this route because in early 2020 the current “Gerald” loco-hauled train and carriages will be operated on additional services along this route. This train has different operational requirements and cannot stop at all the stations along this route where platforms are too short. This has resulted in different calling patterns for certain services along this route. We also have a contractual requirement to offer faster services between North and South Wales.

### **Why is there now a longer waiting time for my connecting service?**

Our timetable planners have worked their hardest to keep service connections where possible. However, there will still be some instances where services may no longer inter-connect seamlessly especially as other train operators' train times are changing too.

Changes were made to the Holyhead to Cardiff services to prepare for the introduction of Mark 4 Loco Hauled Trains when they enter service. The 17.16 service south from Bangor was retimed and stops removed. Where the 17.16 service from Bangor had called at Llandudno Junction, Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn and Flint before Chester. It has now been replaced by a 17.18 service calling at Llandudno Junction only, and then Chester.

## Welsh Government action

The 13 February 2020 letter from the Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales to the Chair responding to this petition summarises the Welsh Government's position. The Minister says that both he and TfW “acknowledge” that the December timetable change which introduced the express north-south Wales route “has raised concerns amongst commuting passengers”. He indicates that “developing timetables is incredibly challenging” and that there are “a number of factors” to be considered to allow for the “much needed express route”.

The Minister continues:

TfW had a commitment to introduce faster Cardiff–Holyhead services each weekday by December 2019, services that will be delivered using modern, more comfortable 'locohailed' services in the coming months. This has led to different train times and changes to the calling patterns on services across the Wales and Borders network, which has meant that in some circumstances passengers need to connect to other services to reach certain destinations.

Transport for Wales will continue to work with stakeholders and listen to passengers, endeavouring to use the valuable feedback they receive to continually improve and shape their rail plans, including our timetables and connecting services.

## National Assembly for Wales action

While not addressing the specific Bangor services identified by the petitioner, in [Plenary in January 2020](#) Rhun ap Iorwerth AM asked the Minister to “make a statement on the effect of recent changes to the train timetables on smaller stations”. The Minister’s response, and the subsequent exchange, are reproduced below:

**Ken Skates AM:** The December timetable change was the biggest change to services for over three decades. This has benefitted some rail users, whilst other services have unfortunately been affected. Transport for Wales has sought to introduce alternative measures where services have been affected, and are reviewing further timetable amendment possibilities as part of the May timetable change.

**Rhun ap Iorwerth AM:** This is a case of a question being answered before I have an opportunity to ask it, but there are still some important issues that need to be discussed. A number of constituents contacted me following timetable changes disappointed that services to the smaller stations in Môn—Bodorgan, Rhosneigr, Valley and Llanfairpwll—had been reduced. Yes, we need swift services, but we also need to serve our communities too.

I am pleased that Transport for Wales has got back to me now, since I tabled this question, to say that there have been changes to timetables that meet some of the complaints that were made. Having said that, there are still a number of concerns about the availability of trains to smaller stations at the end of the school day and so on. Transport for Wales have admitted to me, ‘No, we perhaps didn’t consult sufficiently with the communities in making these decisions’, and I think the other concerns about trains at the end of the day is another example of something that could have been flagged up had there been proper consultation undertaken. Does the Minister agree with me that we must have a commitment to very careful consultation with communities in terms of how proposed changes are going to impact them?

**Ken Skates AM:** Yes, I'd very much agree with the Member, and the issue of proper consultation is something that I've raised with Transport for Wales as we approach the May timetable change. I think it's essential that stakeholder groups, that communities, are informed well in advance of proposed changes so that they can have some input into whether those changes are beneficial or otherwise. There is a contractual obligation, of course, in place to ensure that no stations receive fewer services than was the case when the franchise was let, and that is something that must be upheld, and it's the reason why Transport for Wales have been working to determine alternative services up until May, when those services that were withdrawn from some of the smaller stations can be addressed.

Ken Skates AC/AM  
Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-944  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00313/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

13 February 2020

*Dear Janet,*

Thank you for your letter of 27 January regarding petition P-05-944.

Both Transport for Wales (TfW) and myself acknowledge the December timetable change introducing the express North/South Wales route has raised concerns amongst commuting passengers. However, developing timetables is incredibly challenging, and there are a number of factors which needed to be considered to allow for the much needed express route.

TfW had a commitment to introduce faster Cardiff-Holyhead services each weekday by December 2019, services that will be delivered using modern, more comfortable 'loco-hauled' services in the coming months. This has led to different train times and changes to the calling patterns on services across the Wales and Borders network, which has meant that in some circumstances passengers need to connect to other services to reach certain destinations.

Transport for Wales will continue to work with stakeholders and listen to passengers, endeavouring to use the valuable feedback they receive to continually improve and shape their rail plans, including our timetables and connecting services.

*Yours ever,  
Ken*

**Ken Skates AC/AM**  
Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales

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

**Back Page 76**

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.



## **Response to the Petition Committee Re: Reverse the cuts to commuter trains services in North East Wales petition (P-05-944)**

This petition was motivated by the recent changes to the weekday commuter time train service which did link Bangor to stations in North East Wales (departing Bangor at 17:18). This was the only direct service to link Bangor to North East Wales departing between 15:04 and 19:02 (following cuts to two other rush hour services over the past 5 years).

This cut further highlights issues regarding the poor treatment of rail commuters in North Wales compared to those in the South as we shall demonstrate, and which we believe requires urgent action by the Assembly Government.

The service was cut in December without any consultation of local rail users, and even took the train staff by surprise. A direct result of the cut is that we are already aware of a number of 'regular' users who now drive along the coast as they are no longer able to commute by train. These include an NHS dentist who lives in Flintshire and works in Bangor, a number of Bangor University staff who live in North East Wales and Chester, and a consultant at Ysbyty Gwynedd. We are also aware of at least one commuter who is being forced to work an extra day 'for free' to make up his hours as a consequence of being forced to catch an earlier evening train by the cut in the 17:18 service.

We have contacted Transport for Wales (TfW) to complain and received a variety of 'excuses' that include:

1. A shortage of rolling stock. Not particularly credible given the train still runs!
2. The train is to be made up of new rolling stock and so will no longer fit into the North East Wales stations. Hardly credible given similar trains are already stopping at these stations!

In their most recent communication, TfW spokesperson cited timetabling constraints by Network Rail and Great Western Railway as another implausible excuse, a point to which we will return below.

**We find the minister's response particularly unhelpful.** It comes as no surprise that he hides behind the somewhat patronising 'incredibly challenging' timetabling excuse! However, our primary concern lies in his statement:

*"TfW had a commitment to introduce faster Cardiff-Holyhead services each weekday by December 2019, services that would be delivered using modern, more comfortable 'loco hauled' services in the coming months."*

- The 'commitment' is clearly a commitment to the Assembly Government?
- The 'more comfortable' presumably means First Class?
- ***The implication of this statement is clearly that the Welsh Assembly Government policy is to prioritise first class rail users between Holyhead and Cardiff (whoever they may be?) over North Wales commuters.***

The minister went on to state that, *"This has led to different train times and changes to calling patterns across the Wales and the Borders Network, which has meant that in some circumstances passengers need to connect to other services ..."*

We note that on Saturdays the 17:18 service from Bangor still calls at Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn, and Flint, and so using the TfW timetable we have been able to compare the “different train times and changes to calling patterns”:

- On weekdays this train departs Chester (for Cardiff) at 18:22.
- In contrast, on Saturday, this train departs Bangor 2 minutes later and arrives in Chester at 18:29, a net saving of 5 minutes on this section of the journey on weekdays.
- The net impact is that this service arrives in Cardiff at 21:24 on weekdays, and 21:34 on Saturday. i.e. shortening the journey time by 8 minutes on weekdays (does an 8 minute saving on a 4 hour 15 minute journey time really constitute ‘*more comfortable*’?).
- What is more perplexing, from a business view point, is that whilst the changes have adversely impacted North Wales commuters (and in consequence ticket revenue), the new weekday calling pattern include stations like Church Stretton (annual station usage: 0.139M) and Craven Arms (0.1M).
- Passenger numbers are considerably smaller at these stations than the by-passed North Wales stations (e.g. Rhyl 0.52M, Prestatyn 0.332M, see Table 1 more details).
- Despite considerably small passenger footfall, train services stopping at stations south of Strewsbury are already more frequent, in the early evening, than they are in the rush hour in North Wales. For example, a commuter wishing to travel from Bangor to Colwyn Bay, Rhyl, Prestatyn, or Flint has a choice of two direct services at either 16:15 or 19:02. In contrast, early evening trains south from Church Stretton have a frequency of approx. every 30 minutes (ie. 19:07, **19:38**, 20:11). The 19:38 train is the minister’s “*more comfortable*” service!
- ***It would therefore appear that the changes in stopping patterns prioritise passengers in South Shropshire nipping down to Hereford for a pint over North Wales Commuters.***

**We would like to remind the Petitions Committee that the most recent cut to North East Wales weekday rush hour services is only the latest in a series of cuts.**

In recent years, the morning service which used to arrive in Bangor at 9:38 was cut. In the evening, there was previously an hourly direct service between Bangor and the North East Wales stations. Now there is only one changing service between 16:15 and 19:02, departing Bangor at 18:09, which frequently leaves passengers stranded as the connecting service east from Llandudno Junction is often cancelled. Strangely, however there is still an hourly service on a Saturday!

In the other direction, there has also been a reduction in rush hour services which stop at stations in North East Wales. For example, Flint’s ‘busiest’ train (according to station staff) was the 7:21 to Manchester, but this service was cut about 5 years ago. Strangely, it still runs on a Saturday!

We believe that these previous cuts have been at least partly responsible for the significant fall in the number of passengers using North East Wales rail network over the past 5 years (see Table 1).

**Table 1: North Wales station usage figures (from Wikipedia):**

Station/ year	Colwyn Bay	Rhyl	Prestatyn	Flint	Shotton
2014/15	0.292	0.544	0.349	0.266	0.241
2015/16	0.286	0.537	0.349	0.266	0.237
2016/17	0.278	0.534	0.345	0.261	0.234

2017/18	0.269	0.520	0.333	0.258	0.215
2018/19	0.281	0.520	0.334	0.278	0.223
Change	-4%	-5.5%	-5.3%	+4.5%	-8.5%

For comparison, during the same period, passenger numbers using Chester Station have increased substantially (+10.7%), with a UK wide increase in regional rail use of +7.2%.

Our conclusion is that whilst the use of regional railways has increased substantially across the UK in the period 2014/15 – 2018/19, stations in North Wales have not experienced that increase. Indeed, all bar Flint have seen a significant decline. Note that the most recent figures are for 2018/19 and so do not include the impact of the recent cuts.

**Despite the impoverished levels of service, the passengers in North Wales are expected to pay more.** We consider that another contributory factor to the declining passenger numbers is likely to be the high fares charged on the North Wales coast in comparison to the remainder of the Transport for Wales Network. Even following the 10% cut in North Wales rail fares in January, the cost of a single ticket still comes in at around 45p/ mile. For comparison, fares in South Wales equate to around 25p/ mile. This is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: The costs of travel per mile for rail journeys in South and North Wales, compared.**

Route	Distance (miles)	Anytime single ticket (£)	Cost (£) per mile
Bangor - Flint	48	19.8	0.4125
Swansea - Cardiff	45	12.0	0.2667
Bridgend - Cardiff	24	5.3	0.2208
Maesteg - Cardiff	27	5.0	0.1852
Newport - Cardiff	16	5.4	0.3375
Flint -Llandudno Junction	34	16.7	0.4912
Flint - Colwyn Bay	30	16.7	0.5567
Flint - Rhyl	23	9.3	0.4043
Bangor-Rhyl	25	13.3	0.5320

At the same time, many of the reduced fare options are not available to North Wales commuters. For example, the “Carnet” option is not available between Flint/ Chester and Bangor.

Overall, in our opinion the Assembly Government needs to reconsider their commitment to a sustainable railway network, as they are currently overseeing the decline of an important element of the network at a time of growth elsewhere across the UK.

Furthermore, we would suggest that the ‘visions’ of the electrification of the North Wales Coast line expressed by various ministers and AMs, in recent weeks since the H2S announcement, are simply not credible against the background of declining passenger numbers which we believe are a direct result of the high costs increasing inconvenience associated with North Wales rail commuting.

More broadly, we are disappointed that the minister's response did not address the key points of the petition, namely that impoverished yet overpriced train services in the North Wales that clearly contravene his Assembly Government's policies and commitments by:

1. Forcing people from public transport into their cars, at the time of a climate emergency, contributing to road congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Denying access to Bangor University by those living in some of Wales' most deprived communities, and more generally curtailing employment opportunities for those who rely on public transport.

**In summary, we consider the minister's response to our petition inadequate and unsatisfactory, and ask the Petitions Committee to consider that:**

- **The most recent commuter train cut appears to prioritise the comfort of a few passengers travelling to South Wales/ Cardiff over the needs of many commuters using the North East Wales stations daily;**
- **Cuts to TfW services in North Wales cannot be excused by the 'incredible complexity' of planning and timetabling constraints;**
- **These cuts disproportionately target the passengers in North Wales, who are already paying more for their rail journeys compared to their counterparts in South Wales;**
- **In consequence, passenger numbers in North Wales are declining, in significant contrast to the growth trend observed in South Wales and across the rest of the UK;**
- **This trend is only set to get worse, jeopardising the Assembly Government plans and commitments to sustainable public transport, addressing climate change, and reducing inequalities.**

**Therefore, we urge the Committee to advise the Government to act decisively, reverse the cuts to commuter trains services in North East Wales, and consider the negative impact of TfW actions more broadly.**

Yours Sincerely,

Prof Thomas Rippeth

Dr Hans-Peter Kubis

Dr Simon Viktor

Dr Mihela Erjavec

# Agenda Item 2.5

## **P-05-945 The Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales**

This petition was submitted by Coed Cadw – The Woodland Trust in Wales having collected a total of 4,354 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to urgently increase tree cover to help address this climate emergency & the well documented collapse of nature.

The Welsh Government's 'State of Natural Resources Report' said no ecosystems in Wales are resilient.

We need more trees in urban & rural areas to address high levels of air pollution, lessen heatwaves & floods, increase wildlife & create a carbon store above & below ground.

Rivers, hedgerows & verges can provide quality habitat connectivity, these criss-cross Wales from mountains to coast. Many have biodiversity rich ancient woods, meadows & marshes alongside them, but their range & quality has massively declined in the last 50 years.

Our rivers are healthiest when bordered by wide strips of lightly grazed broadleaf woodland river banks. Trees provide some dappled shade keeping rivers cool & protecting them from pollutants, reducing unsustainable soil loss, whilst helping to keep farmers on the land.

To help nature recover we need to recreate more wildlife friendly landscapes by creating more & healthier interconnecting habitats.

Placed & funded correctly, a new national forest can deliver many solutions for all future generations, a more 'resilient Wales'.

### **We call for a comprehensive strategy to deliver:**

- an increase of 5000 hectares per year in tree cover in urban areas, on farms, & in the uplands
- tree cover that is at least 50% native broadleaf trees, best for biodiversity, & public well-being

- sustainable management of existing trees, forests, woodland & hedges, to protect them from damage & provide a mixed mosaic of habitat for wildlife & people
- new funding for farmers for 'Hedges & Edges' & traditional woodland pasture –agroforestry
- funding for community tree nurseries, for people to be involved in finding sites, planting, & growing trees right across Wales
- a truly national & innovative 'National Forest for Wales'

## Additional Information

### References

**Climate Emergency:** <https://gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-declares-climate-emergency>

**State of Natural Resources Report:**  
<https://cdn.naturalresources.wales/media/682366/sonarr-summary-september-2016-edited-august-2017.pdf>

**A Resilient Wales:** <https://futuregenerations.wales/aotp/resilience/>

**Bordered by wide strips of lightly grazed broadleaf woodland:**  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281902234\\_Beyond\\_cool\\_Adapting\\_upland\\_streams\\_for\\_climate\\_change\\_using\\_riparian\\_woodlands](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281902234_Beyond_cool_Adapting_upland_streams_for_climate_change_using_riparian_woodlands)

**Community tree nurseries** <https://www.longforest.cymru/news/community-tree-nurseries-guest-blog>

**Agroforestry:** combining agriculture & trees  
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2018/07/agroforestry-wales/>

## Glossary

**Biodiversity:** the variety of life found on earth. It includes all species of plants & animals, their abundance & genetic diversity

**Ecosystem resilience:** means how well ecosystems can deal with disturbances – either by resisting them, recovering from them, or adapting to them. Resilient ecosystems are able to carry on delivering services & benefits despite these disturbances.

**Habitat:** the natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism

**Habitat connectivity:** how patches of habitat are linked together to form a connected habitat network that allows species to interact & move.

**Hedges & Edges:** the habitats that make up hedges, tree lines, verges, river & stream margins, ditches, stone walls & other boundaries

**Public Goods:** commodities or service that is provided without profit to all members of a society, either by the government or by a private individual or organisation

**Tree Cover:** the area that is shaded by the canopies of trees & shrubs

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central

# Title: P-05-945 Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 10 Mawrth 2020  
Petitions Committee | 10 March 2020

**Petition Number:** P-05-945

**Petition title:** The Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales

**Text of petition:** We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to urgently increase tree cover to help address this climate emergency & the well documented collapse of nature.

The Welsh Government's 'State of Natural Resources Report' said no ecosystems in Wales are resilient.

We need more trees in urban & rural areas to address high levels of air pollution, lessen heatwaves & floods, increase wildlife & create a carbon store above & below ground.

Rivers, hedgerows & verges can provide quality habitat connectivity, these criss-cross Wales from mountains to coast. Many have biodiversity rich ancient woods, meadows & marshes alongside them, but their range & quality has massively declined in the last 50 years.

Our rivers are healthiest when bordered by wide strips of lightly grazed broadleaf woodland river banks. Trees provide some dappled shade keeping rivers cool & protecting them from pollutants, reducing unsustainable soil loss, whilst helping to keep farmers on the land.

To help nature recover we need to recreate more wildlife friendly landscapes by creating more & healthier interconnecting habitats.

Placed & funded correctly, a new national forest can deliver many solutions for all future generations, a more 'resilient Wales'.





We call for a comprehensive strategy to deliver:

- an increase of 5000 hectares per year in tree cover in urban areas, on farms, & in the uplands
- tree cover that is at least 50% native broadleaf trees, best for biodiversity, & public well-being
- sustainable management of existing trees, forests, woodland & hedges, to protect them from damage & provide a mixed mosaic of habitat for wildlife & people
- new funding for farmers for 'Hedges & Edges' & traditional woodland pasture-agroforestry
- funding for community tree nurseries, for people to be involved in finding sites, planting, & growing trees right across Wales
- a truly national & innovative 'National Forest for Wales'

## 1. Background

### 1.1. Woodlands in Wales

#### Spatial extent

There were 309,000 hectares (ha) of woodland in Wales as of March 2019, representing 14.9% of the total land area. The EU average for woodland area is 37%. There are a further 92,700 ha of tree cover outside of woodlands (as of January 2016), found predominantly in agricultural landscapes, urban areas and transport corridors. This means that approximately 19.4% of Welsh land area is covered by woodlands and trees.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) reported that the mean urban tree canopy cover in Wales was 16.3% in 2013 (PDF, 1.35MB). This is a fall from 17% in 2009. Public open space accounts for 53% of urban tree cover despite covering just 22% of urban land and high density housing areas, often places of high deprivation, contain just 1% of urban tree cover. The report also shows that 72% of Welsh towns lost tree cover between 2009 and 2013, and 7,000 large trees were removed from towns and cities between 2006 and 2013.

#### Planting and restocking

In 1905, there were only 88,000 ha of woodland in Wales, but by 1965 this had grown to 201,000 ha, and by 1998 there were 299,000 ha of woodland cover.

The average planting rate for the last decade (2009-2019) was 430 ha per year. The average restocking (replacing felled trees) rate for the last decade was 1,920 ha per year.

The Climate Change Strategy for Wales (2010) set a target of planting 100,000 ha of new woodland between 2010 and 2030 at a rate of 5,000 ha per year. In the Woodland for Wales: action plan (2016), the Welsh Government said that only 3,203 ha of new

woodland had been planted between 2010 and 2015. The Welsh Government revised its planting target in 2018, see section on current policy below.

## 1.2. Ecosystem services

An ecosystem service is an outcome of a natural system that has benefits for people. The Welsh Government categorises these services in its [Woodlands for Wales strategy](#) as:

- provisioning services – e.g. timber production;
- regulating services – e.g. carbon sequestration and improving air quality;
- cultural services – e.g. recreation and health benefits; and
- supporting services – e.g. increasing biodiversity.

[Forest Research valued Welsh woodland resources](#) in the four specific areas of timber extraction, carbon sequestration, recreation and air quality. They found that the total annual value of services provided by Welsh woodlands in 2015 was £606m. The breakdown between the four different services is shown in Table 1.

*Table 1: Annual value of services provided by Welsh woodlands in 2015. Source: Forest Research.*

Ecosystem service	Timber extraction	Carbon sequestration	Recreation	Air quality	Total
Value (£m)	28.3	108	85	385	606.3

### Commercial forestry sector

The latest [Woodland for Wales Indicators](#) showed that the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the forestry sector in Wales was £665m in 2017. £50m of this total was from logging, £250m from the manufacture of wood products, and £365m from the manufacture of paper.

[Between 10,300 and 11,000 people were employed in the forestry sector in 2017](#), with 9,000 of these as employees and 2,000 self-employed. There were 805 individual business units in the sector. These figures do not include businesses that are supported by woodlands, such as recreation.

### Carbon storage and air quality

The amount of carbon sequestered (taken in and stored) by Welsh woodlands is [estimated to be 1.84 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent \(CO<sub>2</sub>e\) each year](#). The Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector as a whole is a net sink of carbon, and [reduced Welsh emissions by 770,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2016](#).

Among the [air pollutants that have the highest impact on human health are small, particulate matter less than 10 µm in size \(PM<sub>10</sub>\)](#). In 2015 it was estimated that [Welsh woodlands removed 16,211 tonnes of PM<sub>10</sub>](#) from the air. Using air quality damage cost guidance, this removal of PM<sub>10</sub> in 2015 was valued at £385 million.

## Recreation

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In a 2019 survey conducted by Forest Research, 77% of Welsh respondents said they had visited woodlands for recreation in the last 12 months, with walking being the most popular activity. The number of active community woodland groups has increased from 76 in 2016 to 95 in 2019. The area of land leased, owned or managed by community groups has increased from 1,706 ha in 2016 to 5,623 ha in 2019.

## Biodiversity

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The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) states that upland oak woodland is among the most extensive of all habitats of principal importance in Wales. Of the 542 species of principal importance, the Forestry Commission Wales found that 210 species rely wholly or partly on woodland habitats.

In the SoNaRR, NRW assessed ecosystem resilience semi-natural broadleaf woodlands were found to be moderately resilient, and resilience was moderate to high for planted woodlands (native and non-native mixes).

# 2. Welsh Government action

## Welsh Government strategy

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The Welsh Government published its updated Woodlands for Wales strategy in June 2018, setting out its vision for woodlands over the next 50 years.

The four key areas for delivery in the strategy are:

- Responding to climate change
- Woodlands for people
- A competitive and integrated forest sector
- Environmental quality

The strategy sets out an ambition to plant at least 2,000 ha of new woodland annually from 2020 to 2030. This target was recommended by the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) for Wales to meet its statutory requirements under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 of an 80% emissions reduction from the baseline by 2050.

The Welsh Government's low carbon delivery plan (2019) reiterates its ambition is to meet the 2,000 ha per year tree planting target, but to increase this to 4,000 ha per year "as rapidly as possible".

## National Forest

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The First Minister, Mark Drakeford, included the idea of a National Forest in his leadership manifesto. The proposal is reflected in 'Policy 9' of the draft National Development Framework, which states:

“The Welsh Government is committed to developing a national forest, and will identify appropriate delivery sites and mechanisms to achieve this aim. Action to safeguard proposed locations for the national forest will be supported.”

The vision for the National Forest was put forward by the First Minister on 12 July 2019 to the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister:

“... I am very, very committed to the idea of developing a national forest for Wales, both because in a climate emergency context, it's an obligation on us to do more, and I also think it's just such a great thing to have for Wales. We have this fantastic coastal path, which is a tremendous draw to people in Wales, and a national forest, which is not just picking a new area and putting it there, but trying to link up the forests we have in Wales already so that you could walk continuously from one part of Wales to the other, almost, never leaving the national forest, is my vision of it. I want it to be somewhere where people want to go, where there'll be opportunities for leisure like mountain biking—lots of things we can do.

It's a 20-year project, and the latest advice that I've been looking at is to look at the map and see where existing forests are already to be found and then how we can create corridors between them, so that, in the end, over a 20-year period, there will be this continuous forest, and looking to see where the first opportunities are to begin that.”

#### Minister's letter

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The Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths (hereafter, the Minister) wrote to the Chair of the Petitions Committee in relation to this petition on 11 February 2020. In the letter, the Minister emphasised that the Welsh Government's approach is outlined in the Woodlands for Wales strategy.

In relation to the National Forest, the Minister states that:

“The Welsh Government is investing £4.5m to begin establishing a National Forest in Wales. The National Forest will contribute to increasing woodland creation in Wales, alongside other measures such as the Glastir Woodland Creation scheme. The National Forest will also unlock other opportunities, such as helping local communities better connect with the natural environment and tourism.”

The Minister added that reversing the decline in biodiversity was a priority and that the Welsh Government want to encourage community engagement in woodlands, providing funding towards 'Llais y Goedwig', a community woodlands, grassroots network.

### 3. National Assembly for Wales action

#### Branching Out: Committee inquiry report

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The Assembly's Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee (CCERA) published a report in July 2017 following its inquiry into woodland policy.

It highlighted the severe lack of woodland creation in Wales in recent years, mainly due to regulatory, bureaucratic, financial and cultural barriers. It also stated that a lack of funding for woodland management was thought to be affecting the environmental quality of native woodlands.

The report made 13 recommendations to the Welsh Government, aimed at enhancing the environmental, economic and social contribution of Welsh woodlands.

The Minister responded formally to the report in September 2017. She accepted 12 of the 13 recommendations, albeit nine only in principle, and rejected just one.

One of the accepted recommendations urged the Welsh Government to review its Woodlands for Wales strategy; the updated document was published in June 2018 (see above).

The one rejected recommendation called for the Welsh Government to ensure a minimum of 20% tree canopy cover in urban areas. The Minister said that a single target was unlikely to help deliver the Committee's goals and would prejudice the local decision making process envisaged under the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and *Environment (Wales) Act 2016*.

#### Plenary and committee questions

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The concept of a national forest has been raised in a number of Assembly committee meetings and in Plenary in recent months.

During the Assembly's CCERA committee draft budget 2020-21 scrutiny session, the Minister was asked whether the £4.5m capital allocated was enough to meet the Welsh Government's tree planting targets. In response she said:

"No. I think we'll need additional funding [...] The private sector, I think, will play a big part; I don't think we can just do it from Government alone. You've heard me say many times that we're not planting enough trees and we need to ensure that we plant more, and we will."

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

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM  
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-945  
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00251/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

11 February 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 27 January, regarding the Woodland Trust's (Coed Cadw) Petition P-05-945 on the Climate Emergency and National Forest in Wales.

The Welsh Government's *Woodlands for Wales* Strategy outlines our commitment to increase tree planting in Wales and to ensure woodlands are created and managed in a sustainable way.

Our strategy also encompasses the objectives of the Environment (Wales) Act (2016), which put into legislation international best practice for reversing the decline in biodiversity through the 'sustainable management of natural resources' (SMNR). It is further underpinned by the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) being the reference standard for sustainable forest management across Wales and the UK.

The *Woodlands for Wales* strategy sets a target for increasing woodland by at least 2,000 hectares per year from 2020 to 2030 and beyond. This figure was established in line with the recommendations from the UK's Independent Committee on Climate Change (UKICCC) to help address the climate emergency.

The Welsh Government is investing £4.5 million to begin establishing a National Forest in Wales. The National Forest will contribute to increasing woodland creation in Wales, alongside other measures such as the Glastir Woodland Creation scheme. The National Forest will also unlock other opportunities, such as helping local communities better connect with the natural environment and tourism.

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

Pack Page 91

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.

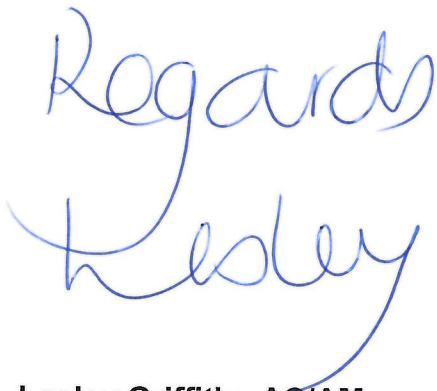
Tree planting is a long-term aspiration and requires a step change in land use, it will take time to make progress. The forestry business by its nature is long term, trees take time to grow and so our policies need to operate both in the shorter term, which are also relevant in 50 years' time. It is important to have realistic and ambitious targets.

The Welsh Government wants to ensure SMNR principles are applied when planting trees to ensure the right tree is planted in the right place. It is also important to maintain a balance in planting to maintain our productive coniferous forests and champion home grown timber in Wales. Importing timber, especially from areas where environmental standards aren't as high as our own, can be problematic and I see it as vital to encourage a dynamic timber industry in Wales.

Tree planting needs to be considered in balance with other important natural resources such as habitat, landscape and water quality in order to maximise the economic and environmental benefits of expanding our woodland cover in Wales.

The approach and delivery framework in the Environment (Wales) Act is about reversing the decline in biodiversity through international best practice to achieve this aim. The Natural Resources Policy sets out 'resilient ecological networks' as a priority for reversing the decline in biodiversity. On the Welsh Government Woodland Estate this is being taken forward through Area Statements and the Nature Recovery Action Plan.

The Welsh Government also wants to encourage community engagement with woodlands. Under the Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being (ENRaW) scheme, the Welsh Government also provides funding towards Llais y Goedwig ('Voice of the Woodlands'). Llais y Goedwig is a community woodland, grassroots network group - which support community woodland groups across Wales. Llais y Goedwig has a large volunteer base and works in collaboration with other organisations, community groups and individuals to champion community woodlands in Wales.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Regards Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Lesley Griffiths AC/AM**

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig  
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



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[woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk)

4 March 2020 *By e-mail*

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

### **Petition 05-945: The Climate Emergency and a National Forest for Wales**

May I thank you for considering this petition and for the opportunity to comment on the Minister's letter. Our comments below respond to the topics covered in each paragraph of that letter. We welcome the general direction and scope indicated in the Minister's summary of the Welsh Government's tree, woodland and forestry programmes.

We are particularly interested in opportunities to explore the "step change" that the Minister mentions, and the ambition and scale of achievement that could be possible, given the Government's declaration of a climate emergency and recognition of biodiversity decline. Our view on what is needed of Government and local authorities are summarised in our Emergency Tree Plan<sup>1</sup>, published in January this year.

### **Sustainable forestry (paragraphs 2 and 3)**

We welcome the Welsh Government's commitment to sustainable forestry, and in particular the strong commitment to maintain independent certification of the Government's forest estate through the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS)<sup>2</sup>.

- i) We would be interested to hear any thoughts the Minister has on the development of the UK Forest Standard (UKFS)<sup>3</sup> given that:-
  - a. The Welsh Government's own monitoring shows that only 20% of private forestry in Wales is "known to be managed" to the UK Forest Standard. The remainder is not subject to any audit process.<sup>4</sup>
  - b. UKFS is a UK wide standard that does not directly embed the SMNR principles or ambition of Welsh policy and legislation.

### **Planting targets (Paragraph 4)**

We welcome the clear commitment to challenging interim planting targets, and the recent increases in planting achieved under the Glastir Woodland Creation Scheme.

<sup>1</sup> Woodland Trust (2020) Emergency Tree Plan.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2020/01/emergency-tree-plan/>

<sup>2</sup> UKWAS. UK Woodland Assurance Scheme. <http://ukwas.org.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> UKFS UK Forest Standard. . <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-forestry-standard>

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government (2019). Woodlands for Wales Indicators 2017-2018. Chapter 3 Sustainable Forest Management <https://gov.wales/woodlands-wales-indicators>



- i) We understand that applications from landowners to this scheme have greatly exceeded the available budget. Can the Minister confirm the extent of un-funded applications received, and the proportion of these applications that is of sufficient standard to be suitable for funding?
- ii) How will the Minister significantly increase resourcing for green infrastructure and tree planting to meet the urgency and scale of the climate emergency?

#### **National Forest for Wales (Paragraph 5)**

We greatly welcome the Wales National Forest programme and look forward to more details being announced by the First Minister. Coed Cadw is hosting an event with the First Minister at Brynau in Neath on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March. We summarised our aspirations for a new Wales National Forest in our submission to the inquiry by the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee in December.<sup>5</sup> An extract of our submission is attached.

#### **Step change in land use (Paragraph 6)**

We absolutely agree with the Minister’s comment that tree planting is a long term aspiration and requires a step change in land use. We note the recent advice from the Committee for Climate Change that forest cover should be increased across the UK from an average of 13% to an average of 19% by 2050.<sup>6</sup>

- i) We would like to ask what progress Welsh Government is making with developing a long term plan to achieve such a significant change in land use.
- ii) What plans does the Welsh Government have to resource such a step change and help landowners significantly increase tree cover?
- iii) What does the Minister need from the farming, forestry and biodiversity sectors to make sufficiently rapid progress?
- iv) What improvements does the Minister think are needed in the quality, breadth and availability of advisory expertise able to support increases in tree cover in a wide range of different circumstances and for different needs?

#### **Timber production (Paragraph 7)**

We support the aspiration to increase the proportion of quality timber grown in Wales, and retaining its added value within Wales.

- i) What plan does the Welsh Government have to increase the resilience and future-proofing of the forest industry and diversify away from the current high volume / low value business model, dependent on a few softwood species and on highly centralised high volume processing?
- ii) What role will the Welsh Government forest estate play in leading this diversification?

#### **Habitats, landscape, water quality and flood mitigation (Paragraphs 8 and 9)**

We welcome the Minister’s emphasis on the need for woodland to deliver these other substantive benefits and to contribute to reversing biodiversity decline. We point out that the design and composition of plantations intended for commercial timber production, and their management by clear-felling, severely compromises the delivery of the “public goods” benefits such as biodiversity and water management. Our view is that other methods of increasing tree cover better meet these objectives, in particular agroforestry, urban tree planting and the use of

<sup>5</sup> Woodland Trust (2019) submission to CCERA inquiry on the National Development Framework.

<sup>6</sup> Committee on Climate Change (2020). Land use policies for a net zero UK. 123 pp

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-policies-for-a-net-zero-uk/>

natural regeneration of native species. Our provisional analysis of the potential of these approaches is attached.

- i) What approach does the Minister propose to ensure that public funding for woodland creation is directed to the effective delivery of these “public goods”?
- ii) What emphasis will the Minister be making for the case for agroforestry? We believe that additional hedge, shelterbelt and riparian planting on farms can meet up to a third of the woodland expansion target and deliver many public and farm business benefits. Our guidance note on agroforestry and flooding is attached.<sup>7</sup>
- iii) Will the Minister ensure that NRW reviews flood management strategies to fully develop the potential of nature based solutions to water management?
- iv) NRW has reported that 159 out of our 220 towns in Wales have shown a decline in tree canopy cover between 2009 and 2013, including losing large amenity trees at a rate of 1000 trees per year.<sup>8</sup> What proposals does the Minister have to ensure that local authorities reverse the current declines in urban tree cover?

### **Community Woodlands (Paragraph 10)**

We welcome the Welsh Government’s commitment to supporting community engagement in woodland and we look forward to a substantial stakeholder engagement process around the creation of the new National Forest. Given the significance of the land use change envisaged we suggest that it is vital that the farming community and the public are supportive.

- i) What approaches to consultation on the location and design of new forest creation is the Minister considering, to avoid the damage done by previous episodes of afforestation and to ensure a strong “social licence” for woodland expansion?
- ii) What analysis is available to the Minister of the economic and community enterprise opportunities arising from substantial woodland expansion, for example in meeting needs for fencing and the potential for community tree nurseries?

### **Carbon Sequestration and Storage**

The Minister does not mention carbon sequestration and storage in her letter. The climate change mitigation potential of additional woodland creation is the main driver for calls to significantly increase tree cover and this is recognised in the Welsh Government’s Low Carbon Wales plan.

There are many complexities involved in establishing the true capacity of trees and woodland to sequester carbon as they grow and to lock carbon into long term storage.

- i) We would like to ask the Minister what analysis the Government has available on the contributions to these goals available from different sorts and uses of woodland and different approaches to increasing tree cover? We would question assumptions that standard plantation creation designed for timber production is the best means of securely locking up atmospheric carbon.
- ii) What potential does the Minister see to drive the creation of a commercial carbon offset market to fund new woodland creation in Wales?
- iii) Will the Welsh Government produce carbon budgets for its own infrastructure projects, such as its roads programme and Cardiff Wales Airport?

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<sup>7</sup> Coed Cadw (2020) unpublished. Briefing note on Agroforestry and Flooding.

<sup>8</sup> NRW (2016) Tree Cover in Wales Towns and Cities: Understanding canopy cover to better plan and manage our urban trees // Study Summary. <https://naturalresources.wales/media/679615/eng-urban-tree-summary-2016.pdf>

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to suggest these topics and look forward to the discussion. Please contact me or Jerry Langford should the Committee members require any further information on any of the issues raised.

Yours sincerely



Natalie Buttriss

Director of Wales

Cyfarwyddwraig Cymru

Enc

1. Coed Cadw – comments to CCERA on Wales National Forest
2. Coed Cadw = Briefing note on Agroforestry and Flooding
3. Coed Cadw - Possible contribution to targets of different forms of new woodland creation



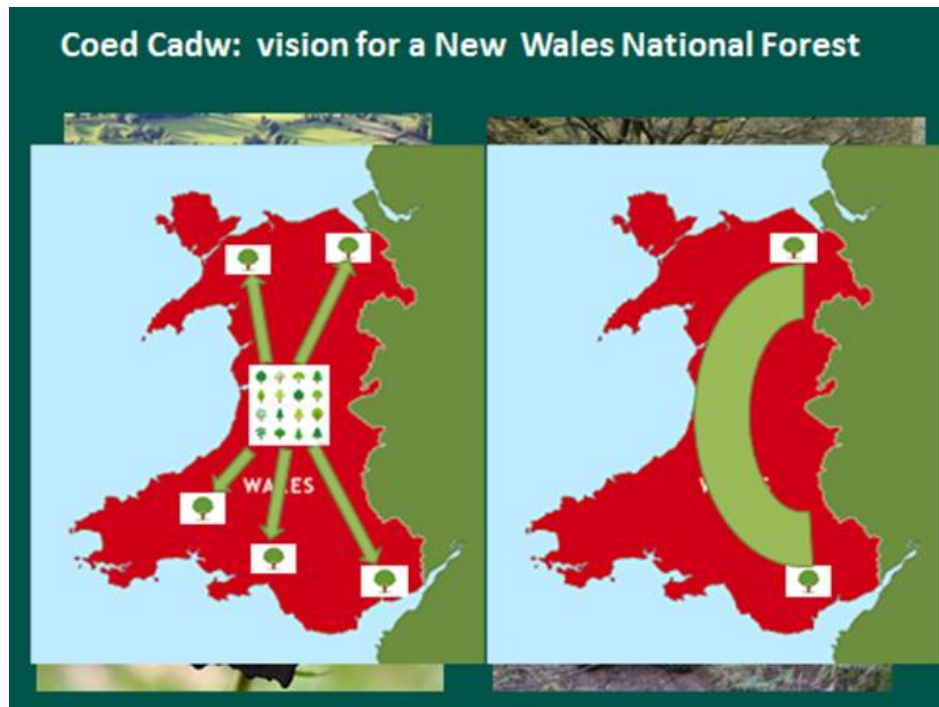
## Wales National Forest

Comments to Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee.

Inquiry on NDF 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### A New Wales National Forest

1. We believe the First Minister's intention is for something inclusive and inspirational and think it is important that this political leadership is maintained. It is important that this new initiative does not just become a utilitarian delivery plan for the woodland expansion targets or a rebranding of the existing public forest estate.
2. We see a new "fforest" as a well wooded landscape which provides an attractive and healthy environment in which many things can happen, including housing and development.
3. We see the programme operating on a national scale, connected from north to south and across both urban and rural locations. We see a truly national and distinctive Welsh brand, flexible to local circumstances.
4. We think it essential that public and stakeholder engagement is at the heart of developing activity. Throughout the NDF document there is frequent reference to communities but the process of community engagement or co-design is barely discussed.



**Views on the policy on establishing a national forest (policy 9). In particular: Whether the draft NDF gives sufficient detail on this issue. Your involvement in developing this proposed policy**

- We are involved in current discussions through the Woodland Strategy Advisory Panel and are also making representations direct to WG
- The idea is still at the development stage, and we think it is important not to close down on details too early, in order to ensure the project is sufficiently ambitious and inclusive. We have proposed a substantial stakeholder engagement and scoping exercise which we hope the WG will fund.
- This engagement process needs to take place over an extended period of time. There is value in the early announcement of one or two demonstration sites provided these launch a process which invites far wider participation
- We believe the First Minister's intention is for something inclusive and inspirational and think it is important that this political leadership is maintained. It is important that this new initiative does not just become a utilitarian delivery plan for the woodland expansion targets or a rebranding of the existing public forest estate.
- A Wales National Forest can start a new and different conversation around woodland that does not repeat the mistakes of the forest expansion of the 1950s when a top down and divisive process destroyed public support for forestry.
- We see a new "fforest" as a well wooded landscape which provides an attractive and healthy environment in which many things can happen, including housing and development.
- We see the programme operating on a national scale, connected from north to south and across both urban and rural locations. We see a truly national and distinctive Welsh brand, flexible to local circumstances.
- We think it essential that public and stakeholder engagement is at the heart of developing activity. Throughout the NDF document there is frequent reference to communities but the process of community engagement or co-design is barely discussed.

## Briefing Note

# Agroforestry can help mitigate flooding

Planting trees improves the infiltration of rain and surface water into the soil. Tree roots open up the soil structure and create a larger network of large pores in the surrounding soil.

Research carried out at Pontbren<sup>1</sup> in Montgomeryshire has demonstrated the value of planting hedges and strips of woodland both across slopes and to protect stream edges. These are agroforestry actions which particularly applicable to livestock farming in Wales. In addition to helping with flood mitigation they deliver many other benefits for livestock welfare and productivity, biodiversity and landscape and carbon storage.

Widespread adoption of such measures, supported by a new sustainable farming scheme, would help to reduce and hold back peaks flows, especially if combined with other “slow the flow” measures and natural flood management approaches.



**(Photo: Pontbren)**

Suitably located and designed tree belts can help reduce flash flooding and soil erosion by slowing down surface water flow and sending it deeper into the soil.

Research results<sup>2</sup> clearly showed shelterbelts across slopes captured surface run-off and allowed it to percolate into the soil. Within woodland the overland flows were greatly reduced.

Through reducing overland flows and increasing infiltration, peak stream flows were also reduced. These effects were apparent within just two years of planting. The benefits will be greater with deeper rooting tree species, including most native broadleaves. Coniferous species including spruces and pines tend to be shallower rooting.

A second valuable agroforestry measure is the fencing and planting in riparian protection zones. This can also slow down water run-off into streams and has a very significant role in

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<sup>1</sup> Woodland Trust (2013) The Pontbren Project: A farmer lead approach to sustainable land management in the uplands. C. Keenleyside 33 pp bilingual  
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2013/02/pontbren-project-sustainable-uplands-management/>

<sup>2</sup> Bird SB Emmett BA Sinclair FL Stevens PA Reynolds B Nicholson S & Jones T 2003. Pontbren: Effects of tree planting on agricultural soils and their functions. Report to CCW, NAW and FC.

intercepting sediment and nutrients and protecting stream banks from trampling and erosion.

As a result vegetation has recovered and stream morphology has returned to a more natural profile with riffles and pools, which are used by trout and supporting other wildlife.

Soil erosion is a loss to the farm, but also has a damaging effect of biological processes in the stream.

(photo: Pontbren. M Townsend)



## The Evidence

Evidence of the impact on flooding of providing cross slope and riparian belts of trees has been recently summarised by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology as part of their evidence work for the Welsh Government to inform the new Sustainable Farming scheme.<sup>3</sup>

They concluded that:-

*On average, compared to the grazed pasture, runoff volumes were reduced by 48% in ungrazed pasture and by 78% in the woodland, and five years after tree planting soil infiltration rates were 67 times greater in the woodland than in the grazed pasture. Further work is needed to understand the full impact of trees as they reach maturity, and whether the ability of soil below trees to store water could be further improved through tree species selection (Marshall et al., 2014)<sup>4</sup>. A modelling study using the observed Pontbren data predicted an average 5% reduction of a severe flood event as a result of creating woodland strips across 7% of this 12km<sup>2</sup> catchment (McIntyre et al., 2012)<sup>5</sup>.*

On riparian woodland they note that the co-benefits on stream quality and habitat are substantial but there is currently a lack of direct observational evidence on the impact of

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<sup>3</sup> Keenleyside, C.B.1 & Old, G.H. (2019) Environment and Rural Affairs Monitoring & Modelling Programme (ERAMMP). Sustainable Farming Scheme Evidence Review. Technical Annex 9: Flood Mitigation. Report for Welsh Government 26pp. <https://erammp.wales/en/resources>

<sup>4</sup> Marshall, M.R. et al (2014). The impact of rural land management changes on soil hydraulic properties and runoff processes: results from experimental plots. *Hydrological Processes*, 28, 2617-2629.

<sup>5</sup> McIntyre, N. et al (2012). The potential for reducing flood risk through changes to rural land management: outcomes from the Flood Risk Management Research Consortium. Presentation to British Hydrological Society's 11th National Symposium, Hydrology for a Changing World (Dundee, 2012).

riparian woodland on flood flows at catchment scale. They note that modelled data does provide some evidence.



*For example, Dixon et al. (2016)<sup>6</sup> modelled riparian forest restoration in the New Forest and found that de-synchronisation of flood waves resulted in a significant reduction in peak flows at the catchment scale (~100km<sup>2</sup>).*

**Photo: fencing for riparian planting in the bleak Doethe Fawr catchment in the Cambrian Mountains**

Another review of the benefits of agroforestry reported evidence from European experience on the possible impact of agroforestry interventions on flooding <sup>7</sup>

*“Wheater et al. (2012)<sup>8</sup> have also predicted the effect of tree planting on water flows from a 400ha sub-catchment. Relative to a baseline scenario, removing all trees increased the median flood peak by 20%, adding tree shelterbelts reduced the peak by 20%, whilst full afforestation reduced the peak by 60%. Whilst Wheater et al. (2012) note that these changes were reduced for more extreme flood events, the results highlight that tree planting can reduce runoff and flooding for ‘median’ events.”*

Also:-

*“In South West France agroforestry is also being promoted at a larger scale to improve flood management and reduce soil erosion as part of the Agr-eau project in the Adour-Garonne watershed (Balaguer, 2016)<sup>9</sup>, an approach that it would be good to replicate in the UK.”*

<sup>6</sup> Dixon, S. J., et al. (2016). The effects of river restoration on catchment scale flood risk and flood hydrology. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* 41(7): 997-1008.

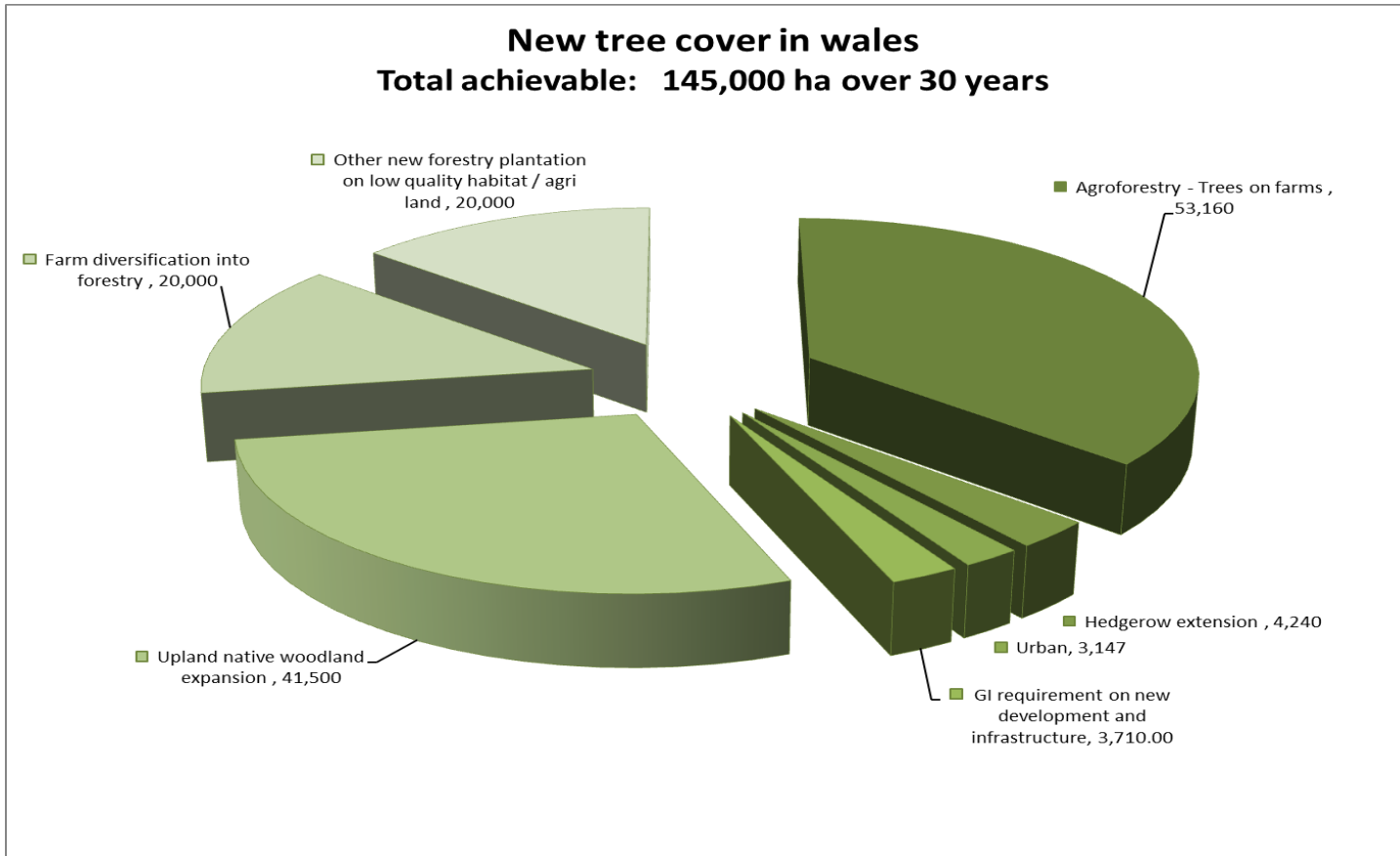
<sup>7</sup> Burgess P (2017) Agroforestry in the UK *Q Journal of Forestry* April 2017 vol 111 No 2 pp111-116

<sup>8</sup> Wheater, H.S. et al (2012) Chapter 22. *Modelling Environmental Change: Quantification of Impacts of Land Use and Land Management Change on UK Flood Risk In: System Identification, Environmental Modelling, and Control System Design* (Eds: L. Wang & H. Garnier) Springer-Verlag London Limited.

<sup>9</sup> Balaguer, F. (2015) *Agr’eau: Developing a Resource-Efficient, Ecofriendly, Climate-Smart Agriculture across the Adour-Garonne Watershed (South- West France)*. Presentation at the Agroforestry Event at EXPO 2015, Milan, Italy. 12 September 2015. <https://www.agforward.eu/index.php/en/news-reader/id-12-september-2015.html>



## Provisional analysis of possible contribution to targets of different forms of new woodland creation



Subject to further analysis

# Agenda Item 3.1

## **P-04-667 A Roundabout for the A477/A4075 Junction**

This petition was submitted by Pembroke Town Council and was first considered by the Committee in January 2016, having collected 597 signatures (115 online and 482 on paper).

### ***Text of the Petition***

*We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to replace the Fingerpost Junction on the A477/A4075 with a roundabout – The current road configuration has not resolved the problems on this dangerous stretch of road.*

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-667  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00195/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

// February 2020

*Dear Janet,*

Thank you for your email of 16 January regarding Petition P-04-667 Roundabout for the A477/A4075 Junction.

Our Trunk Road Agent is in the process of carrying out an enhanced safety review of the A477/A4075 junction, along with a CCTV survey which should be completed by the end of the financial year. A further CCTV survey will be undertaken over the Whitsun period, when tourist traffic flows are higher, as a comparison.

The outcomes from the safety review and CCTV survey will be used to help consider any appropriate measures at the A477/A4075 junction.

*Yours ever,  
Ken*

**Ken Skates AC/AM**  
Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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CF99 1NA

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[Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales)

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

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

**P-04-667 A Roundabout for the A477/A4075 Junction, Correspondence –  
Petitioners to Committee, 04.03.20**

Petitions Committee

Welsh Government.

Cardiff Bay.

Cardiff.

CF99 1NA

REF:- Petition P-04-667 – Roundabout for the A477/A4075 Junction

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you as a member and nominated representative of Cosheston Community Council with regards to the above petition that is due to be considered at your next meeting on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.

Representatives of our council, together with members of Pembroke Town Council last year met with Simon Hart MP and Angela Burns AM to discuss and highlight the issue(s) regarding the safety of the junction known locally as 'Nash Fingerpost', as well as the stretch of road to the West of it which travels towards Pembroke Dock.

Whilst we welcome both the traffic survey's and enhanced safety reviews that we understand are to be carried out by the end of the financial year, we are somewhat disappointed that the issues concerning the safety record of the stretch of road to the West of this junction seem to have been ignored.

The 1 mile stretch of the A477 trunkroad to which I am referring lies approx. 0.5 miles west of 'the Fingerpost' and encompasses 2 'staggered' crossroads that serve the busy service village of Cosheston. These 'staggered crossroads were created as part of the road straightening/improvement scheme which was undertaken approximately years ago.

Our concerns as a council are that this stretch of road is particularly dangerous around these 2 crossroads due to the lack of decent lighting, road markings (both in paint and reflector studs), signage and in inadequate Refuge/Central Turning Lanes.

Travelling East from Pembroke Dock on the A477, the first staggered crossroad junction that you come to is known locally as Slade Cross. This junction is the main access road to the village of Cosheston, as well as being a very well used access to

Pembroke. The junction has no lighting whatsoever, has very poor signage, the coloured road marker studs are inadequate and the Refuge/Central Turning Lanes that are in situ to aid crossing of the carriageway are too narrow and are not really fit for use. The Highway Code states that the proper use of these types of Central Turning Lane is to drive straight onto it, not blocking and allowing any vehicles coming from your left to pass the front of your vehicle in order to themselves turn, before yourself pulling out onto the carriageway. The 2x Refuges/Central Turning Lanes, one which enables traffic to drive in/out of Cosheston by crossing the A477, the other which enables traffic to drive in/out of Pembroke (by way of what's known locally as Mylett's Hill) by crossing the A477, are both too narrow and do not allow proper use as stated by the Highway Code – there is not enough room to sit in the Turning Lane to allow vehicles to pass the front of your vehicle without the rear of your vehicle protruding onto and slightly obstructing a live lane of traffic on the busy A477. I do not have statistics to hand, but local knowledge of accidents on this junction should be backed up in official statistics/Police reports.

Approximately 0.5 miles further East along the A477 from Slade Cross junction is the staggered crossroads known locally as Scoufields Cross. This is a second access into the village of Cosheston via Broadford Lane and also an increasingly used 'rat-run' to access Pembroke via a road known as Mutton Hill. This junction has no lighting, no road markings in either paint or by way of coloured marker studs, very poor signage and no Refuge/Central Turning Lane. In order for any motorist to turn off the A477 onto Broadford Lane or onto Mutton Hill, then this requires traffic to be brought to a dead stop on what is recognised as a very busy trunkroad, used regularly by HGV's travelling to/from the ferry terminal at Pembroke Dock. The lack of a Refuge/Central Turning Lane together with no lighting, poor road marking and poor signage at this particular junction has resulted in at least 3 major accidents in the last 18 months, 2 of which requires the air ambulance. Official statistics/Police reports will I'm sure back up my claims and would probably highlight many more serious accidents over a longer time period.

The three 'main' junctions East of Pembroke Dock – Slade Cross, Scourfields Cross and Nash Fingerpost, are getting to be busier junctions with traffic travelling East out of Pembroke Dock and wanting to turn right, crossing the Westbound A477 Carriageway to access Pembroke. Since the introduction of the new traffic lights at Pembroke Dock's Waterloo Roundabout and new Traffic Lights on Pembroke's Bush Hill, commuters are increasingly using the above stated junctions as 'rat-runs' to try to reduce their travelling times to/from work. Some of the lanes that are being used were not designed for the level of traffic using them, but the contentious issue is that to access these lanes, they must first use these poorly designed junctions to cross the A477.

As previously stated, we as a council welcome the Safety Review and Traffic Survey planned for Nash Fingerpost, but would also request that the issues I have addressed above regarding the Slade Cross and Scoufields Cross junctions are also reviewed and revisited.

In our opinion, Slade Cross needs to have its 2x Refuge/Central Turning Lanes widened and possibly marked with designated 'lanes' as is currently in use at the Nash Fingerpost junction. It also needs to be illuminated – it sits in a hollow and is a very dark, poorly marked junction difficult for even residents to judge, let alone holiday makers or Foreign HGV drivers on the busy A477. With regards to the Scoufields Cross junction, we feel that this incredibly dangerous junction at the least warrants a Refuge/Central Turning Lane to protect motorists from having to stop dead in a busy live carriageway in order to make a turn. Better signage and road marking would also be an improvement but the main 'life saver' would be a Refuge/Central Turning Lane.

We feel that the above points are not only valid, but essential, in order to make this stretch of the A477 safer. Please consider and hopefully act on our suggestions before more members of the public are killed or injured.

Many thanks in advance,

Nicholas A. James (on behalf of)

Cosheston Community Council

# Agenda Item 3.2

## **P-05-907 Change the speed limit in Cemaes to 30mph**

This petition was submitted by Manon Pughe having collected a total of 93 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call upon the National Welsh Assembly to encourage the Welsh Government to reduce the speed limit in the village of Cemaes (on the A470 between Machynlleth and Dolgellau) from 40mph to 30mph. We also call upon them to extend the speed restriction area so that it begins by the Cemaes sign when entering the village from the Cemaes Road direction.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Montgomeryshire
- Mid and West Wales

**P-05-907 Change the speed limit in Cemaes to 30mph, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 29.02.20**

Diolch o galon am yr e bost. Dan ni ddim yn teimlo bod y pwnc yn cael ei ateb yn eich llythyr. Felly nid oes llawer y gallem ei ddweud ar wahan i ofyn i chi eto i geisio prysuro'r broses i newid cyflymdra cyn i unrhywbeth difrifol ddigwydd.

Diolch o galon



Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 3.3

## **P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable**

This petition was submitted by Marine Conservation Society and was first considered by the Committee in May 2017, having collected 1,993 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

The Marine Conservation Society calls on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to act upon the globally responsible Wales goal within the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. Build on the excellent results achieved by the carrier bag charge, by implementing two further actions that would help Wales to achieve a zero waste, circular economy. Namely:

1. Introduce a deposit return system in Wales for all single use beverage containers such as glass and plastic bottles and aluminium cans.
2. Legislate that all fast food containers and utensils, as well as take-away cups and lids, if not reusable or refillable or collected for recycling in store, are fully compostable.

Deposit return systems are already in operation in over 40 countries around the world and have been proven to reduce litter, increase recycling by creating a more certain supply of affordable, high-quality materials, reduce costs for Local Authorities and create jobs.

Fast food wrappers and takeaway cups are a common litter item on our streets and making them refillable/reusable, easily recyclable or compostable would reduce litter.

Manufacturing new drinks containers and fast food containers and cups use up huge amounts of energy, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The more we recycle, and the less we litter, the better for our environment and our economy.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region.**

- Ross-on-Wye
- Herefordshire

Hannah Blythyn AC/AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref HB/00092/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

24 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 February 2020 requesting an update on the proposals to introduce a bottle Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in Wales.

During 2019 we consulted jointly with the UK Government and the Northern Ireland Executive on the merits of introducing a DRS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It received over 208,000 responses and has helped in the development and detailed design of a DRS. This work is being taken forward as a joint project between Wales, Northern Ireland and England and is currently in the design phase.

We also commissioned a piece of consumer research to further understand how a DRS might be received by the public in Wales. This will also further inform the design of the DRS scheme. In summary the main findings were:

- Nearly three quarters of adult survey participants supported the idea of a DRS;
- Between 77% and 83% of survey participants reported they would use a DRS on all or most occasions;
- The findings suggested that older people, those in lower social grades and those without access to a household car may be less able to engage with a DRS for practical and financial reasons;
- 10p was the most popular amount amongst survey participants (37%); and
- An 'all-in' scheme, where all containers carried the same deposit cost, regardless of size, was considered by participants to be the most effective scheme.

This report was published in December 2019, and can be found [here](#).

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[Correspondence.Hannah.Blythyn@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Hannah.Blythyn@gov.wales)

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

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

I also re-affirmed our commitment to the introduction of a DRS in Wales in our recently published consultation document *Beyond Recycling a Strategy to make the Circular Economy in Wales a Reality*. One of the key requirements of a DRS for Wales will be to ensure that it works in conjunction with our established waste collection systems and high recycling rates.

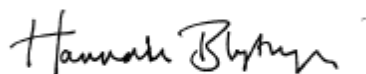
Later this year we will undertake a further joint consultation with the UK Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. The intention is to cover specific issues such as the range of container materials to be included and the possible deposit level.

In parallel work has been undertaken on the primary legislation that will allow Welsh Ministers to enact regulations to bring in a DRS. This is included in the UK Environment Bill, which is currently before the UK Parliament and expected to receive Royal Assent by Christmas 2020.

We are also facilitating a DRS trial using alternative ICT technology and have provided financial support to another DRS trial from our Circular Economy Fund.

A DRS is just one of the interventions that we are committed to that will be needed if we are to achieve our objectives of creating a circular economy, where resources are kept in use longer and waste is avoided, thereby reducing the amount of plastic litter and zero plastic is sent to landfill. We therefore also working on the introduction of an Extended Producer Responsibility system for packaging and the banning of highly littered single use plastic items.

Yours sincerely,



**Hannah Blythyn AC/AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government

**P-05-750 For single use items: introduce a Deposit Return System for drink containers and make fast food containers and utensils compostable, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.20**

MCS welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Deputy Ministers letter of response to your enquiry. Please find below our comments.

Comments on the published survey: Consumer research to inform the design of an effective deposit return scheme

1. MCS welcomes the finding that nearly three quarters of adult survey participants supported the idea of a DRS; and between 77% and 83% of survey participants reported they would use a DRS on all or most occasions.

This demonstrates a high level of public support around these proposed measures. We have public support, cross party support and the Deputy Ministers support there should no barriers to implementing this as soon as legally able.

2. The findings suggested that older people, those in lower social grades and those without access to a household car may be less able to engage with a DRS for practical and financial reasons.

This is to be accepted however it is not insurmountable and has been tackled in other countries where schemes are already in place. As stated in the original Defra consultation document<sup>1</sup>, in circumstances where people may find it difficult to access return points due to isolation of rural areas, age or lack of access to transport, there would need to be provision which would allow these consumers to return drinks containers and receive their deposit refund. For example:

- pick-up services for in-scope DRS material in remote and rural areas and for those who would not otherwise be able to access a return point;
- RVMs could be located in areas of high footfall such as transport hubs, so that they are more easily accessible than if only placed within retail points;
- online retailers selling drinks in in-scope drinks containers could be obligated to pick up and refund DRS material.

3. 10p was the most popular amount amongst survey participants (37%)

Scotland is the first part of the UK to introduce a deposit return scheme for drinks containers with a deposit amount of 20p. MCS are of the view that in order to make working for seas full of life

the scheme as easy to understand as possible, a standardised deposit across the UK should be in place. It would therefore be beneficial to adopt Scotland's deposit of 20p per container. The Scottish consultation document states that the 20p deposit will provide a strong incentive for shoppers to return single-use drinks containers for recycling, thereby increasing the number of these containers which are recycled (and reducing the number which could potentially end up as litter)<sup>2</sup>. As we have seen with the carrier bag charge, the initial 10p cost was a barrier to purchasing a single use carrier bag but over time this appeared to be a less of an incentive. A study by the Environmental Investigation Agency and Greenpeace<sup>3</sup> has found that Supermarkets sold 1.5 billion "bags for life" last year (2019), this is an estimated 54 bags per household. Not only does this suggest that 'bags for life' need to be incorporated into the carrier bag charge, but that costs need to promote behaviour change without being a financial hardship. We are concerned that there has been a replacement of one single use disposable item (10p carrier bag) with another (bag for life). We would hope that a 20p DRS fee would be enough of an incentive in the long run to return the bottles.

4. An 'all-in' scheme, where all containers carried the same deposit cost, regardless of size, was considered by participants to be the most effective scheme.

It is important to note that an 'all in' scheme should include not only containers of all sizes but also all materials including aluminium, glass, plastic, and paper cartons. The Defra consultation concluded that some respondents felt that introducing a DRS, which could include only certain materials and containers while excluding others, could lead to consumer confusion and have the unintended consequence of disincentivising recycling through unnecessary complications.

MCS are of the view that including all materials and sizes will result in levelling the playing field for producers and ensure that producers do not switch to materials not included in the system thus distorting the market and potentially creating further environmental problems. Further to this, the more material captured the higher the chances are of increasing recycling levels and decreasing litter levels of these items.

The Scottish system currently only includes PET plastic, MCS would like to see all plastic included.

5. The Defra consultation concluded: We are minded to introduce a DRS for drinks containers in England and Wales from 2023

MCS is of the view that they already have the information and facts they need to adopt DRS, this delay will result in increasing the cost, negatively impacting businesses and resulting in ongoing environmental impacts. The proposed UK Environment Bill will devolve the powers for a DRS to Welsh Government and enable them to set their own targets, therefore Defra will not be able to introduce an England and Wales scheme however we hope all 4 countries will work together to create a standardised scheme.

6. In parallel work has been undertaken on the primary legislation that will allow Welsh Ministers to enact regulations to bring in a DRS. This is included in the UK Environment Bill, which is currently before the UK Parliament and expected to receive Royal Assent by Christmas 2020.

See above. Within Wales we would recommend that all background work, stakeholder consultation, decisions and legislation be finalised prior to the UK Environment Act receiving Royal Assent at the end of 2020, to allow for immediate roll out of the deposit return scheme after this time.

7. We are also facilitating a DRS trial using alternative ICT technology and have provided financial support to another DRS trial from our Circular Economy Fund.

We have not received any details on these 2 trials so cannot comment of their impact or effectiveness. We would request further information.

8. MCS welcomes that the Welsh government are looking to take action on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), as well as going above and beyond the EU Single Use Plastic Directive (SUDP).

The Defra consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility for the UK concluded that the Government's intention is to make the necessary legislative changes for a reformed packaging producer responsibility system by 2021, with a new system to be operational from 2023. Similarly to the timelines given for DRS, MCS is of the view that they already have the information and facts they need to adopt EPR successfully in the UK as soon as the Environment Bill reaches Royal Assent.

We would also welcome more information on a timescale for incorporating measures on single use plastics into Welsh legislation. To date the European Legislation includes a ban on the following items:

A EU-wide ban of single-use plastic cotton buds, straws, plates, cutlery, beverage stirrers, balloon sticks, oxo-degradable plastics, and expanded polystyrene food containers, beverage containers and beverage cups by 2021.



We have been informed that the delay to introducing ban on cotton bud sticks, straws etc. is that Welsh Government want to introduce comprehensive legislation covering multiple items rather than piecemeal individual legislation. This is logical but it has led to delays and items banned elsewhere in the UK, are still on sale in Wales, therefore we would recommend swift implementation of the SUPD.

Additionally, we would hope Welsh Government would be more aspirational in the types of items being banned, above those within the SUPD.

Yours faithfully,

Gill Bell

Head of Conservation Wales  
Marine Conservation Society

---

working for seas full of life

W [www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org) T 01989 566017 [www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org) facebook.com/mcsuk [twitter.com/mcsuk](https://twitter.com/mcsuk)

Registered charity no: 1004005 (England & Wales); SC037480 (Scotland). Company limited by guarantee no: 2550966. Registered in England VAT no: 489 1505 17.  
Registered office: Overross House, Ross Park, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7US.



# Agenda Item 3.4

## **P-05-864 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture'**

This petition was submitted by People Over Profit having collected 120 signatures

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the Welsh Government to ban the use of "Hostile Architecture" by organisations to deter homeless people from seeking shelter and any other street structures designed to impede or hide the homeless.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Neath
- South Wales West

**P-05-856 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture', Welsh Local Government Association to Chair, 17.02.20**

**Dyddiad /Date:**

17th February 2020

**Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:**

**Llinell uniongyrchol/Direct line:**

**Ebost/Email:**

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff



Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

**Petition P-05-864 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture'**

Thank you for your letter seeking WLGA views on the use of 'hostile architecture' to deter rough sleeping in certain locations.

We would certainly take the view that the efforts of local authorities and other stakeholder organisations are most effectively used to prevent all forms of homelessness, whenever possible, and to remove the need for anyone to sleep rough. Local authorities have a range of statutory duties to people who are homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless, and the WLGA were fully involved in the development of Welsh Government's [Rough Sleeping Action Plan](#).

As has already been emphasised by Welsh Government through their submission in respect of this petition, Planning Policy Wales puts place making at the heart of national planning policy, and requires developers and local planning authorities to think about the well-being of people in the design of new developments.

I can confirm that the WLGA holds no information on the use of 'hostile architecture' by local authorities in respect of their own buildings.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Chris Llewelyn, Chief Executive**

Dr Chris Llewelyn  
Prif Weithredwr  
Chief Executive

Cymdeithas Llywodraeth  
Leol Cymru  
Tŷ Llywodraeth Leol  
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Welsh Local Government  
Association  
Local Government House  
Drake Walk  
CARDIFF CF10 4LG  
Tel: 029 2046 8600

wlga.cymru  
wlga.wales

@WelshLGA

**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.**

**Ni fydd defnyddio'r naill iaith na'r llall yn arwain at oedi.**

**We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and will respond to correspondence in the same language.  
Use of either language will not lead to a delay.**

**Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg a byddwn yn ymateb i ohebiaeth yn yr un iaith.**

**Ni fydd defnyddio'r naill iaith na'r llall yn arwain at oedi.**

**Back Page 121**  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and will respond to correspondence in the same language.  
Use of either language will not lead to a delay.

# Agenda Item 3.5

## **P-05-927 Changing Places toilet facilities**

This petition was submitted by Llanelli Changing Places Campaign Group having collected a total of 1,273 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

This petition urges the Welsh Government to make Immediate Changes to Building and Planning Regulations to ensure that Changing Places toilet facilities, with Adult Changing Bench, Hoist and enough space for 2 Carers, are provided in all Large Public Buildings as they are Built, Redeveloped or Refurbished.

### **Additional Information**

#### Case example

"My daughter is 9 and has global development delay and is a wheelchair user. Her disability means she is unable to maintain a sitting balance and she is non-verbal,so,she cannot tell me when she needs the loo. This means she wears nappies. When she needs changing whilst we are away from home, we often struggle to find facilities in which to do so. She is getting too large for a baby changing unit and our only other option is the toilet floor,which is unsanitary, unhygienic and in my mind is inhumane as well as undignified. This is a completely unacceptable and unreasonable situation for anybody to be exposed to. I am also aware that each time I lift her, I am putting myself at risk of an acute back injury and this will become more of a risk as she gets older and bigger. How people manage to change adults this way beggars belief"

There are thousands of disabled people across Wales who need the facilities a Changing Places toilet offers. British Standards 8300/2018 says that Changing Places toilets should be provided in Larger Buildings and Complexes such as

A/ Major Transport Termini or Interchanges e.g Large Railway Stations and Airports

B/ Motorway Services

C/ Sport and Leisure facilities, including Large Hotels

D/ Cultural Centres, such as Museums, Concert Halls and Art Galleries and Faith Centres

E/ Stadia and Large Auditoria

F/ Large Commercial Retail Premises and Shopping Centres

G/ Key Buildings within Town Centres, e.g.,Town halls, Civic Centres and Main Public Libraries

H/ Educational establishments

I/ Health Facilities, such as Hospitals, Health Centres and Community Practices

J/ Other Visitor Attractions, such as Theme Parks, Monitored Beaches and Parks

The Welsh Government can and must do better than the current situation and make Changing Places toilets Compulsory for Large Public Buildings as listed in BS8300/2018

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Llanelli
- Mid and West Wales

Julie James AC/AM  
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/00125/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Assembly Member  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA  
Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

13 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 24 January following the meeting of the petitions committee on 7 January where you considered petition P-05-927 on changing places toilet (CPT) facilities.

I have now received the advice regarding potential amendments to Building Regulations to increase CPT provision. It is my intention to issue a consultation paper on proposed changes to Approved Document M (Access to and use of buildings) supporting the Building Regulations to make provision of a CPT expected in certain buildings.

I am also aware of the links being made to petition P-05-871 to require baby and toddler changing facilities to be available in both male and female toilets. I will consider if the forthcoming consultation on CPTs should also include proposals to strengthen the provision to expect baby-changing facilities in both male and female toilets. I will write to you again on this point once I have received detailed advice from my officials.

The building regulations only apply where relevant building work is undertaken and do not apply retrospectively, therefore, it is important any proposed changes are supported by other mechanisms to try and increase the provision. Local Authorities, through their toilets strategies, need to identify how provision for both CPT's and baby changing facilities can be increased where the evidence suggests they are needed.

In terms of funding, there is not a single list of grants or other funding that could be utilised to increase the provision of CPTs. This is because grants are offered by a range of organisations (including the Welsh Government), aimed at different target applicants with a range of objectives. The Changing Places website provide some links to potential funding sources, but these are sector specific. [http://www.changing-places.org/install\\_a\\_toilet/faqs\\_about\\_installation/funding.aspx](http://www.changing-places.org/install_a_toilet/faqs_about_installation/funding.aspx). The guidance provided to support the toilet strategies also identifies certain funding links to assist Local Authorities in implementing their strategies.

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

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

**Rack Page 124**  
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.

Without specific details of the Llanelli Wildfowl and Wetlands Trusts (WWT) proposals I am unable to provide definitive advice on specific schemes, however we recently launched the “Brilliant Basics” scheme (<https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/finance#guides-tabs--1>) which may be relevant. Expressions of interest must be submitted by 12 noon on 28 February. I realise this timescale is short, however, for more information on this competitive grant WWT can contact Philip.Abraham@gov.wales.

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government

**P-05-927 Changing Places toilet facilities, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 03.03.20**

We are pleased to learn from the Minister's letter that she plans to issue a consultation paper on proposed changes to Approved Document M (Access to and use of buildings) supporting the Building Regulations to make provision of a CPT expected in certain buildings.

We as a campaign group wondered whether ICF capital grant money could be made available to help not-for-profit organisations fund Changing Places facilities. So for example Llanelli Wildfowl and Wetlands Trusts (WWT) request could be then made to Hywel Dda RPB ICF to increase access for people with profound learning disabilities to their communities. Has the Minister any view on how ICF money could be used to help increase Changing Places facilities?

Finally, until there are adequate Changing Places facilities is there anyway temporary measures could be put in place such as Mobiloos? When big events take place in towns where no CPT are available a large number of our communities can't take part, therefore are excluded.

Many thanks

Llanelli Changing Places Campaign Group



# Agenda Item 3.6

## **P-05-871 Make baby and toddler changing available in both male/female toilets**

This petition was submitted by Antony Esposti having collected – a total of 125 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

Within Wales there are many businesses, hospitals and council run parks/sites that don't have baby changing available for use by both men and women. Normally the facilities are only available in female toilets.

This means that men are often forced to hunt out facilities that they can use, or on many occasions, use makeshift measures like changing their child on the floor, on top of wheelie bin lids in toilets, balancing on their laps and on benches outside.

We would ask the Assembly to ensure that all future renovations and new builds within areas open to the public have an area that provides a safe and clean space to change babies/allow toddlers to go to the toilet safely and as a short term measure make a standalone or drop down changing unit available.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

**P-05-871 Make baby and toddler changing available in both male/female toilets, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 02.03.20**

The ministers letter is really positive about future buildings will have to have provisions. Although as many restaurants, leisure centres etc are existing structures I do worry that it's not resolving the current issue as it stands now.

If it's a case that it's on the local authorities then that's fine and it would seem that, as they're probably not going to actively police it, it's a case of photographing the conditions and pestering them to get more involved.

Thanks

Tony

# Agenda Item 3.7

## **P-05-890 Second Home Tax**

This petition was submitted by Alun Roberts having collected a total of 1,281 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to take immediate steps to close a legal loophole which allows second home owners in Wales to avoid paying neither council tax nor business rates, at a time when local councils are forced to increase council tax to local ratepayers to plug the shortfall in their budgets.

800 second home owners in Gwynedd are now exploiting a legal loophole to avoid paying any council tax at all by registering their properties as small businesses. They are also exempt from paying business rates because of an anomaly in the system which categorises them as 'small businesses' although they are used as second homes for most of the year. In this financial year this equates to a loss of £1.5M from the public purse in Gwynedd alone; money that could be used towards providing social housing for local people.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Arfon
- North Wales

# Agenda Item 3.8

**P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate.**

This petition was submitted by Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People having collected 3,040 signatures – 649 on paper and 2,391 on-line.

## **Text of Petition**

We are calling for the Welsh Government to bring in an "Access Certificate" showing numbers from zero to five along the lines of the Food Hygiene Certificate. All buildings used by the public such as shops, food outlets, sports clubs, pubs and offices as well as public transport services should be assessed on how wheelchair accessible they are, as well as how easy it is for someone with a sensory impairment or learning disability to use.

We want all premises to be given a number which they could then display to show how disabled friendly their premises are. We hope that those who achieve high ratings will possibly persuade other nearby premises to improve access and get a high rating themselves.

When Food Hygiene Certificates were first introduced in Wales they were not mandatory, but later became so. Since the introduction of the Food Hygiene Certificate we believe food standards have vastly improved and premises with a high number use the certificate with pride. We believe premises will make a bigger effort to improve access and services for the disabled community if a similar Certificate was introduced for access. We believe the introduction of such a certificate will hugely improve services for disabled shoppers and those who want to go out for a drink, a meal or to use public transport, facilities most take for granted.

To achieve a five rating a premises will not just need to be wheelchair accessible but be fully inclusive for those with visual and hearing impairments, and possibly have staff understanding to those with learning impairments.

Having a restaurant with a braille menu or staff able to use sign language can make a huge difference and give someone a far easier and less stressful experience when doing everyday things most take for granted.

One idea may be, as well as having the Five to Zero rating to have extra symbols underneath to show if a premises has full wheelchair access, an accessible toilet, info in braille, staff who can use sign language and autism friendly.

We feel that this will result in big improvements. Many food outlets compete with each other to get a higher rating and we hope this will be the same with Access Certificate.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

**P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate – Correspondence, Disability Wales to Committee, 07.02.20**

Further to discussions with Welsh Government and Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People as referred to below, we submitted a proposal to scope the potential for a pilot scheme re *Scores on the Doors*, to be delivered coproductively with the Coalition. To date, Welsh Government has not commissioned us to deliver the scheme. Our understanding from recent meetings with officials, is that funding to do so is likely to become available during 2020-21, in line with a commitment made in the Framework for Action on Disability: the Right to Independent Living (p59):

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-09/action-on-disability-the-right-to-independent-living-framework-and-action-plan.pdf>

We remain committed to working with the Coalition to bring *Scores on the Doors* to fruition and look forward to the opportunity to do so.

Jane Hutt AC/AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/00050/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

10 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 29 January 2020 regarding petition P-05-806 – call for premises in Wales to be awarded Access Certificates.

Since my last update on this petition in March 2019, our new Framework, "Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living", has been published. This Framework makes a direct commitment, under Action 11 United and Connected, to *"take forward recommendations arising from the recent petition for the 'Scores on the Doors' accessibility rating campaign' to explore how this could be developed on a Wales wide basis"*.

As a result, officials will be working with Disability Wales and Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People later this year to develop a pilot for this project.

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

Pack Page 133

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.

No funding commitment has been made at this stage, however I am committed to ensure all actions from our recently published Framework are realised as soon as possible. I have asked my officials to keep me informed of progress and will update the Committee as this work goes forward.

*Bert Hisher,  
Jane*

**Jane Hutt AC/AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip



**P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.20**



Dear Petition Committee

We are delighted at B.C.D.P (Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People) that our Scores on the Doors Petition is again being looked at and we are glad we have a number of other charities and organisations including Disability Wales and Scope behind the idea.

As you may know our original idea was to have literally have “Scores on the Doors” similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate showing how assessible and disabled friendly premises are.

But our thoughts were then changed, and we would like to see just **logos** displayed on the front of a building and on their website to show what they offer.

For example, it would be great if a disabled person knew in advance if a pub, restaurant or hairdressers, etc had an accessible toilet by them displaying a logo on the door to say they have good access and have toilet that can be used by a wheelchair user.

Likewise, if a bank has a good hearing loop it would be good if the hard of hearing community knew in advance, and if a restaurant offered a braille menu it would be good if this was advertised.

There are many premises where staff have undergone dementia training or are autism aware. But once again most premises don't advertise this.

During the time our petition was alive and more recently we have spoken to many groups and individuals who say they are far more likely to go somewhere if they knew in advance what the premises offered and if they were accessible.

We do not want this idea, if implemented to punish or name and shame listed buildings or places that have poor disabled facilities but to show and promote the good. But even if you have a basement bar or a salon with steps there is no reason this establishment cannot still rate highly by having a hearing loop, braille menu or staff be trained in sign language so the premises may not be suitable for a wheelchair user but excellent for those with sensory impairments.

We think the idea is a positive one and we have had 99% good feedback. Many business owners with good access have said they would happily display logos to show what they offer and improve facilities to get more logos and offer more services.

The main reason we have decided logos would be better than a number scheme is a premises could offer excellent services to those with sensory impairments or learning disabilities but be completely inaccessible to wheelchair users, or vice versa.

Statements we have had recently have read:

**Statement 1:** “I am a wheelchair user and recently went to Llandudno for a weekend conference. I wanted to go out and watch the football on TV and to have food, but I was unaware which premises had good access and if it was possible for me to use loo when there. If this idea was implemented and I could search the net and see on a premises website what services they offered it would make my life a lot easier. Likewise, if logos were displayed on the front in building I would know which food establishments I could empty my bladder in. Going to a hairdresser’s or simply buying a newspaper would also be made so much easier”.

**Statement 2:** “As a visually impaired lady I recently went out for a meal in Cardiff. When I entered premises I was shown to my table and waiter saw my white stick and asked me if I wanted the braille menu. I had no idea they offered this service and said yes straight away. It made my day and meal much better as someone didn’t have to read menu out to me. I told various visually impaired groups that this restaurant has a braille menu and many now go to eat there.

The restaurant does not advertise the fact it has a braille menu, but it should and if a braille sign was on door then far more people would go there”

**Statement 3:** “My son Tom has autism and can often have a breakdown and huge tantrums and he is often seen as being naughty. I rarely take my son out because of this and am selective where we go. I know a lot of places offer staff autism awareness training and often these places are far more understanding to Tom and his needs. So, it would be great if a logo was introduced to show staff have had this training”.

**Statement 4:** “Any such idea has to include and increase mental health awareness training for staff and there needs to be more safe

spaces for those with mental health issues to go to and relax. Plus when they are in place there needs to be more information to where they are”.

**Statement 5:** “As someone who has recently had to start using a chair in her 20s I want to go out to clubs and festivals but often you get somewhere and they have poor access or no disabled toilets. It would make my life much easier if I knew in advance how wheelchair friendly a place was”

**Statement 6:** “I was recently down Chippy Alley in Cardiff during a Rugby International. There were huge queues outside three fast food outlets and a small queue outside a fourth. I noticed that those who had queues had 4 or 5 hygiene ratings and the other had a score of 2. Showed that this system works, I am sure a disability rating would work just as well.

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We at Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People firmly believe this will be a simple idea to implement and would change many lives for the better and we have had good feedback from a variety of disability groups across Wales.

The main criticism this idea has had is will it be used to vilify listed buildings that cant improve access. The answer to that is no, we wont. We want to promote the good and be positive, not slate those with poor access. But there are things that even listed buildings can do and even if physical access cannot be improved they can make life easier and improve services for those with sensory impairments.

Thanks

Simon Green (Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People)

# Agenda Item 3.9

## **P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households**

This petition was submitted by Malpas Women's Institute having collected 141 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

Malpas WI demands free sanitary products to all women in low income households. The Women's Institute was set up in 1915 and campaigns on issues which matter to women and their communities. Our aim is to empower and inspire women of all ages. We believe that no-one should be forced to go without sanitary products because of cost. With ever more women needing foodbanks to keep themselves alive, it has become clear that sanitary products are a luxury women on low incomes cannot afford.

Across the UK there are girls too poor to buy sanitary protection. They are having to miss school. Their dignity is being undermined. For too long women's needs have been neglected. Unlike property transactions, sanitary products are still not exempt from VAT. Periods are not a luxury, they are a necessity. Women do not choose to menstruate. We call on the Welsh Government to follow Scotland's lead and provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Newport West
- South Wales East

**P-05-863 Call on the Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all women in low income households, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 17.02.20**

I am most grateful that you have afforded me an extended period of time in which to respond to the papers relating to our petition.

I particularly applaud the move towards reusable menstrual products. This is not just good for the environment, it ensures the female has a ready supply of products for use during holidays and emergencies. I would like to see the use of reusable products to be prioritized over all others, and single use products phased out completely.

I felt that the responses you link to, whilst not in any way wrong, do not go nearly far enough to address the twin underlying problems of poverty and stigmatization, so, if I may, I would like to take another forward step and envisage the world as we would wish to see it in relation to the availability of sanitary products for women and girls of low income.

Menstruation has been seen as an inconvenience, an illness, a psychosis and a downright curse. In some cultures menstruation labels the woman as unclean and she is outcast. Menstruation is in fact a gift, an enabler and the fore-bringer of life, and attitudes need to change. Action on period poverty could enable new paradigms.

1. It seems to me that one of the biggest issues facing women and girls is that of stigmatization of periods. We urgently need to overcome this, as despite the availability of free products, there will be those who are simply too embarrassed to ask for them. Any single topic which affects more than half the population is an issue which affects us all. Whilst I accept that the remedy for this is probably generational, the only time to start normalizing menstruation is now. Therefore I would ask that the Committee recommends that boys and men are included in all initiatives. We have brothers, fathers, sons and male friends, and each of them should feel empowered and informed to both disseminate information about period products, and obtain them for their female friends and relatives when necessary. Lets dump the taboo.
2. We have left the EU, and can now reduce VAT at will. It is therefore possible to reduce VAT on women's menstrual products to zero. This is, after all, a tax on being a woman, and should be abolished on the grounds of discrimination.
3. I understand that a scattergun approach to the delivery of menstrual products is a useful way of discerning best practice, and should be used as a stepping stone to harmonization. In fact, rarely does the scattergun approach mature to a single delivery method ( kerbside recycling being an example). I would put forward that just as family planning products are available on the NHS, so should reusable female sanitary products be available on repeat prescription. The hidden benefits to this are professional consultation, privacy, and the opportunity for a holistic approach to an individual' overall needs.
4. I would hope that it would also be possible to provide sustainable sanitary products to Welsh students of low income studying outside Wales. This will remove the extra expense at a time when many students are low on financial means.

Clearly the abolition of poverty is beyond the scope of this petition, and I trust the WG has a strategy for that.

My best regards,

Pippa

Pippa Bartolotti, on behalf of Malpas WI

# Agenda Item 3.10

## **P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently**

This petition was submitted by Nathan Lee Davies and was first considered by the Committee in October 2017, having collected 631 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

I am a recipient of the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG) and a disability activist who intends on asking Welsh Government to reconsider their decision to close WILG as of April 2019.

The WILG was introduced to help people who previously claimed from the UK government's Independent Living Fund (ILF), which closed in 2015. More than 1,500 people are helped by the scheme across Wales. Recipients all have high degree of care and support needs.

It was due to run until the end of March 2017, but Social Services Minister Rebecca Evans said in November that funding would continue for another year.

The annual £27m fund will then transfer directly to local authorities during 2018-19 so they can meet the support needs of all former ILF recipients by 31 March 2019.

### **Additional information**

Why we oppose this decision:

The Welsh Government said the decision was taken on stakeholder advice. The majority of representatives on the stakeholder group were third sector or citizens. But they didn't want WILG scrapped and the key point is that our advice was not accepted.

It should also be remembered that closure of WILG is not inevitable as is proved through the formation and success of the Scottish Independent Living Fund; which also works to support the Northern Ireland ILF.

Furthermore, the hugely popular Labour Party Manifesto outlined plans to set up a national care system to exist independently of local authorities.



This is exactly the time that the Labour Party should be united on such issues against the Tories. We must question why Welsh Labour are not playing their part in the changing political landscape?

Indeed, eventually it should be our aim to set up an Independent Living Fund for Wales so that no disabled person should have to suffer the same uncertainty and isolation as WILG recipients are now experiencing. We can only begin to believe that true social justice and equality for all is possible if Welsh Labour revisit their WILG decision.

Welsh Labour will no doubt argue that we should give the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act a chance to succeed. However, this idealistic act needs hefty investment and resources to ensure it is a success – with no sign of any of the necessary improvements to our infrastructure that the success of the Act depends on. This may indeed be the time for a revolutionary change in the way social care is delivered, but such a transformation could take a decade or more and WILG recipients do not deserve to be treated like guinea pigs when their high care and support needs require long-term stability and structure.

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Wrexham
- North Wales

Julie Morgan AC/AM  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Your ref: P-05-771

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

4 March 2020

Dear Janet,

I wrote to you on 24 July last year to provide the Committee with an update on the independent care assessments I have introduced for recipients of payments from the former Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG). This was in connection with Petition P-05-771 from Nathan Davies, which I understand the Committee is still considering.

These independent care assessments are to provide the opportunity of a second opinion for those former recipients of WILG payments who were dissatisfied with the outcome of their local authority care assessment. Those local authority assessments were undertaken as part of the transition of WILG recipients' care to their local authority to support their ability to live independently at home and in the community. I am now writing to provide a further update on progress on the independent care assessments.

I attach a copy of a Written Statement I have recently issued on this subject. This sets out the progress to date and the early indications from those independent assessments completed thus far. From this you will see that all of the independent assessments requested have now been completed, quality assured and passed to the respective local authority to consider. In over half of the cases a discussion of the outcome has taken place between a social worker from ICS Assessment Services (the organisation appointed to undertake these) and the relevant local authority's social worker, with the remaining discussions taking place over the next few weeks. Following these discussions, meetings with former recipients have begun, with outcomes for those people being agreed and starting to be put in place.

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

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

While it is too soon to comment on the overall outcomes from these independent assessments you will see that in a number of cases individuals are receiving larger care packages than expected, potentially because some individuals are at the transition point for NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC). Having reflected on this I have instructed my officials to undertake a review of the direct payments for social care and CHC interface. This is with a view to determining whether there are other mechanisms, for example independent users' trusts, that could be used to ensure people that need more support from the NHS are not put in a position of losing the team of personal assistants they have funded through direct payments, with relationships built up over a number of years. If a better more equitable way can be found, this would remove the apparent fear that some people feel about the prospect of CHC.

As the outcomes across the span of independent assessments are confirmed I would reiterate my earlier commitment that the cost of these assessments, and any additional social care that might be identified from them, will be met by the Welsh Government. This is so that there can be no question of changes being made to people's care and support as a cost cutting measure. The under-pinning principle of my approach is to ensure that outcomes reached are fair and consistent with supporting people's agreed wellbeing outcomes.

Yours sincerely

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

**Julie Morgan AC/AM**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE:** Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG) - Update on Independent Care Assessments

**DATE:** 13 February 2020

**BY:** Julie Morgan AM, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

It is paramount that people's ability to live independently is not compromised by changes to the way their care and support is arranged and provided. Last July, and following close working with the #SaveTheWILG campaign, I updated Members on the new arrangements I had introduced to provide independent care assessments for people who used to receive payments from the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG). These new arrangements were to aid any former WILG recipient who was unhappy with the outcome of their local authority care assessment. This statement is an update on those independent assessments.

Following my last update, ICS Assessment Services were appointed, through a competitive process, to organise and undertake the independent assessments for those who requested these, and 46 former recipients of payments from the WILG took up this opportunity. ICS has now undertaken all of these assessments.

All of the independent assessments completed have now been quality assured by ICS and passed to the respective local authority to consider. This was prior to a discussion between a social worker from ICS and a social worker from the respective local authority about the outcome of the independent assessment, and any effect its findings may have on the person's current care package. Subsequent to this, a joint meeting is held with the person to discuss the outcome of that discussion, talk through the implications for their care package and agree the future care and support they will receive as a result.

In around half of the independent assessments completed, the discussion between the ICS and local authority social workers has now taken place, with the remaining discussions taking place over the next few weeks. Following these, meetings with care recipients have begun, with outcomes for those people being agreed and starting to be put in place. While it is too soon to comment on the overall outcomes from these independent assessments, some important issues are coming to light.

In a number of cases ICS has found that individuals are currently receiving larger care packages than expected, potentially because those individuals are at the transition point for NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC). This interface between CHC and direct payments, and

the challenges this can cause for care recipients, are issues that have also been highlighted to me at the National Social Care Partnership Board

Having reflected on this, I have instructed my officials to undertake a review of the direct payments and CHC interface. This is with a view to determining whether there are other mechanisms, for example independent users' trusts, that could be used to ensure people that need more support from the NHS are not put in a position of losing the team of personal assistants they have funded through direct payments and built up over a number of years. If a better more equitable way can be found, this would remove the apparent fear that some people feel about the prospect of CHC.

It is a complex area and I will not compromise the principle of an NHS that is in the public sector rather than in the hands of private individuals, but I want us to see if there is a better way and to do that work quickly.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 19, is clear that States must ensure disabled people have access to a range of home / residential and other community support services, including the personal assistance necessary to support living independently and inclusively within their community. The key principle regarding this human right is the ability to choose how you are supported in your everyday personal care.

As the outcomes across the span of independent assessments are confirmed, I would remind Members that the cost of the independent care assessments, and any additional social care that might be identified from them, will be met by the Welsh Government. This is so that there can be no question of changes being made to people's care and support as a cost cutting measure. The under-pinning principle of my approach is to ensure that outcomes reached are fair and consistent with supporting people's agreed wellbeing outcomes.

**P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair, 04.03.20**

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

Many thanks for giving me the right to reply to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services latest statement regarding an update on independent care assessments for former recipients of the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG).

I wholeheartedly support the contents of this statement and believe the Welsh Government are doing all they can to safeguard independent living for disabled people. I particularly applaud the Deputy Minister for her review of the Direct Payments and CHC interface. I feel that this is an important development as it is key that private individuals are able to continue to employ the staff that they depend on, even if they are funded by a public body. I recognise that it will take time to review the interface, but it is vital that this issue is being addressed to help future generations.

At the moment, I am more concerned about the 'independent' assessment that ICS has supposedly written in relation to my future care and support plan. Despite the assessment going well, it has been recommended that I only receive 44.5 hours of support per week and be forced to wear incontinence pads throughout the night, even though I am not incontinent. This is a huge insult to me after spending so long campaigning for independent living and the rights of disabled people, especially since I have been receiving council approved 24/7 support since October 2019.

Worryingly, there appears to be a determined approach by the local council to thwart what was intended by the Welsh Government, for WILG recipients like myself, to receive the full support package they need. It seems that I am being punished for having the audacity to appeal against the local authority.

The Welsh Government is providing me with the support I need at this worrying time. I feel that it would be counter-productive to go into too much detail about my specific case at this moment in time. I am confident that this will be resolved, but I just felt that I should highlight the failings of local authorities. I would like to request that the Committee keep their investigations open until this matter finally reaches a conclusion.

We would like to thank the Petitions Committee for their help and assistance throughout the #SaveWILG campaign. Our fight to maintain independent living for disabled people with high care and support needs continues with the stubbornness of certain local authorities now standing in the way of achieving a level playing field.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Lee Davies

#SaveWILG Campaign

# Agenda Item 3.11

## **P-05-857 Create a National Task Force for Children's Mental Health**

This petition was submitted by The National Organisation for Children's Mental Health having collected 91 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to create a National Task Force to investigate which cultural, societal, and political factors may be contributing to the number of children in Wales experiencing poor mental health; and that this National Task Force:

- 1) Include in its membership: children; representatives from organisations working with children; representatives from all political parties represented in the National Assembly for Wales; academics involved in researching social policy, political science, culture, society, and economics;
- 2) Is chaired by the Children's Commissioner for Wales in post when this task force is created and that they should remain the Chair of the task force for its duration, should they agree to do so (regardless of whether they remain the Children's Commissioner for Wales for the duration of the life of the task force – except in exceptional circumstances);
- 3) Should be tasked with producing a report based upon its investigations that includes recommendations for the Welsh Government based upon its findings;
- 4) Should have all of its recommendations examined by the Welsh Government in consultation with this National Task Force, the National Assembly for Wales, and the residents of Wales (including children).

### **Additional Information**

The National Organisation for Children's Mental Health Ltd is a newly established social enterprise. Our objective is to support the development of a national culture that enables children to sustain excellent mental health by helping organisations working with and/or for them to create the best environment in which every child's mental health can flourish.

## **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central



# Agenda Item 3.12

## **P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled**

This petition was submitted by Tracy Locke having collected a total of 121 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the Welsh Government to ensure that it is a legal requirement for all GP surgeries to have wide, adjustable treatment beds and hoists available for the use of disabled patients, so that they can be examined whenever there is need.

I was born with Spinabifida in 1970 and as a survivor of this condition I am paralysed from above the waist down and use a wheelchair full time. In 2017 I was diagnosed with stage 4 bladder cancer. It cannot be legally proven but it is my sincere belief that had I been examined earlier in the years before in my GP surgery on an a wide, adjustable treatment bed, perhaps with the aid of a hoist, then my cancer would not have been diagnosed at such an advanced stage. Since I've been looking into this issue, many disabled women have spoken to me about how they do not have equal access to smear tests because of this issue too. Often people think that disabled access is just about lifts and ramps but in health care, it is so much more complex. Let's join together to make access to health care equal for all people.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

**P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 27.11.19**

To Whom This May Concern

Thank you for sending me the link to the video of the Petitions Committee discussing mine and others' petitions.

It was quite frustrating because there seemed to be a lack of understanding about what the impact of inequality is on an already disadvantaged group.

I wanted to say that I wasn't asking for a room that was just for the use of disabled people. The room could be used by anyone but would be there available when needed for disabled people. We appreciate we are in the minority so don't expect to have a whole room designated to us when we might not need those facilities all the time.

The idea put forward by one woman on the committee that centres be provided, shows that there was a lack of understanding about how difficult it is for disabled people to travel outside their area in comparison to able bodied people.

If it would be helpful, I would happily come to Cardiff to meet with the committee to effectively put flesh and bones on the issue. I could bring representatives from the Spinabifida and Hydrocephalus Information Network Equality (SHINE) group with me.

What is the plan regarding speaking to 'the minister'? I assume this would be the Health Minister? Would the minister write a proposal? If so, would I get to see it? I remain committed to being instrumental in pushing equality in health care forward.

I thank you for your support in this.

Kind Regards,



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/08765/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

20 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 2 December regarding Petition P-05-914; Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled. This is a follow up to my letter of 1 November. Sorry for the delay in replying.

GPs are independent contractors, with the GP practice entering into a contract to provide general medical services with the health board in its area. The provision of premises for these services is also something for which GPs as contractors are responsible. Despite guidance for new premises, it is recognised that some premises do not physically have space available to accommodate specialist treatment and hoist facilities. As a result, as part of commissioning reviews and discussions it is the responsibility of the health board with GP engagement to consider suitable provision for patient groups with specialist requirements.

As stated in my previous reply, guidance recommends a treatment room with a combined Changing Places Toilet and the facility to treat bariatric patients. The reason for the combined room is to maximize room utilisation. The design guidance sets out room requirements and sets out the best practice requirements.

Legislation to increase the provision of Changing Places Toilets is being considered by the Minister for Housing and Local Government. NHS facilities will need to consider compliance with any requirements that are introduced. As stated, this would be the best way to cover the requirements.

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

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

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

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

**P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.20**

Thank you for sending me Vaughn Gething's response. If I am to understand this correctly then, all surgeries are to have the bariatric space which perhaps could incorporate the hoist and adjustable treatment bed, the bed would by nature of a bariatric patient's needs, have to be wide which would also suit a mobility-compromised patient.

I feel that what I was petitioning for did not need extra space but can easily be incorporated into a normal GP's consulting room or the bariatric space my point it just needs to be available when a severely disabled patient comes in and that can be arranged as and when required. It doesn't mean that every time a patient with Spinabifida attends the surgery, that they will need to be examined on a bed for example.

I understand that GP surgeries are independent but I do think this is important enough to make clear the importance of it for severely disabled people. The lack of such facilities could well have cost me my life and I don't want that to happen to someone else and the problem is easily remedied.

# Agenda Item 3.13

## **P-05-926 To Provide a Chronic Fatigue Department in Wales**

This petition was submitted by Marjorie Ann Lasebikan having collected a total of 155 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

There is no Chronic Fatigue Department in the whole of Wales! Chronic Fatigue is being overlooked or thought of as depression. I would like to see a Department set up with a view to individuals being assessed properly. General Practitioners say 'there is no cure' or 'you haven't been assessed'. Without a Chronic Fatigue department there can be no research into finding a cure or no means of being assessed.

I have suffered with this for 23years. The onset was after a week of high fever which showed as 104 on the 5th day. Little is known about Chronic Fatigue. I wrote up a Petition recently and collected 65 signatures with a view to setting up a department in Wales; it showed 20 had family members or friends suffering with it. It is so debilitating and such a waste of life. With an inability to think, concentrate or do anything physical without the need to go to bed afterwards. It can take days to overcome any effort however small.

I saw a woman being interviewed on television. She was at a Chronic Fatigue Clinic saying she had received a Myer's Infusion, which consists of Vitamins and Minerals, and felt so well she felt like her old self. It is not available on the NHS. I want to give it a try to see if this is the answer but need to find a private clinic to administer the Myer's Infusion. Last year I had a '5 day window' when I had clarity of thinking and energy. I do not know if this was because of taking a Vitamin B Complex capsule daily for a while. I saw a General Medicine doctor at Llandough Hospital recently [he sees many individuals with Chronic Fatigue] I told him of this infusion and he is interested in hearing the outcome of the procedure. I will report back to him. In the meantime, will you give your support to this Petition? It is essential to have some hope and the only way to achieve this is to have the right help in the first place. Not live a life unfulfilled. Thank you.

**Additional Information**

Concentration is poor; the ability to absorb information fully is difficult. To plan or organise things is impossible. To get excited is exhausting. Physical work cannot be undertaken without going to bed afterwards. To do anything strenuous can take a couple of days to recover and walking any distance is a problem. To sit in front of a computer for 30 minutes can result in energy draining away. Shopping is a big problem unless there is a buggy to use to take one around the store. It often ends up by shopping on line which is extremely tiring. I have always been an active person with many interests. There are days where I sit unable to do anything. Life is nothing but frustration.

**Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00234/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
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14 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 24 January regarding Petition P-05-926 to provide a chronic fatigue department in Wales and seeking information on the Chronic Fatigue Steering Group.

The group to which you refer is the ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia Advisory Group, chaired by Owen Hughes (Consultant Counselling Psychologist and Head of Pain and Fatigue Management Service at Powys Teaching Health Board). Representatives of pain services from each health board are on the group, including the head of the ME/CFS clinic in North Wales. The group includes GP representation and colleagues from Public Health Wales. In addition to NHS colleagues, the third sector and patient voice were represented by the Welsh Association of ME & CFS Support and Action for ME.

This group's initial remit was to implement recommendations from a ME/CFS Task and Finish Group report in 2014 but subsequently developed into a more formal advisory group. The group considered issues such as digital support and patient experience and its last action was to commission an exercise to seek assurances from health boards as to the current provisions in place and their approach to improving services for ME/CFS in the short and longer term.

Many of the issues faced by those living with ME/CFS are common to other conditions and our approach moving forward is to amalgamate the advisory groups relating to pain, musculoskeletal conditions, fibromyalgia and ME/CFS. These conditions face many commonalities over a range of areas, including the need for patient and professional education, effective diagnosis, self-management techniques and prevention. This approach has received an overwhelmingly positive response from members of all the groups affected and the first meeting of the new Long Term Pain and Musculoskeletal Conditions Advisory Group will be convened in the summer.

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[Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@gov.wales)

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



In addition to the aforementioned advisory groups, my officials have instigated numerous meetings with various patient support groups, such as ME Support in Glamorgan and Fibrofighters, to engage a wider range of views. They have also held regular discussions with Health Education and Improvement Wales to further consider how education for healthcare colleagues can be improved, and engaged with specialist clinicians based external to Wales with a specific interest in ME/CFS.

Regarding the concerns raised by Dr Shepherd, I would like to clarify that the suggestion that there are no ME/CFS hospital based services in Wales is not correct. These may not be specialist CFS/ME clinics (with the exception of North Wales where there is a specialist CFS/ME centre based in North East Wales) but patients are seen in pain clinics throughout Wales by health care professionals with significant knowledge and expertise in this area.

I trust this information is helpful and look forward to receiving the recommendations of the Committee in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

**Vaughan Gething AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

**P-05-926 To Provide a Chronic Fatigue Department in Wales, Correspondence –  
Petitioner to Committee, 03.03.20**

Thank you for your letter that I received yesterday of a copy letter to Janet Finch-Saunders in reply to her letter of 24th January 2020.

In this letter I see reference to ME/CFS and a Fibromyalgia Advisory Group. This letter refers to PAIN only and those who represent pain services.

I see no reference to EXHAUSTION/FATIGUE. What about EXHAUSTION/FATIGUE when NO PAIN is involved?

In my Petition requesting a Department for CHRONIC FATIGUE I did not mention pain once. This is something completely different to that linked to ME and has not been addressed. I made no mention of pain throughout my 23 years of suffering this illness.

I think therefore the petition has deviated from my concerns and needs to look at this in a separate light. We need to look at exhaustion when there is no pain linked to it. It seems to be a completely separate issue.

It says, "The main symptom of CFS/ME is extreme physical and mental tiredness (fatigue) that doesn't go away with rest or sleep. This can make it difficult to carry out everyday tasks and activities. Also the inability to think, remember or concentrate." But concentration on pain seems to be uppermost under the ME/CFS Advisory Groups.

I would like the Committee to concentrate on Chronic Fatigue rather than the pain as I feel that this side of it is being overlooked.

With thanks

# Agenda Item 3.14

## **P-05-877 Children's used uniform scheme**

This petition was submitted by Rachael Mackay (Topaz class, Monnow Primary School) having collected a total of 54 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We the children of Monnow Primary School in Newport would like to see a used school uniform scheme up and running in every city in Wales. The scheme should provide uniforms, shoes and trainers for all ages. This would make sure that all children have access to affordable uniforms. Families that receive free school meals should take priority.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Newport West
- South Wales East

# Agenda Item 3.15

## **P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas**

This petition was submitted by Alanna Jones having collected having collected 158 signatures online and 141 on paper, a total of 299 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to amend the current wording of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations"). We call on the National Assembly to make the amendments to the Regulations to address the current limitation of Regulation 6, Condition 5 which prevents Welsh students accessing student finance to study at UK higher education institutions where the location of study is at their overseas campus which we consider could be achieved in one of either two ways, by either:

widening the criteria in Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by UK higher education institutions at either their UK or overseas campuses; or amending Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by higher education institutions offering designated courses and to include the University of London Institute in Paris on the list of institutions offering designated courses, using your discretion under Regulation 8.

Proposed Amendment:

Option 1

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom or at any campus of a United Kingdom higher education institution located outside of the United Kingdom".

Option 2

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom. This condition shall apply, unless the course has been deemed to be treated as a designated course pursuant to Regulation 8(1) or 8(2)."

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to adopt the proposed amendments so that Welsh students applying for courses at institutions such as the University of London Institute in Paris, can be considered as "eligible students" for the purposes of receiving student support. The University of London Institute in Paris offers higher education courses in modern languages, where the teaching and supervision is carried out primarily in Paris. Nonetheless, students are taught by employees of the University of London and its collaborative partner, Queen Mary, University of London.

Unless an amendment is made to the current wording of the Regulations, Welsh students will continue to suffer an unjust disadvantage when applying for courses at specific UK institutions. We call on the National Assembly for Wales to make this change as there is no equivalent limitation across other parts of the UK. If no action is taken, the Regulations may continue to act as a deterrent for students hoping to apply for courses at the University of London, Institute in Paris.

### **Additional Information**

Between September 2018 and February 2019 we received inconsistent messages relating to the University of London Institute in Paris' position and both current and prospective students received contradictory information on their eligibility. The University of London Institute in Paris took the following steps to address this:

Contacted the Students Loan Company

Contacted Student Finance for Wales

Contacted the 'Designation' department of the Welsh Government.

Copies of the relevant correspondence are available on request.

When the position was eventually clarified in February, Welsh applicants were informed by the University of London Institute in Paris of their ineligibility for student finance for these programmes which caused significant distress, so

we call on the National Assembly for Wales to please consider our concerns as a matter of priority.

**Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales

Kirsty Williams AC/AM  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-884  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00302/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

25 February 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

**P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas**

Thank you for your letter of 12 February regarding a petition made to the National Assembly of Wales.

In my previous correspondence on this issue, I advised that I would be prepared to consider an application from the University of London Institution in Paris (ULIP) for specific designation of its courses. It is for ULIP to determine whether or not to apply for specific designation. The Welsh Ministers policy on specific designation, including the criteria that must be met, can be found at

<https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/media/196461/specific-course-designation-policy-document-english.pdf>.

In terms of the wider policy on overseas study, the position in the regulations remains unchanged.

Yours sincerely,

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education

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

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

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

**P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 02.03.20**

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Following the Minister for Education's letter addressed to yourself on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020, a copy of which I recently received, I would like to take this opportunity to respectfully present my thoughts and opinions to the Committee.

As a student at the University of London Institute in Paris (ULIP), I am obviously not in the position to apply for specific designation for ULIP, however, I have passed on this information to the relevant staff at the Institute who I am sure will pursue this if the need arises.

I still struggle to understand why ULIP should have to apply for specific designation as they did not have to do this in order for English, Scottish and Northern Irish students to receive student loans/grants. I feel this is very unfair and, if I'm to be completely honest, it seems a bit unnecessary. As far as I'm aware, applying for specific designation is a long process which could mean even more Welsh students losing out on something so simple as attending a British university which happens to be based in Paris. The location is also not completely irrelevant as it plays a major pedagogical role because ULIP's focus is on French Studies. No new Welsh students were able to attend ULIP this academic year and I believe no Welsh students have applied to start in the next academic year which is probably due to the fact that the ULIP website states that Welsh students are not eligible for student finance through Student Finance Wales. If ULIP have to go to the extreme and apply for specific designation, it could not be guaranteed that Welsh students who cannot afford to fund their own studies would be able to study at ULIP in the 2021/22 academic year. Personally, applying for specific designation shouldn't be the case as I strongly believe ULIP should automatically be considered a 'normal' British university just like the University of Cardiff or Glasgow, for example. On an economic note, surely the whole process of applying for specific designation would cost the Welsh Government a considerable amount of money which could be better used elsewhere. From a financial point of view, the easiest, fairest and best solution would be to allow Welsh students to receive student loans without the drawn out process of applying for specific designation. The fact that England, Scotland and Northern Ireland consider ULIP students/applicants eligible for funding should surely be enough to allow Welsh students to have access to loans and grants.



At a time when the Welsh Government seem to be trying to strengthen Franco-Welsh relations by establishing the Wales France Business Forum (Le Club), I would have thought that encouraging Welsh students to study in Paris would be beneficial for these relations. Our Minister for Education obviously thinks otherwise. I'm not sure if the Welsh Government is aware of this, but ULIP offers a French Studies with Business degree and I would have thought the government and the representatives of Le Club would want to take full advantage of this. There could be Welsh students who are fluent in French and English, and potentially Welsh, who also have a solid knowledge of business and have an excellent knowledge of Paris and France. Unfortunately, Le Club will not be able to make the most of this until Welsh students are given the same opportunity as English, Scottish and Northern Irish students. If ULIP applies for specific designation, which I believe is granted by Welsh Assembly Members, I truly hope that this petition and previous correspondence would not affect the Minister for Education's decision in granting ULIP special designation. I have found her letters addressed to yourself to be quite blunt and at times they read as quite rude. I would like to trust that the decision concerning special designation is taken without malice or spite and that the decision is taken based on what is best for Welsh students.

I sincerely hope that you as the Committee can find a better solution to this problem which disadvantages Welsh students.

Yours sincerely,  
Alanna Jones

# Agenda Item 3.16

## **P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools**

This petition was submitted by Isabella Evans having collected 4,914 signatures online and 110 on paper, a total of 5,024 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

We call on the Welsh Government to consider the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools.

I am the 13 year old sister of a little boy with Downs Syndrome who's primary use of communication is Makaton sign language. I have taught myself Makaton sign language for the purpose of communicating with my brother and as a result have set up social media platforms to help other people in similar situations learn. I was surprised how much demand there is for people who want to be taught Makaton in order to communicate with friends and family who have learning difficulties.

I believe it should be included in all schools in Wales alongside the everyday teaching to give every child the ability to learn to communicate via this method.

I am passionate to achieve this and believe it is the fundamental right for all children in Wales to be taught Makaton in order to break down barriers, misconceptions and achieve true inclusion within Wales.

### **Additional Information**

A vast amount of research has been conducted to test the effectiveness of using symbols and signs to help people develop language and literacy skills.

Current research findings support the use of sign language with adults and children who have intellectual and communication handicaps.

There is also a study exploring the extent of learning sign language alongside a foreign language in modern foreign languages lessons support oral vocabulary retention in foreign languages.

Many research papers have been published supporting the use of Makaton including:-

- Birket, E.M. (1984)
- Colema, A. (2014)
- Cornforth, A.R.T., Johnson, K. Walker, M. (1974)
- Ford, J. (2006)
- Francis. (2000)
- Grove, N. (1980)
- Powell, G. (1999)
- Reed, A. (2014)
- Sheehy, K. Duffy, H. (2009)
- Volpato, D. ,Orton, D. and Blackburn, D. (1986)
- Walker, M. Armfield, A. (1981)

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**  
**Y Gweinidog Addysg**  
**Minister for Education**



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

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-909  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00303/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales](mailto:SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales)

25 February 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

Thank you for your follow-up letter of 12 February, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, regarding Petition P-05-909 - Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools, and allowing me the opportunity to respond to these points.

The starting point for the new curriculum is that it should enable every pupil to enjoy their education and fulfil their potential. We do not want to put limits on what should be taught to all our learners. Schools will design their own curriculum within a clear national framework, and will decide what experiences, knowledge and skills will support their specific learners reflecting their particular needs.

It is important to note that Makaton is not a language but one of several sign support systems. Sign support systems enhance and support wider language development. The most effective impact on language development is to ensure that practitioners in all learning environments are able to enrich language development in all forms rather than only provide specific sign support.

Our digital learning platform, Hwb, provides the opportunity for all schools in Wales to promote relevant bilingual resources and events. Should a school, region or organisation wish to share information with a particular focus like Makaton then Hwb could offer the opportunity for this to be shared to all schools in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**  
**Y Gweinidog Addysg**  
**Minister for Education**

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)

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

**Back Page 170**  
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-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools,  
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.20**

Dear Committee,

Thank you for again giving Isabella the opportunity to voice her opinions further during the petition process.

After reading the document letter from the Minister for Education Kirsty Williams to Janet Finch-Saunders the Chair of the Committee Isabella has a couple of opinions. Whilst we understand that it is important to enrich the possibility for education for everyone we feel that the framework proposed by Kirsty Williams is too vague. Isabella feels it is important to reiterate that although Makaton is not a Sign language but a communication tool it is the first step to introduce people to Sign. The whole point of Makaton is simplicity and the fact that it is universal. Even One Makaton Sign a week taught in schools, introduced alongside whatever language the school chooses is best for them, will help the chosen language to be remembered. Not only is this beneficial academically but it will truly help to achieve an inclusive society, starting with the generation of children currently in schools. This is a subject that Isabella is very passionate about as she has seen the benefits of introducing Makaton to children, not only with her brother Lucus who has Down Syndrome but to all the children who follow her daily Signs on her social media platforms of which the response and demand has been quite astounding.

We do hope that Isabella's views will be taken once more into consideration and look forward to seeing the outcome of the Petition debate discussions on the 10th March.

Kindest Regards,  
Isabella Signs.

# Agenda Item 3.17

## **P-05-932 Education On Food Allergies In Schools & Mandatory EPI PEN Training**

This petition was submitted by Archie's Allergies having collected a total of 172 signatures.

### **Text of Petition**

There is currently no law in place anywhere in the UK that offers education on food allergies in schools from primary age and up.

We want to change that! Offering educational sessions in schools will benefit children at risk of anaphylaxis. It will help others to understand food allergies, a medical condition that unless you know someone with this disease you wouldn't be aware of the side effects it carries.

We hope introducing educational sessions on food allergies will also break the stigma around them, eliminate bullying and offer more support to children living with this disease.

All it takes it one touch or one bite and without administering an epi pen you could be faced with a very tragic situation.

Introducing mandatory epi pen training will also eliminate the worry for families living with food allergies. Teachers and school staff will know the vital signs of an allergic reaction meaning anaphylaxis can be spotted sooner.

Archie's Allergies is a new charity offering support, advice and information on the importance of being allergy aware.

### **Assembly Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-932  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00254/20  
Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

19 February 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 7 February regarding Petition P-05-932 'Education on food allergies in schools and mandatory epi-pen training' from Archie's Allergies.

Following its meeting on 21 January, the Petitions Committee asked the following questions which I will respond to in turn.

- clarification on how the implementation of the Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs guidance is monitored;
- to ensure that the petitioner and other people with lived experience are consulted when reviewing the approach to allergies and immunology from a health perspective, and;
- propose that officials meet with the petitioner to discuss the current support for children with allergies in schools.

I am committed to ensuring that all learners with healthcare needs have the appropriate support in place to access a high standard of education and reach their full potential. The [Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs](#) statutory guidance requires all maintained nurseries, primary, secondary and special schools, and pupil referral units (PRUs) to properly support their learners with healthcare conditions, including those with allergies.

Following publication of this guidance in 2017, I wrote to all maintained schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) to reiterate the requirement to read the statutory guidance and implement a healthcare needs policy at the earliest opportunity. I also wrote to all health boards, emphasising the need for collaborative working to support learners with healthcare

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)

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

needs. I have made my expectations clear that learners are to be supported as set out in the guidance, and that healthcare needs policies are required to be readily available to parents and learners.

Local authorities are responsible for monitoring effective implementation of the guidance within their education settings. All local authorities have provided the Welsh Government with assurances that their healthcare needs policies are in place and they are providing schools with information and support.

Estyn's guidance for inspectors on safeguarding in schools and pupil referral units includes information on the 'Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs' guidance. This ensures inspectors have a point of reference should a healthcare question arise from a school inspection.

From a health perspective, our approach to allergies and immunology is being reviewed and a meeting has taken place with the Deputy Chief Medical Officer and specialists to discuss a range of issues, which has included raising awareness of allergies. Further engagement will take place with our stakeholders on this matter and officials will consult with the [petitioner](#), and other people with lived experience, on any work that we take forward on allergies and immunology.

The legal duty to provide suitable education and support to all learners rests with local authorities and schools. We are of the view that these organisations are better placed than Welsh Government officials to discuss with the petitioner the support they make available to learners with allergies. The contact details for local authorities are available on the Welsh Government [website](#).

I hope this information assures you of my ongoing commitment to ensuring learners with healthcare needs are able to access quality education and achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely,



**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Thank you again to the petitions committee for allowing me to respond to the Minister of Education's second response, firstly I'd like to show you these pictures;



These are just 2 separate occasions where my own child has come out of school covered in hives because the teachers that are meant to be 'fully supported' and 'fully capable' of aiding him when he has an allergic reaction simply aren't, because his own school haven't taken the appropriate action to make parents aware of the severity of his food allergies. This child could die if he comes into contact with food he is allergic too, will anyone want to take action then?

Why is it that Wales has to WAIT for a tragedy to happen why wouldn't you want to be leaders in showing the rest of the UK how you take control and put STRICT policies in place to ensure every child with a food allergy is taken SERIOUSLY, that every child with a food allergy is put as a priority and thought of first, instead of 'it benefits 60 other children, yours is only 1' and the cycle continues.

To address the minister of education, I met with the Cardiff Council Schools LA officers in December to offer Archie's Allergies Charity as a support system for families and schools alike when and where needed. It's funny that the local authority is having to solely deal with this because I've already spoken with the 'local authority' and where it stands they don't have a clue when it comes to allergies and they can't support the schools or the families within these schools to any kind of standard that's needed.

Not only are we living proof but so are many, many families that the 'local authority' fails their schools. I have a great example, someone from Cardiff Council, a health and safety officer for schools did a risk assessment on my son, without my knowledge by the way, when this assessment was done which I'll include, it states throughout, that everyone is to continuously apply hand gel throughout the day, unless these children are protecting themselves from germs, hand gel DOES NOT

remove food proteins or particles from hands, this coming from the local authority is alarming to say the least. Where is the 'local authority' getting this information? What reliable sources are they taking advice from?

Young children cannot and should not be responsible for their life threatening food allergies, WHO is looking after these kids?

I've asked parents across Cardiff, Penarth & The Vale if their children's schools are nut free, because for some reason this is the only allergen schools are prepared to ban, however it is only down to the head teacher that decides if they go nut free, still to this day my sons school refuses to ban nuts despite the high threat they have to not only his life but others within the school, my child nearly died because of something we all take for granted daily.

We aren't asking for nut free schools, because you'd have to be free of all the other allergens that exist. However an allergy aware school is what really makes a difference, a school that washes their hands several times a day, a school that is cautious of the pupils that suffer with allergic disease, a school that supports a child with food allergies and stands for making others aware, WOW how nice would that be and do you know it's really easy too!

Could you imagine dying from something you've never even eaten? Or just from being in the same room as it?

What attitude is 'nuts are a form of protein', I have to hear over and over as an excuse before a child is laying on the floor in anaphylactic shock, because to children with food allergies, food is a lethal weapon, it's the loaded gun, the sharp knife, yet we celebrate birthdays with cake that contain egg, we give our children granola bars with all kinds of nuts in it but it won't hurt those children not to eat these things around my child, but it can kill my child if it's eaten around him, all it takes is one touch, one bite and we never know when that might be.

If the minister of education does not want to take full responsibility for these children that are at risk DAILY, I ask the welsh assembly to make it Archie's Law that will ensure that in every school across Wales every child with a food allergy will be given the highest priority, their needs will be treated just as important as anyone else's. They will be equal and supported, they'll know they are no different to their peers.

How would you act if you couldn't bake cookies with the rest of your office, so your friend walks your around the car park for a bit? You'd feel not only humiliated but you'd think what disease do you have that your constantly left out of 'educational activities'.

We'd ensure that every person that comes into contact with that child will have had an educational session on food allergies because 'I have had epi pen training' is not good enough, understanding food allergies is what is needed, my sons teacher was looking for a 'milk' ingredient in pasta this week, why is she looking

for milk? She is meant to be a safe guarding officer for the infants at my sons school, don't forget the worrying amount of conversations and meetings we've had about his allergies but she's looking for MILK? He's allergic to eggs, peanuts and tree nuts, that's never changed since his diagnosis.

The problem is, teachers don't care. They don't have to care, no one is ticking boxes and checking them to ensure the right care is being given. No one is saying if you don't tick this box then you will be held accountable as a teaching professional, as a human being. So I'll do it, if it meant that every parent of an allergy child could feel assured, feel as if they are being taken as serious as life and death is, I'll do it.

Kirsty Williams has to tell local authorities that education on food allergies is needed but she won't, but I challenge her to live like someone that's allergic to eggs, nuts and peanuts for a day and go into a school and see for yourself. Show me the food you eat and read every ingredient over and over and over.

For every call I have received from his school, 'Hi Miss Murphy, nothing to worry about, Archie's arms/face are covered in hives, we've given him his medicine'

That's not normal, is it? How about making it mandatory to tell parents that a child in their child's class could die if you send them in with egg mayo.

Our children are not safe, my son is not safe and no one cares.

But I do, from the earliest time needed I care, from the worries that my child will be bullied because of the example TEACHERS are setting for shunning children with food allergies.

It's not good enough, I ask the Welsh Assembly to put these policies and vital education in place for every family that suffers because of allergic disease, for the parties our children can't attend, for the friends houses they can't go over and for the education they miss out on because of their very real and very serious medical conditions.

We welcome the Police into our schools to teach our children about drugs and alcohol that can kill them, why is this not the same as eating peanut butter next to children that are allergic. Food allergies should have been introduced to children years ago but it's only since my own child's diagnosis and the diabolical treatment we have received that it's taken to come to the Welsh Assembly to do something about it.

Schools are taking their own approach to food allergies and I've already highlighted how and to the extent they go too, why are they allowed to do as each pleases but others aren't guided to do the same?

The logo for Archie's Allergies is a blue speech bubble with the text "ARCHIE'S ALLERGIES" written inside in a blue, hand-drawn style font.

## ARCHIE'S ALLERGIES

If someone went into a school with a knife its a criminal offence, but the child that sits next to mine with a Nutella sandwich is just eating his lunch? So is my child just eating his lunch but it cost him his life.

But if we just added 2 educational sessions a year, we would change the way our children see food. How they treat it, where do our children go to learn? School and school is where these sessions are needed not just for children but the teachers and staff with them everyday.

Charlotte, Archie's Mum & Founder of Archie's Allergies Charity

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# Agenda Item 5.2

## Written Response by the Welsh Government to the report of the Petitions Committee entitled Report on Petition P-04-433 CCTV in Slaughterhouses.

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The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring high standards of welfare for all animals, at all stages of their life. We have some of the highest standards in the world and take animal welfare at slaughterhouses very seriously.

Our larger slaughterhouses, which process the majority of animals, already have CCTV and adhere to a protocol jointly developed and agreed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and industry bodies to enable Official Veterinarians (OVs) access to CCTV footage. An [FSA survey](#), completed in 2016, estimated 'that in England and Wales 92% of cattle, 96% of pigs, 88% of sheep and 99% of poultry throughput comes from premises with some form of CCTV in use'.<sup>1</sup>

There are currently 24 slaughterhouses in Wales: Nineteen process red meat (four large, six medium and nine small) and five process poultry (three large, one medium and one small). Eleven have CCTV systems installed (including all five poultry slaughterhouses). Nine small and four medium red meat slaughterhouses do not currently have CCTV.

A £1.1million Food Business Investment Scheme (FBIS) for small and medium sized slaughterhouses, which opened to expressions of interest in September 2018, has recently closed for applications. Projects that include investments to safeguard animal welfare, such as installation, upgrade or improvement of CCTV, are being given priority.

CCTV cannot replace direct oversight by slaughterhouse management or OVs, particularly in very small premises, but can provide objective supporting evidence of good practice. Safeguarding animal welfare requires knowledge and a culture that respects animals. Successful applicants to the scheme will also receive expert welfare advice on the movement and management of animals in their premises.

In addition to FBIS, the Food Skills Cymru (FSC) programme delivered by Lantra supports businesses within the Welsh food and drink processing and manufacturing industry to ensure employees have the right skills and training. FSC is working with Shropshire Training to deliver 'Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing' to businesses applying for training up until March 2021. FSC is also looking to develop additional animal welfare related courses for slaughterhouses to ensure animals are properly handled and cared for prior to slaughter.

FSA is undertaking an investigation in respect of the Farmers Fresh slaughterhouse in Wrexham. While the investigation is ongoing I cannot comment on this specific case. However, I have met with the FSA to ensure the matter is being dealt with in a manner which reflects the seriousness of the allegations and the evidence which supported them.

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<sup>1</sup> Food Standards Agency (FSA) Results of the 2016 CCTV survey in slaughterhouses in England and Wales, 2016

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their Report on CCTV in Slaughterhouses. I have set out my response to the Report's recommendations below.

**Detailed Responses to the report's recommendations are set out below:**

**Recommendation 1**

The Committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government makes the installation and maintenance of CCTV monitoring systems mandatory in all slaughterhouses in Wales. This should cover all areas of the premises which are involved in the holding or processing of live animals and supported by requirements on the placement and operation of cameras, and the retention and storage of recordings and the availability of recordings for inspection.

**Response: Accept in principle**

I have previously said I am considering legislating to ensure CCTV is in place in all Welsh slaughterhouses. However, I have committed to working with slaughterhouse operators, in a supportive relationship, to achieve the same objective. Any decision to introduce legislation to make CCTV mandatory will not be made until after the applications to the Food Business Investment Scheme for small and medium sized slaughterhouse, including the type and scale of investments, have been assessed.

**Financial Implications:** Legislating to make CCTV mandatory would have financial implications for slaughterhouses. This would need to be considered as part of a Regulatory Impact Assessment accompanying any legislation brought forward.

**Recommendation 2**

The Committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government ensures that the Food Standards Agency, or another appropriate body, is provided with a sufficient level of resource to monitor and enforce the new CCTV monitoring system in slaughterhouses in Wales.

**Response: Accept in principle**

Please see my response to Recommendation 1.

**Financial Implications:** Costs would be drawn from existing programme budgets.

**Recommendation 3**

The Committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government ensures that the Food Standards Agency is provided with a sufficient level of resource to undertake its animal welfare delivery activity in Wales,

with consideration given to the FSA's estimates of the cost of delivering official controls.

**Response: Accept**

The funding provided to the FSA by Welsh Government is reviewed on an annual basis and takes into account estimates of costings for the year ahead along with the evidence of previous budgets. This ensures sufficient resource is provided to allow the agency to carry out its duties effectively and to ensure animal welfare standards are maintained to a high level.

**Financial Implications:** Costs are drawn from existing programme budgets.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Lesley Griffiths AM**  
**Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs**