

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Video Conference via Zoom

Meeting date: 23 June 2020

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

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Ross Davies – Deputy Clerk

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In accordance with Standing Order 34.19, the Chair has determined that the public are excluded from the Committee's meeting in order to protect public health. This meeting will be broadcast live on www.senedd.tv

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Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers

This petition was submitted by David Adam Clarke having collected a total of 174 signatures.

Text of Petition

NHS wales bank workers who are vulnerable, require safeguarding or are over 28 weeks pregnant might not be given the same financial support or safeguarding as full time NHS staff by health boards. Some of these NHS wales bank HCA's, Nurses, Midwives et al. have worked for the NHS for years and this is their primary income. The vulnerable and pregnant could be facing working or receiving no pay, and that is subject to them being offered alternative work.

Please support the NHS bank workers

Additional Information

The equality act 2010 protects vulnerabilities (under disability) as well as pregnancy and maternity against discrimination.

The health and safety at work act 1974 along with management of health and safety at work 1999 dictates that risk assessments must be carried out in regards to NHS bank workers in relation to the Covid-19 crisis. Where those nhs bank staff cannot work or be offered alternative work, they may be left without an income.

In these unprecedented times the Welsh Parliament, NHS wales and relevant health boards should ensure financial support and safeguarding to NHS bank workers. Currently NHS bank workers in wales might only have the choice to work or stay at home with no financial support.

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/rcn-advice/bank-workers>

<https://www.rcm.org.uk/media/3896/2020-04-21-occupational-health-advice-for-employers-and-pregnant-women.pdf>

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/nhs-southmead-hospital-furlough-coronavirus-4082655>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Clwyd South
- North Wales

Extend Covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 23 Mehefin 2020
Petitions Committee | 23 June 2020

Reference: RS20/12730-2

Petition Number: P-05-964

Petition title: Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS Wales bank workers.

Text of petition: NHS Wales bank workers who are vulnerable, require safeguarding or are over 28 weeks pregnant might not be given the same financial support or safeguarding as full time NHS staff by health boards. Some of these NHS Wales bank HCA's, Nurses, Midwives et al. have worked for the NHS for years and this is their primary income. The vulnerable and pregnant could be facing working or receiving no pay, and that is subject to them being offered alternative work. Please support the NHS bank workers.

The Equality Act 2010 protects vulnerabilities (under disability) as well as pregnancy and maternity against discrimination.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 along with management of health and safety at work 1999 dictates that risk assessments must be carried out in regards to NHS bank workers in relation to the Covid-19 crisis. Where those NHS bank staff cannot work or be offered alternative work, they may be left without an income.

In these unprecedented times the Welsh Parliament, NHS Wales and relevant health boards should ensure financial support and safeguarding to NHS bank workers. Currently NHS bank workers in Wales might only have the choice to work or stay at home with no financial support.



1. Background

The NHS Wales Employers website sets out **guidance** for the Welsh NHS workforce in relation to coronavirus. The website includes a link to an NHS Wales document - [COVID – 19 \(Coronavirus\) Frequently Asked Questions for NHS Managers and Employers \(28 May 2020\)](#).

The information below, taken from the document, sets out some of the terms and conditions of service that apply to NHS Wales staff during the coronavirus pandemic.

Individuals who are shielding or in self-isolation

Individuals who are ‘shielding’ or who are in self-isolation will be categorised as being “medically excluded” from work. In these circumstances they should be encouraged to work if they are in a position to do so. If an individual’s role prevents them from working from home, then the circumstances of medical exclusion are that it is authorised absence, they will be paid full pay and they would not be expected to work back any of the time off. In addition, it is expected that individuals fully comply with any public health advice.

At-risk workers

Pregnant women may be particularly vulnerable, and employers have additional responsibilities to protect them. As the situation progresses, employers should regularly risk assess and should discuss with pregnant employees whether it is appropriate to move them to a different location, arrange for them to work from home or even to temporarily remove them from the workplace. In which case they will receive full pay. It is imperative that any action is done with their consent and preferably with support from Occupational Health. Further advice is available from the [Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#).

Similar action should be taken for other vulnerable individuals, particularly those who are immuno-suppressed or have long term conditions. [Public Health Wales advice](#) should be followed in these circumstances.

Where an individual has received a letter from Welsh Government advising them that they should be shielded for a period of 12 weeks, then employers should in the first instance explore what work they can do from home. If an individual’s role

prevents them from working from home, then they will be paid full pay and they would not be expected to work back any of the time off.

Self-isolation

Any self-isolation absence in the interests of control of infection (household isolation) will be disregarded in respect of the cumulative absence and triggers which operate within the Managing Attendance at Work Policy. These absences will be treated as medical exclusion and will be paid at full pay.

Where individuals self-isolate for 7 days with symptoms this will be classed as normal sickness absence but will also be disregarded in respect of cumulative absence and triggers which operate within the Managing Attendance at Work Policy and the individual will receive full pay as noted above.

Taking time off to look after a child or dependant who has been advised to self-isolate because they are in an at risk category

Staff are entitled to time off work to help someone who depends on them (a “dependant”) in an unexpected event or emergency. This would apply to situations to do with COVID-19 and may be a combination of time off in lieu (TOIL) / unpaid / annual leave.

In respect of the longer term support for the changed circumstances e.g. school closures, a change to working arrangements should be considered.

Death-in-service benefits

The Welsh Government has announced a new Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme to provide benefits for eligible NHS and social care staff who perform vital frontline work during the pandemic.

Bank staff

The [COVID - 19 \(Coronavirus\) Frequently Asked Questions for NHS Managers and Employers \(28 May 2020\)](#) document includes the following information relating to bank staff.

If a bank staff member cancels a shift due to the need to self-isolate, they will be paid for the booked shifts. However, this is for the purpose of control of infection only and in these circumstances, all bank workers should recognise the reasoning and intent behind this provision and not book multiple shifts knowing that they may need to self-isolate.

There is no further, specific reference to bank staff in the document.

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

P-05-964 Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 18.06.20

Dear Petitions committee,

I am writing to you to provide comments to support my petition to “Extend covid-19 financial support and paid leave to vulnerable and pregnant NHS wales bank workers”. Please let this email act as comments and support of this petition. I ask you to bear in mind that the NHS bank workers are nurses, hcas, doctors, midwives and carers who make up an estimated 8%-10% of the workforce & work directly for our NHS (as opposed to agency bank workers, who are employed privately at greater expense and are eligible for furlough support), many have worked for the NHS for years to find themselves out of contract and working for the bank as their sole income and if you or a loved one has ever found themselves being treated by the NHS in Wales, you will have been treated at some point by an NHS Wales bank worker.

Since writing this petition I can now confidently say that medically vulnerable and pregnant NHS bank workers in Wales are not granted any financial support where they cannot work due to medical conditions that before Covid-19 and lockdown would not have effected their ability to work, this includes those in shielded categories or where risk assessments dictate they cannot work; This is both due to replies I have, through politicians, received from health minister Vaughan Gething MS (please find attached) and through hearing from NHS bank nurses, midwives, HCA's et al. across Wales who are being deeply effected by this and facing great financial hardship. I also state that this petition and its cause is as important as ever, especially for those NHS wales bank workers in shielding categories, who for the past 3 months have received no financial support or income and face with the extension of shielding in Wales no prospect of income for themselves and their families until August. Not only have they had to endure financial hardship, but they also face having years of service to the NHS ignored by NHS wales and being discriminated against during this crisis due to medical conditions that previously would not hinder their ability to work, all whilst hearing the claps for the NHS who they are meant to represent.

Whilst private sector atypical workers, medically vulnerable or not, are eligible for the national furlough scheme whether they work for a healthcare agency, McDonalds, a sex shop or any other private business, the self employed have been supported through financial support schemes and grants, contracted NHS wales workers have been given financial support beyond the scope of their contracts in full paid leave and many healthboards in England have given medically vulnerable and pregnant NHS bank workers full paid leave based on average earnings, in Wales NHS bank workers get no financial support from NHS wales and are not eligible for any financial support schemes. The only thing that sets them apart from private atypical workers on 80% of their wages, and medically vulnerable or pregnant NHS England workers, is that they work for the NHS in Wales. I believe action needs to be taken now to remedy this issue.

Additional background:

The original background and cause for this petition is a personal one to myself although it will not have a direct impact on mine or my families predicament now. My partner has been in the third trimester of pregnancy from the onset of the coronavirus lockdown, has had open heart surgery in the past and works for the NHS bank, at a hospital for a Welsh health board. My partner for the past 5 years has worked for NHS Wales and having had her contract come to an end 3 years ago, following the closure of the ward she worked on, has found herself as many others working solely on the NHS bank at her healthboard in Wales, as her sole income.

At the onset of the Coronavirus crisis when it was first announced that pregnant women would be placed in a vulnerable category towards the end of march, my partner had shifts booked in advance until June and was advised by occupational health at her health board that she should stay at home and was also advised that she would be paid for all her shifts she had booked (around 60% of her usual earnings). 4 weeks later at the beginning of the easter holidays my partner was informed that this would not be honoured and it was her "choice" to return to work, she was also informed there were many others that has been wrongly promised financial support and it was her "choice" to work as per the terms of NHS wales bank. If she did not "choose" to work my partner would not be eligible for any financial support. Since easter Sunday my partner has worked in an alternative office role for NHS Wales, working when both her medically vulnerable or pregnant contracted counterparts in Wales have been granted paid leave and many medically vulnerable or pregnant NHS England bank workers have been given paid leave from the onset of the coronavirus crisis (we have both friends and family working for English healthboards). During much of the time she has been working during this crisis at over 28 weeks gestation, The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists guidelines for NHS employers for much of this time has stated that pregnant workers over 28 weeks gestation should stay at home, along with this many of the contracted office workers for the NHS in wales along with politicians that were neither in 3rd trimester pregnancy or have medical vulnerabilities were given either paid leave or told to work from home. My partners pregnancy was also deemed a high risk pregnancy and was consultant lead. Whilst my partner has been fortunate in she has not gotten ill, has successfully given birth via C-section and has been able to still provide an income and enjoy the opportunity to help her colleagues during this crisis, many have not been as fortunate and cannot work.

Please view additional documents for context. I hope you look favourably upon this petition and I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Kind regards,
David Clarke

Important information- Please find a link below to the guidance for English NHS health boards in regards to self-isolation and with reference to NHS bank workers:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/staff-terms-and-conditions/self-isolation>

Please use this as a reference point to the different treatment of NHS bank workers in Wales compared to in England. If many of those NHS bank workers in Wales denied financial support due to self isolation as a result of being medically/clinically vulnerable or shielding worked for health boards in England, they would have been paid based on shifts booked and/or based on average earnings from the previous financial year.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

**WRITTEN QUESTION
FOR ANSWER BY
THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
ON 13 MAY 2020**

Mark Isherwood (North Wales): Will the Minister confirm whether health boards should pay bank nurse staff on zero hours contracts who have pre-booked their shifts but are unable to work them because they are in a vulnerable/shielding category? WAQ80106 (e)

Vaughan Gething: NHS Wales bank staff operate on flexible contracts – they can choose the shifts they work and, in a majority of cases, they work bank shifts in addition to their regular NHS shifts. The contract terms are made clear to people when they sign up to work under this service.

If someone working on the NHS Wales bank needs to self-isolate as they have coronavirus symptoms, they will be paid for the booked shifts.



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/03260/20

Ken Skates MS
Member of the Senedd for Clwyd South

ken.skates@senedd.wales

16 June 2020

Dear Ken,

Thank you for your letter of 19 May on behalf of a constituent regarding income issues for pregnant and vulnerable NHS bank staff. I hope that you will understand that it is not appropriate for me to comment on individual circumstances. However, I would expect that the employing organisation undertakes the appropriate risk assessment to assess pregnant and vulnerable staff to take the necessary steps.

Bank and locum workers operate on flexible working hours where they are able to choose the shifts they work dependant on their needs. Therefore, as they have a flexible contract with no fixed hours they are not entitled to the same benefits of being employed with a regular contract such as occupational sick pay. This is made clear to bank workers when they sign up to work under this service.

However, the Welsh Government understands the situation and constraints that bank workers who have been asked to shield have found themselves in and we have asked health boards and trusts to look again at the circumstances whilst considering the employment relationship of bank workers and their employment status.

Should bank and locum workers wish to have the same benefits of being a contracted member of staff including the security of regular shifts, sick pay and holiday pay they may wish to consider applying for a contracted NHS position, this could be for all or some of the hours they would wish to be employed for. I understand that currently all NHS Employers are currently holding local discussion with their bank and locum workers to see how and if they would like to have contracted work going forward to have the same benefits as employees for those contracted hours.

I expect health boards and trusts to agree a position very soon that means that bank and locum workers who have been asked to shield by the Welsh Government do not find themselves in a worse off position than their bank and locum colleagues who are able to continue working during the pandemic.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

I 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 AS/MS

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



Royal College of
Obstetricians &
Gynaecologists

COVID-19 virus infection and pregnancy

Occupational health advice for employers and pregnant women during the COVID-19 pandemic

Version 2.1: Published Monday 30 March 2020



Summary of updates

Please note that version 1 of this occupational health guidance was published as a chapter in the RCOG's general Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection in Pregnancy guidance. The occupational health guidance will now be published as a separate document given the audiences for each document are distinct. It is hoped that this will make it easier for all healthcare professionals to stay updated as new versions of each document are published in line with emerging evidence.

The occupational health guidance will continue to be referenced in the general Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection in Pregnancy guidance.

Version	Date	Summary of changes
2.1	30.3.20	2.2: Update - Assessment of the risk of vertical transmission has been changed to 'probable', in line with a single case report published 26.3.20 that showed the first convincing evidence of COVID-19 being transmitted to the baby during pregnancy.

1. Introduction

Everyone in the UK is advised to follow guidance from the Government to lessen the spread of COVID-19. As of 23 March 2020, this has been updated to guidance to stay at home, with the exception of a limited number of circumstances, detailed [here](#).

However, for individuals in key professions, travelling to and participating in work remains essential in this national emergency.

For pregnant women in these key professions, and in particular for pregnant healthcare professionals, the following information may be helpful when discussing how best to ensure health and safety in the workplace with their occupational health teams.

2. Available information about risks of contracting COVID-19 in pregnancy

COVID-19 poses a risk to all members of the population, particularly to people with co-morbidities. The groups who appear to be at the lowest risk of developing severe disease are children and healthy adults. It is reassuring that there is as yet no robust evidence that pregnant women are more likely to become infected than other healthy adults.

2.1 Risk to pregnant women

It is known from other respiratory infections (e.g. influenza, SARS)^{1,2} that pregnant women who contract significant respiratory infections in the third trimester (after 28 weeks) are more likely to become seriously unwell. This may also lead to preterm birth of the baby, intended to enable the mother to recover through improving the efficiency of her breathing or ventilation.^{3,4}

Given these additional considerations for pregnant women who become seriously unwell in the later stages of pregnancy, the Government has taken the precautionary approach to include pregnant women in a vulnerable group. This is so that pregnant women are aware of the current lack of available evidence relating to this virus in pregnancy; and particularly, to encourage awareness that pregnant women in later stages of pregnancy could potentially become more seriously unwell.

2.2 Risk to the baby

Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 causes problems with the baby's development or causes miscarriage. With regard to vertical transmission (transmission from mother to baby antenatally or intrapartum), emerging evidence now suggests that vertical transmission is probable. There has been a report of a single case in which this appears likely, but reassuringly the baby was discharged from hospital and well. In all previously reported cases, infection was found at least 30 hours after birth. The proportion of pregnancies affected by vertical transmission and the significance to the neonate is not yet known.^{4,11}

No previous coronavirus has been shown to cause fetal abnormalities; and, while COVID-19 is new, the absence of reports of an increased incidence of fetal abnormality at routine scans in Asia indicates this is likely to be the same for the novel coronavirus.

Although the evidence to date available offers no evidence of harm, it is not possible to give absolute assurance to any pregnant woman that contracting COVID-19 carries no risk to her baby and no risk to her over and above that experienced by a non-pregnant healthy individual. The information above combines the limited evidence from COVID-19 so far with evidence extrapolated from other similar viral illnesses. We are actively seeking more evidence and will update this guidance when this is available.

3. Recommendations for pregnant healthcare workers

In the UK, there already exist significant protections in law for pregnant workers. These must be followed in relation to COVID-19. NHS Employers should do everything possible to maintain the health of their pregnant employees. The central aspect of this protection is based on risk assessment of each individual pregnant worker's working environment and the role they play.

Acknowledging the evidence above and following discussion with the Government and UK Chief Medical Officers, the following recommendations should guide pregnant healthcare workers and occupational health teams in conducting this risk assessment.

3.1 Protection of all pregnant healthcare workers

In light of the limited evidence, pregnant women of any gestation should be offered the choice of whether to work in direct patient-facing roles during the COVID-19 pandemic. This choice should be respected and supported by their employers. Suitable alternative duties might include remote triage, telephone consultations, governance or administrative roles. This is in line with the national guidance that workers, including healthcare professionals, who are also identified by the Government as vulnerable to COVID-19 should be able to participate in their own risk assessment.

3.2 Choices for pregnant healthcare workers prior to 28 weeks' gestation

Pregnant women who choose to work in patient facing roles after occupational health risk assessment, prior to the third trimester of pregnancy, should be supported to do so by minimising risk of transmission through established methods.

It may not be possible to completely avoid caring for all patients with COVID-19. As for all healthcare workers, use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and risk assessments according to current guidance will provide pregnant workers with protection from infection. The arrival of rapid COVID-19 testing will significantly assist in organising care provision, and this guidance will be updated appropriately when such tests are commonly available.

Some working environments (e.g. operating theatres, respiratory wards and intensive care/high dependency units) carry a higher risk of exposure to the virus for all healthcare staff, including pregnant women, through the greater number of aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs) performed. These procedures are summarised in the PHE publication '[Guidance on Infection Prevention and Control](#)'. When caring for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients all healthcare workers in these settings are recommended to use appropriate PPE. Where possible, pregnant women are advised to avoid working in these areas with patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

3.3 Healthcare workers after 28 weeks' gestation or with underlying health conditions

For pregnant women from 28 weeks' gestation, or with underlying health conditions such as heart or lung disease at any gestation, a more precautionary approach is advised. Women in this category should be recommended to stay at home. For many healthcare workers, this may present opportunities to work flexibly from home in a different capacity, for example by undertaking telephone or videoconference consultations, or taking on administrative duties.

All NHS employers should consider how to maximise the potential for homeworking given current relaxation of [NHS Information Governance requirements](#), wherever possible.

Staff in this risk group who have chosen not to follow government advice and attend the workplace must not be deployed in roles where they are working with patients. Services may want to consider deploying these staff to support other activities such as education or training needs (e.g. in IPC or simulation).

These measures will allow many pregnant healthcare workers to choose to continue to make an active and valuable contribution to the huge challenge facing us, whether at home or in the workplace, until the commencement of their maternity leave.

References

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DISCLAIMER: The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) has produced this guidance as an aid to good clinical practice and clinical decision-making. This guidance is based on the best evidence available at the time of writing, and the guidance will be kept under regular review as new evidence emerges. This guidance is not intended to replace clinical diagnostics, procedures or treatment plans made by a clinician or other healthcare professional and RCOG accepts no liability for the use of its guidance in a clinical setting. Please be aware that the evidence base for COVID-19 and its impact on pregnancy and related healthcare services is developing rapidly and the latest data or best practice may not yet be incorporated into the current version of this document. RCOG recommends that any departures from local clinical protocols or guidelines should be fully documented in the patient's case notes at the time the relevant decision is taken.

 @RCObsGyn  @rcobsgyn  @RCObsGyn



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Agenda Item 3.2

P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales

This petition was submitted by Peter Black having collected a total of 5,790 signatures.

Text of Petition

The Welsh Government has adopted different NDR Relief policies to England for the retail sector, excluding the small proportion of properties with a rateable value of over £500,000. With Debenhams already in financial trouble this threatens the viability of all their Welsh stores and the future of up to 900 staff. If these stores close it will have a disastrous impact on shopping centres where they are situated, reducing footfall for other retail outlets.

Additional Information

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/debenhams-coronavirus-wales-stores-closed-18147574>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Swansea East
- South Wales West

Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 23 Mehefin 2020
Petitions Committee | 23 June 2020

Reference: RS20/12927/1

Petition Number: P-05-967

Petition title: Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales

Text of petition: The Welsh Government has adopted different NDR Relief policies to England for the retail sector, excluding the small proportion of properties with a rateable value of over £500,000. With Debenhams already in financial trouble this threatens the viability of all their Welsh stores and the future of up to 900 staff. If these stores close it will have a disastrous impact on shopping centres where they are situated, reducing footfall for other retail outlets.

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/debenhams-coronavirus-wales-stores-closed-18147574>



1. Background

Business rates (sometimes known as non-domestic rates or NDR) have been fully devolved to Wales since April 2015.

Business rates are calculated by applying a multiplier to the rateable value of a non-domestic property and subtracting any reliefs a property might be eligible for.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{£} \\ \text{Annual} \\ \text{Business} \\ \text{rates bill} \end{array} = \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{£} \text{ } \text{Factory} \\ \text{Rateable} \\ \text{value of} \\ \text{non-domestic} \\ \text{property} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{c} \% \\ \text{Multiplier} \\ \mathbf{0.535} \\ \text{in 2020-21} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} \text{£} \text{ } \text{Calendar} \\ \text{Annual} \\ \text{Business} \\ \text{rates liability} \end{array} \right) - \begin{array}{c} \text{Hand} \\ \text{Any reliefs the} \\ \text{property is} \\ \text{eligible for} \end{array}$$

The rateable value of a property is an estimate of how much it could rent for per year on the open market at a given point in time. The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) assesses the rateable value of all non-domestic properties in Wales and England.

The multiplier is the ‘pence in the pound’ of the rateable value paid in business rates and is set by Welsh Government each year. Any reliefs that the property is eligible for are subtracted from the liability in the final business rates bill. The multiplier for 2020-21 is set at 0.535.

In Wales, business rates are collected by local authorities and paid into a national ‘pool’ administered by the Welsh Government. They are then redistributed to Welsh local authorities and Police and Crime Commissioners as part of the annual Local Government Settlement and Police Settlement.

2. Welsh Government action

Business rates relief has formed a part of the Welsh Government’s response to COVID-19. This is alongside other measures, including grants to businesses linked to the rateable value of a property.

On 19 March, the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd announced a package of support for businesses in dealing with COVID-19. This scheme followed an announcement on 17 March regarding businesses support.

This support includes 100% business rates relief for all properties used for retail, leisure and hospitality. The support is available for one year (2020-21).

The relief will be automatically applied to the business rates bills of eligible businesses.

The scheme was amended on 24 March following the announcement to exclude properties with a rateable value of £500,000 and over. The Welsh Government state that: “this will affect fewer than 200 properties across Wales but will release approximately £117 million to kick-start the economic crisis fund”.

Guidance for the scheme contains more detailed eligibility criteria, including specific examples of property types that fall under the category of retail, leisure and hospitality.

The UK Government is also offering 100% business rates relief for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in 2020-21. There is no rateable value limit on the relief.

The Welsh Government also offers other business rates reliefs, including:

- Small Business Rates Relief:
 - eligible business premises with a rateable value of up to £6,000 will receive 100% relief; and
 - those with a rateable value between £6,001 and £12,000 will receive relief on a tapered basis from 100% to zero
- Registered Childcare Premises receive 100% relief until 31 March 2022, during which time it will be evaluated to assess its effect
- Post Offices:
 - Post offices with a rateable value up to £9,000 receive 100% relief
 - Post offices with a rateable value between £9,001 and £12,000 receive 50% relief
- Hydropower Projects with a rateable value up to £50,000 can apply for support towards their 2020-21 business rates.

-
- Charities may qualify for charitable rate relief, which automatically qualify for 80% mandatory rates relief, and may qualify for relief of up to 100% at the discretion of the local authority.
 - Empty business properties are exempt from paying business rates for 3 months after the property becomes vacant. There are additional exemptions for certain types of property or for properties under a set rateable value.
 - Local authorities can also grant hardship relief to businesses if they believe that it is in the interests of the local community to do so.

The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd's letter to the Petitions Committee notes:

The Welsh Government is providing non-domestic rates relief to the majority of Debenhams stores in Wales, with our support totalling over £1 million. I have also met the Chair of Debenhams to learn more about the company's position and I have asked officials to explore whether alternative support might be an option.

3. Welsh Parliament action

The coronavirus pandemic, including support for businesses, has been a focus of the Welsh Parliament's activity during the pandemic.

Following the change to the scheme, the Welsh Government was asked in a written question (31 March); "what did the Minister consider in choosing not to distinguish between national chains and indigenous, single-site destination tourism businesses". The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd replied:

We estimate that the decision to limit non-domestic rates relief for retail, leisure and hospitality businesses to premises with a rateable value of £500,000 or below will affect fewer than 200 business properties across Wales. It has released more than £100 million towards the new Economic Resilience Fund announced by the First Minister on 30 March.

The Economic Resilience Fund will provide a package of support to help firms of all sizes, with a focus on those that have not already benefited from the Coronavirus funding previously announced by Welsh Government. The package includes support for larger companies which are of critical social or economic importance to Wales.

Retail, leisure and hospitality businesses which are not eligible for the rates relief may make a case for support through the Economic Resilience Fund.

On 17 April, the Welsh Government was asked in a written question; “what exemptions or financial relief does the Welsh Government plan to provide to any business with a property that has rateable value above £500,000”? The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd replied:

The Economic Resilience Fund is providing a package to help firms of all sizes, with a focus on those that have not already benefited from the other Coronavirus business support schemes we have put in place.

The package includes support for larger companies which are of critical social or economic importance to Wales.

In the Public Accounts Committee (8 June) the Director General, Economy, Skills and Natural Resources Group, Welsh Government was asked to what extent the Welsh Government had considered the use of discretionary business rate relief for businesses with a rateable value of £500,000 and over. The Director General noted:

...that's down to a case-by-case judgment. Ministers took the view, at the point that we were putting the NDR schemes into play, that there was an opportunity to fund more small and medium-sized enterprises and micro-enterprises through putting the £500,000 cut-off point in there... But it will be about the particular circumstances that the company in question faces—its strategic importance in a local economy or in a supply chain, the impact on jobs, and considerations of that sort, on a case-by-case basis.

In response to questions on this subject in Finance Committee (21 May), the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd noted:

So, the rate relief, as you'll know, is part of our support for the economy, which is £1.7 billion of support, and our support here in Wales eclipses anything offered anywhere else in the UK. We took the decision to limit rate relief to properties with a rateable value of under £0.5 million, and we did so recognising that there was an opportunity there to put together a fund of £100 million to support small and medium-sized enterprises. But it didn't preclude those business with properties over that £0.5 million mark from seeking funding from the economic

resilience fund. So, there's funding there for larger companies, and I know that several of them have made applications to that.

The Minister also spoke about Debenhams specifically, stating:

I did have a useful meeting with the chair of Debenhams. I think that we have to start, really, from the point of recognising that the troubles that Debenhams are facing started long before the coronavirus outbreak, of course; it's facing insolvency for the third time. So, I think that it is—. Well, it's just not credible to suggest that rate relief support from the Welsh Government is entirely responsible for the trouble that Debenhams finds itself in. But, that said, we recognise the important role that Debenhams plays in our high streets in a number of places across Wales, and, of course, Debenhams has benefited from the rate relief in several of its stores in Wales where the ratable value is less than £0.5 million. So, I met with the chair of Debenhams, and the suggested way forward was to make an application to the economic resilience fund, which, of course, is grant support for businesses. But, as part of that, I would want to see guarantees on jobs being retained and I would want to see that kind of commitment in the longer term to our town centres, which you just, I have to say, wouldn't get if it were just a matter of offering rate relief.

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

P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales, Correspondence – Interested Party to Chair, 17.05.20

Dear Janet

I am writing to you and Chair of the Petitions Committee to ask that the below petition is urgently considered for a full debate in the Senedd, now that it has reached more than 5,000 signatures. I have already written separately to all the Members of Senedd who represent my constituency of Newport East and South Wales East.

Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales

<https://petitions.senedd.wales/petitions/200008>

The Welsh Government's decision to cap business rate relief threatens a major and perilous blow for town and city centres like Newport, where I live.

Newport has experienced some positive regeneration in recent years, primarily linked to the Friars Walk development. As you may know, the anchor store in Friars Walk is Debenhams and I have been very worried to hear the news that Debenhams may not reopen its flagship Welsh stores as a result of the rate relief cap. If we were to lose that store it would leave a gaping hole in Newport city centre that no other retailer is likely to be able to fill, especially in the current financial climate. Being a small, compact city centre, Newport would feel the impact of the loss of a store like Debenhams in a catastrophic way. Unlike Cardiff, there is not a plethora of other large department stores and major retail shops for people to go to.

I urge you not to underestimate the significance of a store like Debenhams in a place Newport. We suffer a large number of vacant retail units along our main historic shopping street (Commercial Street) and even in Friars Walk itself, which has only been open a few years. Part of the reason for this is the crushing burden of an outdated business rates system, which does not reflect the reality of modern retail businesses.

I never thought I would ever write to my elected representatives or petition the Government for greater support for a large retail business. But in fact I am writing to you out of concern for the future prosperity of Newport more broadly, the 3rd biggest city in Wales, and the gateway to our nation. Newport deserves to live up to its potential and have a thriving city centre. All Welsh towns and cities deserve this, which is why it is so critical that this decision is debated, scrutinised and hopefully reviewed.

If you are in any doubt about the seriousness of this matter, I would encourage you to walk the length of Commercial Street and through Friars Walk and count the number of empty shops, which I personally find quite soul destroying. Newport has a lot of potential and the very hard work in recent years with developments like Chartist Tower would be potentially wasted if we do not get the right kind of support for key businesses in our city, now.

A debate in the Senedd is needed, urgently, on this matter -- to protect Welsh towns and cities from economic damage.

Thank you for your time considering this matter.

P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales, Correspondence – Interested Party to Chair: further comments, 23.05.20

The recent news from Trago Mills in Merthyr also highlights why disadvantaging big employers is dangerous for job security. It is also worth noting that retail employs a disproportionate number of women so it is women who always bear the economic brunt when retailers close stores or go bust. For places like Newport and Merthyr, stores like Trago Mills and Debenhams play a huge role in our wider economies and the aspirations of our towns and cities.

I would also like it noted in my comments that business rates need urgent and major reform more generally. They are contributing, in a serious way, to the decline of our high streets. The boarded up shops we see in places like Newport are on the whole due to the disappearance of major retailers. Big retail needs help as much as small independents. The rate relief for 2020 could have been the start of a broader discussion on that and I am worried that the Welsh Government are still not grasping this.

Thank you again.

Best wishes,



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-967
Ein cyf/Our ref: RE/00336/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair of the Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

9 June 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter as about non-domestic rates.

I recognise the importance of Debenhams stores to communities across Wales. The Welsh Government is providing non-domestic rates relief to the majority of Debenhams stores in Wales, with our support totalling over £1 million. I have also met the Chair of Debenhams to learn more about the company's position and I have asked officials to explore whether alternative support might be an option.

I am grateful for the hard work of local authorities which are home to Debenhams stores in Wales in working with the Welsh Government to find a viable mechanism for supporting the business. A number have been considering how they can use their discretionary powers to assist the continued presence of the stores in their areas. I am pleased that Newport City Council and Swansea Council have agreed to defer the non-domestic rates liability for the Debenhams stores in their city centres until 31 March 2021.

I do need to emphasise that the decision to set the threshold for the rates relief at £500,000 was not taken lightly. I also need to stress that, unlike the UK Government, we have relatively little control over the overall size of our budget, so face very difficult choices in the current crisis.

I must also make it clear that the financial challenges that Debenhams faces cannot be attributed solely to its rates liability, nor could the future of Debenhams be guaranteed by the availability of rates relief. Debenhams has already announced the closure of a number of its stores across the UK, including some which were eligible for relief.

The Welsh Government is continuing to consider this matter, and we appreciate the challenges Debenhams faces and the impact store closures would have on communities in

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Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

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 and any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Wales. We are working with local authorities to consider how our high streets can be best supported to ensure vibrant and enduring business activity and a strong retail presence.

Yours sincerely,

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

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Finance and Trefnydd

P-05-967 Welsh Government to amend its NDR relief policy to help keep Debenhams stores open in Wales, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 09.06.20

Thank you for your email. I do understand that Debenhams is already in trouble, but the Swansea branch in particular is one of the best-performing of its stores. There is every reason to believe that if it reopens in more normal times then it will survive. The discretionary powers being used by Swansea and Newport Councils amount to a temporary measure, and just defers the liability until 31 March rather than expunging it.

The threshold for rates relief being set by the Welsh Government of £500,000 may well assist a lot of smaller businesses, but the larger stores with higher rateable value act as anchor stores, and the footfall they attract into town and city centres helps sustain those smaller retail businesses. If these anchor stores disappear then other, smaller businesses may fail as well. That is why Wales should have followed the model of relief adopted by the UK Government.

I note that talks are ongoing with Debenhams and I would hope that the committee will explore further with the Minister the options being explored in these talks and their likelihood of success in securing the future of Debenham stores in Wales. There are a lot of jobs at stake here, as well as the future viability of many shopping centres, already in trouble because of the Covid lockdown, and not all those people at risk of losing their jobs work for Debenhams.

I am happy to expand on these views to the committee if required. Thank you

Peter

Agenda Item 4.1

P-05-952 Revert to Welsh language spelling of place-names

This petition was submitted by Jonathan Parsons having collected a total of 1,096 signatures.

Text of Petition

Wales has many place names which have needlessly been Anglicised, and have often been replaced by Anglicised forms for no good reason. Not only is this disrespectful to Welsh people and the Welsh language, but the Welsh language is, according to Law, supposed to be on an equal footing with English in Wales.

Places such as Trevor (from Welsh Trefor) near Wrexham are not only undermining, but obscure the etymologies of such names! This is surely unacceptable.

I, and the undersigned, therefore petition the Welsh Assembly to take action and change these Anglicised forms of Welsh names – throughout Wales – and restore their original Welsh spellings. The petition does not go so far as to call for English names to be abolished where a Welsh name also exists (Caerdydd next to Cardiff, etc).

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Clwyd South
- North Wales

P-05-952: Revert to Welsh language spelling of place names

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 28 Ebrill 2020
Petitions Committee | 28 April 2020

Reference: RS20/12391-1

Petition Number: P-05-952

Petition title: Revert to Welsh language spelling of place-names

Text of petition: Wales has many place names which have needlessly been Anglicised, and have often been replaced by Anglicised forms for no good reason. Not only is this disrespectful to Welsh people and the Welsh language, but the Welsh language is, according to Law, supposed to be on an equal footing with English in Wales.

Places such as Trevor (from Welsh Trefor) near Wrexham are not only undermining, but obscure the etymologies of such names! This is surely unacceptable.

I, and the undersigned, therefore petition the Welsh Assembly to take action and change these Anglicised forms of Welsh names – throughout Wales – and restore their original Welsh spellings. The petition does not go so far as to call for English names to be abolished where a Welsh name also exists (Caerdydd next to Cardiff, etc).



1. Context

The names of Welsh villages, towns and cities have developed over a period of two millennia. While the **majority of place-names in Wales are Welsh**, many place-names have their origins in English, French, Latin, Irish, Norse and Brittonic/British (evolving to become *Cymraeg* as we know it today).

Examples of some recognisable **Welsh only place-names** include Aberystwyth, Bangor, Tonypany, Penarth and Pontypridd to name just a few. However, there are several examples of cities, towns and villages in Wales that have both a Welsh and English name.

Some of those places with Welsh and English names have very **similar spelling and pronunciation** in both languages. Places like:

- *Caerffili* - Caerphilly;
- *Caerdydd* - Cardiff;
- *Merthyr Tudful* - Merthyr Tydfil;
- *Treorci* - Treorchy; and
- *Rhuthun* - Ruthin.

There is a strong likelihood that for a number of these places, the names have simply been anglicised over time due to various economic, cultural and social changes. This is not necessarily true in all cases however. There are examples of English names such as Flint (*Y Fflint*), Wrexham (*Wrecsam*) and Caldicot (*Cil-y-coed*) that have been adopted by the Welsh rather than the other way around. Similarly, the original name for Biwmares was the Norman-French name - Beaumaris.

Other places in Wales have alternate names unrelated to each other. Examples include:

- Newport - *Casnewydd* (the Welsh meaning New Castle);
- Swansea (derived from the Norse meaning Svein's Island") - *Abertawe* (the Welsh meaning the Mouth of the River Tawe);
- Brecon (derived from Welsh Kingdom of Brycheiniog) - *Aberhonddu* (Welsh taken from River Honddu)
- Anglesey (derived again from Norse - *Ongul*), while the Welsh name *Môn*, was first recorded as Latin *Mona*.

Dr. Dylan Foster Evans, an expert on Welsh place names writes in an article - [What's in a name?](#) on Wales.com (the Welsh Government's website to promote Wales) about the evolution of many Welsh place names, and how some have been anglicized:

In other places, Welsh names were changed by being taken up into English. The modern Welsh name *Dinbych* ('the little fort') has the final -*ch* sound whose equivalent disappeared from the English language some centuries ago. So two places called *Dinbych* gave rise to the English forms *Tenby* in Pembrokeshire and *Denbigh* in Denbighshire. These rhyme with each other, despite the different spellings. But to avoid confusion, the former - a seaside resort - is known in Welsh as *Dinbych-y-pysgod*: 'Dinbych of the fish'.

There are of course examples over the years of anglicized Welsh place-names gradually ceasing to be accepted or used, including Caernarvon (*Caernarfon*), Conway (*Conwy*) and Llanelly (*Llanelli*).

There are also places where there are ongoing disagreements over whether the Welsh spelling should be used exclusively or not, such in [Varteg](#) ([Farteg](#)) which has had some publicity in recent times.

2. The Place-names Standardisation Panel

The [Welsh Language Commissioner](#), an independent body established by the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) is responsible for providing advice on the **standard forms of Welsh place-names** to individuals and organisations. A list of standard forms of the Welsh names of villages, towns and cities in Wales is now [available as an online resource](#) for anyone wishing to use it. It is continuously being updated.

The Commissioner established a [panel of experts](#) to work on and make recommendations on the standard form of Welsh place-names. The Commissioner's website notes that in forming its recommendations, 'the Place-names Standardisation Panel gives consideration to the **meaning, history and etymology of the place-names**, as well as their **current usage**'. The panel is also guided by the [Guidelines for Standardising Place-names in Wales](#) (PDF 243KB). Section 9 - *Dual forms* notes the following advice for the panel to consider:

If the difference between the Welsh form and the 'English' form consists of **only one or two letters**, the use of a **single form is recommended**, with **preference being given to the Welsh form**. This accords with the recommendations of the Ordnance Survey and the Highway Authorities. However, recognized variations should be acknowledged (Caeriw/Carew, Biwmares/Beaumaris, Y Fflint/Flint, Wreccsam/Wrexham).

The List was launched on 20 June 2018, and it is possible to search among 3,475 place names that are currently included. Trevor/Trefor – the village noted in the petition itself is **not currently included** within this list.

The Commissioner notes on the website that if a place name in Wales is not on the published *List*, individuals should complete a short query form noting the name, grid reference and local authority area of the place in question.

3. Assembly and Welsh Government actions

A petition calling on the Assembly to protect and promote Welsh place-names was submitted in 2018. The specific action the petitioner called for was:

Old Welsh place names/building names should be protected by law; and new developments should have a mandatory Welsh name in order to preserve our unique culture and language.

The Welsh Government outlined its activity in this area (PDF 198KB) in response to the petition. It noted that, following the passing of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Welsh Government has introduced a statutory list of historic place names. It states:

Statutory guidance requires local and National Park authorities and Natural Resources Wales to take account of the list when their functions involve naming or renaming places. This includes the naming or renaming of streets, properties and other places, either directly or by another party. The intention is that the operation of the list and the statutory guidance together will lead to a reduction in the number of formal changes to historic property names.

However, the Welsh Government noted:

...these measures stop short of providing formal protection for historic place names. Detailed consideration was given to providing statutory

protection for historic place names during the development of the 2016 Act, when a number of representations similar to the current petition were made. However a number of significant issues, including enforcement, potential additional burdens on local authorities and human rights, militated against it.

In January 2017, Dai Lloyd AM won the ballot to propose a Member's bill: [Development of the Protection of Welsh Historical Place Names Bill](#). Dai Lloyd AM provided the following [Explanatory Memorandum \(PDF 195KB\)](#) prior to the [Plenary debate](#), which was held on the 15 March.

The Welsh Government did not support the bill, and it did not receive leave to proceed.

As part of its 2017 inquiry into the [Historic Environment](#), the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee considered the List of Historic Place Names of Wales. It stated that the Welsh Government should keep the matter under "active review and should be willing to introduce further protection for historic place names if the current list does not prove effective".

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



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-952
Ein cyf/Our ref EM/00207/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair
Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament

17 June 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Minister for Housing and Local Government concerning the call to the Petitions Committee for reverting to Welsh language spellings of place names. I am responding as this issue falls within my portfolio. I apologise for not responding sooner.

The Welsh Language Commissioner is responsible for providing advice to individuals and organisations on the standardised forms of place names in Wales. The Commissioner's List of *Standardised Welsh Place-names* is a useful online resource, which can be searched or downloaded to find the standardised names of villages, towns and cities in Wales. The list is available at the following link:

<http://www.comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru/english/commissioner/placenames/pages/search.aspx>

However, the Commissioner's role is to suggest forms and spellings for place-names, rather than to enforce them.

I am aware that protecting place-names has previously been considered by the Petitions Committee. For instance "P-05-819 Welsh Place Names - Protection & Promotion Bill" was considered by the Committee in 2018. The link below to the Committee proceedings includes the response sent to the Committee by the Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, which outlines the requirements in the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

<https://business.senedd.wales/ielssueDetails.aspx?Id=21901&PlanId=0&Opt=3>

In terms of efforts at Local Government level, the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 places a duty on the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) to keep local government arrangements under review. Proposed changes may include changes to the names of Welsh administrative units. Any proposed changes to the names of these units does not impact on the name of the town, village or city within those administrative units.

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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.

As part of the review process the Commission will seek the views of the Welsh Language Commissioner about the proposed names of the administrative units. If there are areas where the Commission and the Commissioner do not agree on one or more of the proposed names, it is for Welsh Ministers to make a decision on the name.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2019 also places a duty upon the Welsh Ministers to 'compile and maintain a list of historic place names in Wales'. The List of Historic Place Names of Wales is maintained on our behalf by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. It now contains nearly 700,000 entries, but it is a dynamic resource and will continue to grow. It is a valuable resource for tracing the changing forms of Welsh settlement names for it aims to record any historic place names that can be confidently geo-located prior to 1919. The list can be found here:

<https://historicplacenames.rcahmw.gov.uk/>

I hope this information will assist you and the Committee in your consideration of the Petition.

Yours sincerely,

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

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol
Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language

Agenda Item 4.2

P-05-961 Lower the age for breast cancer screening in Wales from 50 to 30

This petition was submitted by Rachel Candy having collected a total of 76 signatures.

Text of Petition

A friend of mine was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer at the age of 36. If she had been screened this would have been detected and dealt with a lot sooner.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

Lower the age for breast cancer screening in Wales from 50 to 30

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 23 Mehefin 2020
Petitions Committee | 23 June 2020

Reference: RS20/12730-3

Petition Number: P-05-961

Petition title: Lower the age for breast cancer screening in Wales from 50 to 30

Text of petition: A friend of mine was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer at the age of 36. If she had been screened this would have been detected and dealt with a lot sooner.

1. Background

Public Health Wales delivers population based national screening programmes across Wales, including [Breast Test Wales](#).

Breast screening looks for breast cancer before symptoms show and involves taking mammograms, which are x-rays of the breast. If breast cancer is detected at an early stage, treatment has the greatest chance of being successful.



The Breast Test Wales website provides the following information in relation to its breast cancer screening programme:

- Women aged **50 to 70** are automatically invited for a breast X-ray every three years.
- Breast Test Wales identifies women from its GPs' lists and invites each doctor's practice in turn. Women will not necessarily get their invitation in the year that they turn 50. If they are registered with a doctor, they will be invited for breast screening before their 53rd birthday.
- Women over the age of 70 can ask for a screening appointment every 3 years.
- Breast screening is carried out at screening centres and accessible mobile units across Wales. Taking part in breast screening is a patient's choice.
- Screening can find cancers when they are too small to see or feel. Screening will miss some cancers, and some cancers cannot be cured.
- If a mammogram shows a possible abnormality, the patient will be offered an appointment in one of Breast Test Wales' screening centres. The patient will be examined by a doctor and may be offered further tests.

Women under 50 years of age

Breast Test Wales is not able to offer an appointment to women under the age of 50. Breast Test Wales explains that currently the screening programme has only been shown to be of benefit for women over 50. If patients below the age of 50 display symptoms, they should contact their doctor for advice.

The Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan for Wales 2016-2020 states that the introduction of screening programmes in Wales is based on the expert advice of the UK National Screening Committee and Wales Screening Committee to ensure programmes do more good than harm and are cost-effective.

Breast Test Wales states that although research studies have not shown a clear benefit in the general population for starting screening earlier than age 50, women at increased risk because of a family history of breast cancer may benefit from screening at an earlier age. The balance between benefit and harm from screening younger women at moderate or high risk is unknown, as research has not been undertaken for this specific group of women.

Breast Test Wales offers a breast screening service to women resident in Wales, who have been assessed by the [Genetics Service](#) and found to have an increased risk of developing breast cancer.

Statistical Reports

Breast Test Wales published its [Annual Statistical Report 2018-19](#) in March 2020. This report is a detailed summary of information on work undertaken and includes figures on screening activity, invitation, and uptake.

2. Welsh Government action

In correspondence to the Committee dated 28 May 2020, the Minister for Health and Social Services states that Wales, like the rest of the UK, follows the independent, expert advice of the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC). Routine breast screening of women under 50 without any symptoms is not offered in the UK because the UKNSC advises that the current evidence indicates that the benefits of screening do not outweigh the known harms. All recommendations are subject to regular review and should the UKNSC recommend changing the age range for breast screening, the Welsh Government will consider how this can be delivered in Wales. The UKNSC recommendation on breast screening can be found [here](#).

The Minister also notes that the benefits and harms of breast cancer screening were considered in an [independent review](#) published in 2012.

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

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/02898/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AS/MS
Chair
Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

28 May 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 4 May, as Chair of the Petitions Committee, regarding Petition P-05-961 to lower the age for breast cancer screening in Wales from 50 to 30.

Wales, like the rest of the UK, follows the independent, expert advice of the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC). Routine breast screening of women under 50 without any symptoms is not offered in the UK because the UKNSC advises that the current evidence indicates that the benefits of screening do not outweigh the known harms. At present, for breast cancer, the recommended routine screening age range is between 50 and 70 years, with screening offered on a three-yearly basis. All recommendations are subject to regular review and should the UKNSC recommend changing the age range for breast screening, the Welsh Government will consider how this can be delivered in Wales. The UKNSC recommendation on breast screening can be found at:

<https://legacyscreening.phe.org.uk/breastcancer>

The benefits and harms of breast cancer screening were considered in an independent review published in 2012 at: https://about-cancer.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer/getting-diagnosed/screening/screening-2012-review?_ga=2.195904684.1062693435.1589284068-436743268.1589284068

If any patient is concerned about symptoms they should contact their GP to discuss their concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.

Agenda Item 4.3

P-05-963 Require supermarkets to donate excess food to charity

This petition was submitted by Crosskeys My World My Home Group having collected a total of 84 signatures.

Text of Petition

Throughout the world, one third of all food produced annually is wasted. In the UK, that equates to about 9.5 million tonnes, which represents a huge waste of resources and unnecessary pressure on our environment. Despite this, from 2018 to 2019, Trussell Trust charity had to distribute a record 1.6 million food bank parcels in the UK. We believe that food should not be thrown away when there are people going hungry in this country.

In February 2016, France decided to take action against the food waste problem and mandated that its supermarkets donate all food nearing its sell-by-date to charity – a law that now rescues 46,000 tons of food from being thrown away every year, and has increased food bank donations in France by over 20%.

In 2019, the law was extended to encompass the institutional catering and agro-food industries. We believe that WE CAN DO THE SAME here in Wales by saving edible food and preventing our nation's supermarkets, restaurant chains and food suppliers from sending decent food to landfill. The Welsh Government has already been working with Fare Share Cymru to redistribute the equivalent of over 8 million meals since 2011.

By adopting the solution used in France, we can take a much bigger step towards ending hunger in Wales, as well as the Welsh Government's goal of halving food waste by 2025, which will also put us on the path to becoming Zero Waste by 2050.

Please sign this petition calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to pass a law similar to the one in France to take a stand AGAINST food waste and FOR those in need.

Additional Information

For more information see the following materials:

France's food waste law extended to agrifood and catering businesses <https://iegpolicy.agribusinessintelligence.informa.com/PL222646/Frances-food-waste-law-extended-to-agrifood-and-catering-businesses>

Is France's Groundbreaking Food-Waste Law Working? <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/frances-groundbreaking-food-waste-law-working>

French law forbids food waste by supermarkets <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/04/french-law-forbids-food-waste-by-supermarkets>

Welsh Government aims to halve food waste by 2025 <https://environmentjournal.online/articles/welsh-government-aims-halve-food-waste-2025/>

The Trussell trust - <https://www.trusselltrust.org/>

Fare Share Cymru - <http://www.fareshare.cymru/en/home/>

WRAP Cymru - <http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk/>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Islwyn
- South Wales East

Title: P-05-963 Require supermarkets to donate excess food to charity

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 23 Mehefin 2020
Petitions Committee | 23 June 2020

Reference: RS20/12730-4

Petition Number: P-05-963

Petition title: Require supermarkets to donate excess food to charity

Text of petition: Throughout the world, one third of all food produced annually is wasted. In the UK, that equates to about 9.5 million tonnes, which represents a huge waste of resources and unnecessary pressure on our environment. Despite this, from 2018 to 2019, Trussell Trust charity had to distribute a record 1.6 million food bank parcels in the UK. We believe that food should not be thrown away when there are people going hungry in this country.

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By adopting the solution used in France, we can take a much bigger step towards ending hunger in Wales, as well as the Welsh Government's goal of halving food waste by 2025, which will also put us on the path to becoming Zero Waste by 2050.

Please sign this petition calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to pass a law similar to the one in France to take a stand AGAINST food waste and FOR those in need.



Additional Information: For more information see the following materials:

France's food waste law extended to agrifood and catering businesses

<https://iegpolicy.agribusinessintelligence.informa.com/PL222646/Frances-food-waste-law-extended-to-agrifood-and-catering-businesses>[Opens in a new browser window]

Is France's Groundbreaking Food-Waste Law Working?

<https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/frances-groundbreaking-food-waste-law-working>[Opens in a new browser window]

French law forbids food waste by supermarkets

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/04/french-law-forbids-food-waste-by-supermarkets>[Opens in a new browser window]

Welsh Government aims to halve food waste by 2025

<https://environmentjournal.online/articles/welsh-government-aims-halve-food-waste-2025/>[Opens in a new browser window]

The Trussell trust – <https://www.trusselltrust.org/>[Opens in a new browser window]

Fare Share Cymru - <http://www.fareshare.cymru/en/home/>[Opens in a new browser window]

WRAP Cymru -<http://www.wrapcymru.org.uk/>[Opens in a new browser window]

Background

Research by WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) estimates that food waste in the UK in 2015 amounted to 10.2 million tonnes (156 kg / person / year). Of this, the majority - 7.1 million tonnes - was household food waste, with the remaining 3.1 million tonnes originating in the (post farm gate) food supply chain. Within this, **261,000 tonnes of food waste came from the retail sector and 754,000 tonnes came from hospitality and food service.**

The research estimated the total value of food wasted in the UK for 2015 was £20 billion. The value of food wasted for the retail sector was £0.8 billion and for hospitality and food service is was £2.9 billion.

The research was undertaken to form a baseline for the [Courtauld Commitment 2025](#), a series of voluntary agreements aiming to improve resource efficiency and reduce the carbon and wider environmental impact of the UK grocery sector. Courtauld includes food waste and [the major supermarkets have signed up to it.](#)

An [update report published by WRAP in January 2020](#) shows that while overall food waste reduced by 7% between 2015-18, **retail food waste was up by 6%, to 280,000 tonnes while hospitality and food service waste also increased, by 7% to 1.1 million tonnes.**

French food waste legislation

In 2016 France adopted legislation aimed at preventing larger supermarkets from throwing away edible food by obliging them to work with food waste NGOs that can redistribute food that would otherwise be thrown away. Stores not complying with the law can be fined. There has been much discussion of this legislation and its effectiveness in the food sector media, examples can be seen in the links provided by the petitioner above and also [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Welsh Government action

In 2017 the now Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths announced the [Welsh Government's ambition to halve food waste in Wales by 2025](#), against a 2006-07 baseline.

The Welsh Government [consulted on its proposed circular economy strategy "Beyond Recycling"](#) between December 2019 and April 2020. The [consultation document](#) (PDF 1MB) states:

We will lead the way in eradicating avoidable food waste by looking at the whole supply chain and working with businesses from farm to fork to minimise waste and maximise resource efficiency.

and

To promote higher recycling of business and public sector waste, **our aim is to require recycling in all non-domestic settings**, separating waste in the way households already do [Research Service emphasis].

At the time of writing this briefing the Welsh Government had yet to publish the outcome of the consultation.

Minister's letter to the Committee

The Minister wrote to the Committee in relation to this petition on 26 May 2020. In summary, the letter states:

- The Welsh Government has worked with the major food bank providers to understand the current situation for all food banks across Wales.
- During the Coronavirus pandemic, UK foodbanks have been assured donations from supermarkets, including £15m from Tesco, £10m from Morrisons, £5m from Asda and £1.5m from the Co-op.
- The Trussell Trust has confirmed that its food banks across Wales currently have sufficient food supply and volunteers to meet demand, and do not require financial

support from the Welsh Government. Approximately 50% of food banks in Wales fall under the Trussell Trust's umbrella).

- Reducing food waste is a priority for the Welsh Government, it is working with the food supply chain to ensure waste is minimised and surplus stock redistributed as necessary.
- The Welsh Government commends the voluntary actions taken by the sector under the Courtauld Commitment and will monitor their impact. Should it believe more action is necessary, the Welsh Government "should have the option to mandate surplus food redistribution under powers being sought for Welsh Ministers under the UK Environment Bill."

Senedd action

While the general issue of food waste is raised relatively frequently in the Senedd, the specific issue of food waste from supermarkets has not been discussed in detail since a [Short Debate on food waste](#) led by Julie Morgan MS in 2015.

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-963
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01207/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

26 May 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 7 May, regarding the petition seeking that supermarkets are required to donate excess food to charity.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has seen the food supply system come under intense pressure, and the Welsh Government recognises there are people in Wales who are particularly vulnerable, facing financial difficulty and needing urgent support.

Welsh Government has engaged with two major Welsh food bank stakeholders – Trussell Trust and Fareshare. These organisations have embedded experience of providing food supplies to the food bank network across Wales.

We have sought to understand the current situation for all food banks across Wales, including those which come under the Trussell Trust umbrella (approximately 50% of Food Banks across Wales) and the independent food banks run by third sector organisations, such as charities and churches. We have also been in discussion with the WLGA, WCVA and Local Authorities across Wales, to assess the situation regarding food supplies to food banks at this point in time.

To date during the crisis, UK food banks have been assured donations of £10m from Morrison's and £15m from Tesco to be delivered through the Trussell Trust and Fareshare. The Co-op has also donated £1.5m and Asda donated £5m to food banks through the Trussell Trust and Fareshare. At a local level individual stores are regularly donating surplus stock to local food redistribution schemes.

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Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@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.

Trussell Trust Wales has confirmed to the Welsh Government they do not require financial support from the Welsh Government at this time. Their network of food banks across Wales currently have food supplies to meet demand and volunteers to work in the food banks during the crisis.

Reducing food waste remains a priority for the Welsh Government, and we continue to work with the food supply chain to ensure waste is minimised and surplus stock redistributed as necessary.

The voluntary actions being undertaken by the industry to address the issue, especially during the current pandemic, are to be commended. We will monitor the returns made from the food supply chain via the voluntary Courtauld initiative to see if there is potential for even more surplus food to be redistributed instead of being wasted. Should more action be necessary, we should have the option to mandate surplus food redistribution under powers being sought for Welsh Ministers under the UK Environment Bill.

Regards

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

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

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

P-05-963 Require supermarkets to donate excess food to charity, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair – 17.06.20

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders MS,

In response to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, we would like to commend the Welsh Government's close work with charities such as the Trussell Trust, as well as the financial pledges offered by many major supermarkets, in helping to secure stable supplies for food banks across Wales in this difficult period.

We would also like to raise a few points for the Senedd's discussion of our petition, as we feel the Welsh Government's response places most of its focus on the current financial position of the major food donation distributor, Trussell Trust, during the time of upset caused by the coronavirus pandemic: while we feel that issues pertaining to the crisis should be a priority at the current time, we would also like to point out that the Trussell Trust has been reporting a record number of referrals to its food banks in Wales since last year, well before the coronavirus crisis.

UK Government authorities have maintained that food wasted by many supermarkets is still at an unacceptable level, despite the laudable donations and funds pledged by Morrison's, Tesco and other supermarkets voluntarily. In response to the UK Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's report on food waste in 2017, Committee Chair Neil Parish MP concluded that while he "[commended] Tesco for publishing its food waste data from across the supply chain...The fact that no other retailers have followed their lead shows that a voluntary approach is inadequate...There is a huge amount of surplus food that is currently not being redistributed." This is a far-reaching problem, and though we are glad to see the Welsh Government's primary concern currently lies with alleviating the pressure of the coronavirus crisis, we believe that the twin issues of redistributing surplus food and preventing unnecessary supermarket food waste deserve to be considered on their own terms as separate to the pandemic.

Given the Welsh Government's commitment to halving food waste by 2025, we would like to ask what current Welsh Government powers are over surplus food redistribution, and what powers are being requested in the UK Environment Bill? What specifically does the Welsh Government propose if those powers are obtained, and with elections next May can we expect commitment to the proposals before the end of this Senedd term?

We appreciate the steps taken to communicate with the Trussell Trust and other organisations, and to ensure their financial stability at the current time. Although many food banks across the nation have sufficient food supplies and volunteers to meet demand, there are local food banks still in need of donations whose volunteer numbers have significantly reduced, such as in Caldicot where one food bank's staff has fallen from 20 to only 4. Some of these food banks are not affiliated with Trussell Trust.

When the French Government legislated a supermarket food waste ban, the law improved the quality of food donations, and saw them increased by 30% in the subsequent year alone. Despite concerns over the initial pressure put onto food rescue charities, the law helped make reducing food waste the norm in the food supply chain. Tackling food waste needs a far-reaching approach that engenders behavioural change, so that food system actors (including consumers) change their habits for the better; this needs to be a long-term change, and we urge you to settle for one that has permanent effects, rather than a temporary mandate. We hope you can see that more action on

these matters is necessary, and that while voluntary measures such as the Courtauld initiative are commendable and appropriate for the moment, the problems of food waste and food shortage are a lot older than the current crisis, and will certainly outlast it if left unchecked.

We'd be grateful if the Petitions Committee could keep this petition open and ask these further questions of the Welsh Government, as well as possibly contacting some food banks directly for their response.

Yours sincerely,

Agenda Item 5.1

P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late

This petition was submitted by Tamsin Davies and was first considered by the Committee in February 2018, having collected 8,700 signatures on paper and another petition website.

Text of Petition

As local residents, we believe that the planned flood works in Roath Mill Gardens and Roath Brook Gardens in Penylan, Cardiff are unnecessarily destructive.

We have seen the devastation of Waterloo Gardens and oppose Phase 3 of Natural Resources Wales' Roath Flood Scheme, which will widen the brook in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens and see the felling of over 30 trees in an area where there has never been any flooding in the past.

We want to save the trees and ground in Roath Mill Gardens and Roath Brook Gardens in order to preserve the character of the area, minimise ecological damage and protect the habitats of our local wildlife.

We believe that Natural Resources Wales have not properly considered all options available, have misled the public with inaccurate figures during their consultation period and that it is, in fact unnecessary to bulldoze park grounds in order to widen the channel of the brook and remove mature trees in the process.

We call on the Welsh Government to urge National Resources Wales to stop work at Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens and consider the other viable options available to mitigate the perceived flood risk to this area.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late, Correspondence - Natural Resources Wales to Chair, 29.03.20



Ein cyf/Our ref:
Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-801

Ty Cambria / Cambria House
29 Heol Casnewydd / 29 Newport Road
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF24 0TP

E-bost/Email:

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

By email: SeneddPetitions@Assembly.Wales

29 March 2020

Dear Ms Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late

Further to my letter to you of 5th December 2019, I write to provide an update on the Roath Flood Scheme.

As previously advised, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has been undertaking a reassessment of the final phase of the Roath Flood Scheme as a standalone scheme. The final phase consists the elements of the scheme in Roath Brook Gardens and Roath Mill Gardens. I can now confirm that we have completed this reassessment.

The re-assessment took account of the work already completed downstream in Waterloo Gardens and Railway Gardens by Natural Resources Wales and the new footbridge built in Roath Brook Gardens by Cardiff Council.

The new footbridge was constructed after the original flood risk was assessed but formed part of the design for the works in Roath Brook Gardens as part of the wider scheme.

The initial result estimates the number of properties at flood risk during a 1.33% (1 in 75) chance flood event has reduced from our previous assessment of circa 70 properties. However, even though there is a reduction in the numbers of properties remaining at risk, NRW remains committed to working with partners and the community to find a solution to manage this remaining flood risk.

I mentioned in my previous letter that Cardiff Council may be undertaking work at Roath Park Lake and we are discussing this with the Council to see if there is an opportunity to manage the remaining risk at Roath Brook and Roath Mill Gardens through these works. Accordingly, we will not be considering any further work in Roath Brook and Roath Mill Gardens until these discussions with Cardiff Council are finalised.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim England". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and a long, sweeping underline.

Tim England
Operation Manager – Flood and Water Management
Natural Resources Wales

P-05-801 Save the trees and ground in Roath Mill and Roath Brook Gardens before it's too late, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 17.06.20

Your e-mail enclosed a copy of the letter received from Natural Resources Wales dated 29th March 2020 inviting our comments. Representatives of the group met with Natural Resources Wales in early March 2020 when we were informed of the results of the re-assessment and in advance of the public announcement (a copy of which appears below).

Whilst we are naturally pleased with the results of Natural Resources Wales re-assessment, in that further destructive works to the parks appears unlikely, there remain a number of issues of concern which we believe the committee should be aware of.

1. The letter states that the reassessment has been completed. The group asked NRW for a copy of the report at the meeting in March and it was agreed that it would be disclosed. This has not yet been provided and after being chased earlier this month we were informed on 8 June that *"The report is still a Final Draft and cannot be published formally until it has been through a final internal validation exercise. Unfortunately, the huge amount of work that has fallen out of the February flooding has delayed the final validation. Whilst the validation will not change the outcome ... it is likely to be several weeks before the staff who can carry out the validation will be available, due to their February Flooding priorities."* Whilst we have been promised a copy of the final report we would ask the Committee to also request a copy of the same and monitor the progress of this final validation exercise.

2. Whilst the letter to the committee states that number of properties subject to a "1 in 75" flood risk has reduced, it does not state the size of that reduction. The re-assessment undertaken by NRW actually reduces the number of properties said to be at a "1 in 75" flood risk from approximately 70 properties to 11 properties (see NRW announcement below). This is obviously a very significant reduction.

3. The stated reasons for the reduction are:
a) the new Footbridge built in Roath Brook Gardens by Cardiff Council; and
b) the work completed downstream (phases 1 & 2)

In response we would note:

a) In relation to the footbridge it was installed in 2013, before NRW commenced its design works in March 2014 and over 4 years before the works were actually due to commence. It is obviously concerning that something which appears so fundamental had not even been noticed, let alone its effect considered throughout this time. Further it is worth noting that in their appraisals none of the reports suggest a change in the footbridge as one of the measures that could be taken to cause a dramatic change in the flood risk. A change in footbridge could, of course, have been recommended at a far lower cost to the environment and the public purse. The committee will recall that they were told on a number of occasions by NRW that a thorough and comprehensive review of the risks and options was undertaken before they decided that the significant environmental impact of this scheme was the only option.

b) A re-assessment due to the work completed downstream was one of the central requests the Campaign Group made from the start (along with taking account of the environmental damage). As the members of the committee will recall NRW asserted throughout this matter that a re-assessment was not required because the work completed downstream would have no impact on the flood risk on the houses affected by Phase III. In that regard we would refer by way of example to the response to point 1 in the letter from NRW to the Chair of the Committee dated 24th April 2018. NRW could not have been more explicit in stating *“the risk and measures required to manage it will not change following the completion of Phases 1 and 2”*. Further, even when they reluctantly agreed to re-assess, NRW continued to state that they remained *“confident of [their] assessment of the flood risk in the area.”* (NRW Letter to committee dated 29th January 2019). It is clear now that their confidence was misplaced and further that they may have misled the Petitions Committee on fundamental points.

4. The Campaign Group has no desire to point to individual mistakes which may have occurred in this matter, or create scapegoats, but we are concerned that the manner in which the local residents were treated could be repeated in areas where locals may not have the opportunity or ability to challenge NRW’s actions. It is therefore important that NRW acknowledge the mistakes which were made, and learn from them, to ensure that they are not repeated. In that regard we have offered to engage with NRW in relation to helping shape future consultations and have been provided with contact details of a third party to engage with. We contacted that third party on 30th March but have not heard back (although we acknowledge this may be COVID related).

We would therefore request that the Committee continue to monitor the position to ensure a suitable outcome for all involved. If the Committee require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Regards

Friends of Roath Brook

Appendix: Text of NRW announcement ([re-assessment-of-cardiff-flood-scheme-completed](#))

Re-assessment of Cardiff flood scheme completed

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has completed its re-assessment of the flood risk in the Pen-y-lan area of Cardiff.

The first two phases of the Roath Brook Flood Scheme have reduced the risk of flooding to more than 300 homes and businesses in the area.

The final part of the scheme to reduce flood risk to the remaining properties around Roath Brook and Roath Mill Gardens has been on hold since December 2017.

Since that time NRW worked with the Friends of Roath Brook campaign group and in January 2019 agreed to re-assess the final phase as a separate piece of work.

The re-assessment considered the work already completed downstream and the new footbridge built in Roath Brook Gardens by Cardiff Council.

The footbridge was constructed after the original flood risk was assessed but formed part of the design for the works in Roath Brook Gardens as part of the wider scheme.

The initial result estimates the number of properties at flood risk during a 1.33% (1 in 75) chance flood event has reduced to 11. NRW remains committed to working with partners and the community to find a solution to manage the flood risk.

Tim England, Operations Manager for NRW, said:

“Following our re-assessment, there are properties in the area that remain at flood risk, and this risk will only increase due to climate change.

“There may be a way to address this remaining risk as part of work that Cardiff Council is considering at Roath Park Lake, upstream of Pen-y-lan.

“We are discussing this with Cardiff Council and won’t consider further work in Roath Brook and Roath Mill Gardens until these discussions are finalised.

“We will inform the local community once this work is complete and what options we have to address the remaining risk.”

Agenda Item 5.2

P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales

This petition was submitted by the Brecon and Radnor Branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales having collected 2,469 signatures online and 2,098 on paper, a total of 4,567 signatures.

Text of Petition

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to take long-term strategic action to ensure that the poultry product industry is environmentally sustainable through effective delivery of the Environment (Wales) Act, Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Powerful agricultural drivers reinforced by BREXIT are increasing intensive egg & poultry production. The WG is ignoring the devastating environmental consequences for biodiversity, soil and water quality and avian and human disease. The public is vocal about poultry welfare but largely ignorant of the environmental impact of intensive poultry farming units (IPUs). "Free-range" egg units with concentrations of up to 2,500 birds/Ha are a particular risk (NRW report 218: Powys Poultry Pilot Study & INI nitrogen alerts 6/17).

Steep-sided valleys, high rainfall causing heavy nutrient run-off and populations of rare natural species make much of rural Wales wholly unsuitable for the current explosion of IPUs. After a decline from 1990, ammonia emissions have been increasing since 2010 (NAEI 2017 report for DEFRA). Critical loads of ammonia and nitrogen deposition (estimated thresholds for unacceptable damage to plant diversity) are far exceeded at some European & UK protected sites, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland. Excess phosphates threaten our watercourses (Wye & Usk Foundation 2017).

In failing to act on the evidence, WG, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Powys County Council (PCC) are neglecting the duty to "maintain and enhance biodiversity" (Environment Act Sec 6).

The WG must use its powers to control the industry:

1. *Provide proper resources for NRW to do urgent research, regulate and monitor IPU's and give better planning help to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).*
2. *Issue planning policy and guidance to LPAs to improve decisions, ensure cumulative impacts are considered and monitor and enforce planning conditions.*
3. *Make the industry contribute towards the costs of regulation and monitoring and hold it to account for breach of environmental responsibility.*
4. *Publish transparent public reports on progress.*

Additional information

Our evidence is from Powys but our petition applies to all Wales.

Chair Diane McCrea confirms that NRW is shamefully under-resourced (BBC 14/12/17). NRW assesses impacts of IPU applications on European and UK nature sites and issues permits for IPU's over 40,000 birds. Improved NRW guidance (April 2017) covers cumulative impacts but assessment methods fail to prevent development where existing critical loads are exceeded.

The LPA assesses proper description of outdoor ranges and impacts on water quality, air quality, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, landscape, residential amenity and local traffic.

LPAs lack the skills and resources for these responsibilities. PCC does not consider the cumulative impact of applications, together with all neighbouring IPU's, on the natural environment, landscape or rural residents. Schedule 2 Environmental Impact Assessment should ensure assessment of cumulative impacts but fails in practice. PCC is reluctant to award EIA status because the WG can overturn the decision (see P/2016/0608 & P/2017/0007).

CPRW has data on intensive poultry planning applications in Powys since 2011. In the last 30 months, there have been 99 APPLICATIONS involving over 3 MILLION BIRDS, of which 72 are for free-range eggs. Of the 99, only 10 have EIA status: 65 applications have been approved and ONLY ONE HAS BEEN REFUSED.

We have evidence of developments approved without contour or outdoor range mapping, close to nature reserves (71m), vulnerable ancient woodlands (adjacent) watercourses (10m) and residents (50m). Residents suffer health risks from flies, airborne ammonia, poultry dust, traffic-generated particulates and offensive smells. Environmental stakeholder and public objections are ignored, rare plant species are dying, disease risks are increasing and watercourses are failing WFD standards.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: A unique set of POWYS IPU DATA including applications, interactive map, hot-spot map and animated chronological IPU growth display can be viewed at <http://www.brecon-and-radnor-cprw.wales>.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales**

Ein cyf/Our ref: CX20-121
Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-815

Ty Cambria / Cambria House
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Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC
Chair
Petition Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Ebost/Email:
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

By email to the clerking team at SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

28 February 2020

Dear Mrs Finch-Saunders,

Petition P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales Petition Committee 21 January 2020

Thank you for your letter of 12 February 2020 and sharing the additional information raised by petitioners (P-05-815) at the Petitioner Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020.

From your letter the Petitioner Committee is asking us to respond on the points relevant to NRW. We note that this petition raises concerns about the adverse environmental and health impacts of poorly controlled poultry farm units in Wales, the slow progress being made by the Town and Country Planning (Intensive) Agriculture Working Group (set up by Welsh Government) and the review of Environmental Permitting thresholds. Regarding the discussion and specific points raised in the petition we comment as follows:

- 1. Ask the WG to co-operate with NRW in providing a strengthened Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and NRW guidance about ammonia/phosphate impacts on habitats both for “top-tier” tier designations and for “lower tier designations” and other important habitats, including ancient woodland and veteran trees.*

While the petitioner has sought the views of Welsh Government (WG) or Welsh Ministers (WMs) in response to this question, we provide the following comments:

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and other interests are invited to attend the Working Group to help Welsh Government develop a new Technical Advice Note (TAN) in planning for (intensive) agriculture. We provide advice to minimise the adverse effects of intensive agriculture through the national planning framework and to help WG confirm changes to Planning Policy Wales and TANs. We will review our own guidance once the new TAN has been published.

For this year we will be reviewing our Guidance Note 20: Assessing the impact of ammonia and nitrogen on designated sites from new and expanding intensive livestock units (Guidance Note 20). Provisions will be made to support the assessment of sensitive species and habitat locations in addition to Natura 200 sites, changes to thresholds and screening distances. For example, changes in number of broiler units and places for hens so that they are aligned with requirements set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitat Assessment Regulations, which help to reduce the adverse impacts of emissions. Our review of guidance will be subject of public consultation in March/April 2020 and there will be an opportunity for our partners and customers to provide comments on our proposed changes to guidance.

2. Ask NRW/WG to set out who is responsible for assessing cumulative impacts, given that:

- a) *development ammonia consultants are saying they cannot do this*
- b) *NRW say it is for LPAs to make the analysis of in-combination impacts*
- c) *LPAs expect to rely on NRW advice and cannot produce adequate accounts of the clusters of units in question and their emissions*

The planning authority is responsible for determining planning applications and in so doing will decide which and how in-combination and cumulative effects will influence their planning decision on a development, and they will also decide on the information to be submitted by an applicant. As a consultee we advise on the potential effects from a development scheme based on the environmental interests listed in our consultation topics document (Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics (September 2018) is published on our [website](#)). This includes providing advice on potential cumulative and in-combination effects. In the consideration of cumulative impacts, the location of other developments either granted planning permission or subject of an Environmental Permit should be considered.

While local planning authorities are better placed to provide advice and information, they hold on the location of development schemes with planning permission, we can provide advice on the location of sites that have an Environmental Permit. This information can be made available on request.

We also refer you to our letter 17th August 2018 (ref. CH-031) where we confirmed that NRW introduced tighter air quality thresholds in April 2017 to support our regulatory role. These thresholds have been supported by Guidance Note 20. Appropriate staff from NRW and local authorities in Wales have received training in using this guidance. The guidance requires that new units are assessed in terms of background and cumulative impacts so that any relevant permission issued will include appropriate conditions to minimise adverse environmental consequences. Our current guidance is also being considered by WG and its Working Group, which is helping to prepare a new TAN on planning for (intensive) agriculture. Further, NRW would be willing to support WG in preparing guidance to support a strategic approach to minimise adverse impacts on the environment and human health.

*3. Ask the Minister for EERA and NRW to outline the evidence they have been working together to consider about lowering Environmental Permitting thresholds. (Refer to CPRW response** to letters from Ministers Welsh Assembly Petitions Committee Meeting 21/1/20)*

We refer you to our letter 17th August 2018 (ref. CH-031) where we comment that there are opportunities for WG to better manage the proliferation of poultry units, their emissions and adverse impacts on the environment. There appears to be opportunities for WG to review evidence, thresholds and controls, which apply to Environmental Permitting Regulations, and also through the development planning and management processes. In our previous response we commented on the merits of changing the regulatory thresholds to include units below 40,000 bird places (either through permitting or the application of general binding rules). We identified that as an initial step it would be for WG to consider the current impacts that may be occurring across Wales, which have not yet been quantified.

By way of update, in 2019 NRW commissioned consultants to look at extending the application of Best Available Techniques to a wide range of farming activities. The study was limited to ammonia releases and used recognised cost of harm figures for mass releases of ammonia. We are currently evaluating the evidence and once we complete this exercise, we can decide if the evidence is robust and if we can share these studies with other interests.

The Town and Country Planning (Intensive) Agriculture Group, which has been set up by the WG are represented by members from different interests including NRW, local planning authorities and CPRW. The Working Group has been set up to support the drafting of guidance (Technical Advice Note - TAN) on planning for intensive agriculture. Once published this TAN will be a material consideration in development planning and management decisions. While the proposed timetable for preparation has slipped there has been much discussion on the scope of the new TAN and this has included the defining and meaning of intensive agriculture, identification of key material planning considerations and confirmation if there is up-to-date evidence available to support considerations and Working Group recommendations. Notably discussions have identified several gaps in research and evidence, difficulties in managing intensive farming and land spreading of manure, challenges in enforcing requirements, and the limited resources of public bodies and other interests to address matters.

4. Ask the Minister to ensure incorporation of the “polluter pays” principle into WG regulation of agricultural pollution and apply this to all IPU operators (whether or not they opt into extra environmental services for enhanced payments).

While the petitioner has sought the views of WG or WM in response to this question, we provide the following comments;

We refer to our letter of 17th August 2018 where we confirm that any non-compliance with permit conditions will be investigated and appropriate enforcement is undertaken where corrective measures and timely actions are required by a site operator. Appropriate enforcement action is also carried out for reported pollution incidents with costs being

recovered from the polluter. NRW is supportive of the polluter pays principle and that it continues to be set out in Welsh law.

5. Ask the WG to reconsider its unsustainable blanket support for intensive poultry farming and to require and fund proper mapping of intensive livestock units across Wales matched to updated background ammonia/nitrogen levels in order to define areas where a threshold has been reached and no more units are acceptable.

While the petitioner has sought the views of WG or WM in response to this question, we provide the following comments;

We are currently working to ensure our Guidance Note 20 requires that background concentration of ammonia is considered when applying for an Environmental Permit and when providing advice in response to planning consultations. We refer to our comments above where our review of Guidance Note 20 will be subject of public consultation and there will be opportunities to comment on the proposed changes.

We are supportive of identifying areas where tighter controls would be required due to local sensitivities. We are also developing maps containing details of sensitive species across a range of habitats, which will support WG planning advice and local authority planners.

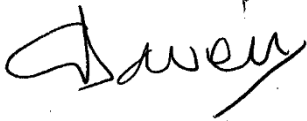
6. Ask NRW whether they will address the problem in Area Statements, particularly for Mid-Wales. The statement from CPRW also comments that “forth coming Area Statements could be a tool for controlling development and protecting rivers in areas which are already suffering unacceptable impacts. NRW has not provided any clear answers about whether Area Statements can or will address the issue of impacts of IPUs on biodiversity.”

The Area Statements will be published at the end of March 2020. The Area Statements in themselves will not limit development or prioritise the issues to be addressed by other formal mechanisms. Area Statements will focus on high-level issues specific to that area and identify a need for partners to work together. For example, in identifying and addressing air quality problems the WG, local authorities and Public Health Wales will need to identify the appropriate response. One of the main themes of the Mid-Wales Area Statement will be on land management and sustainable agriculture. This Area Statement will recognise the following opportunities;

- Increasing the sustainability of farming, enabling our farmers to be custodians of the land and being able to implement change on the ground (with support from the WG’s ‘Sustainable Land Management Scheme’)
- Providing equal opportunities for all managers of the land
- Providing space for both agriculture, food production and nature
- Improving the management of our soils, water and air including the prevention of pollution and enhancing our resources, and
- Sustainable land-based economy and diversification of agriculture

I trust the above information is helpful in your consideration of the questions raised at the Petition's Committee.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ceri Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ceri Davies
Executive Director for Evidence, Policy & Permitting
Natural Resources Wales

cc. [REDACTED]

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-05-815
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00669/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

17 March 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 12 February regarding Petition P-05-815 – Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduces Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SNMR) and sets out a framework to achieve this as part of decision-making. I am satisfied that the existing guidance in Planning Policy Wales 10 (PPW) adequately addresses the need to consider pollution within the planning system. PPW requires planners ensure resilient locational choices for infrastructure and built development, taking into account water supplies, water quality and reducing, wherever possible, air and noise pollution as part of a SMNR approach.

The petitioners requested information on who is responsible for assessing the cumulative impacts of intensive poultry units. This responsibility lies with Local Planning Authorities at both the Development Plan and Development Management stages. It is acknowledged that capacity and expertise may be an issue for authorities which is why the Town and Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group will be looking at ways to address this and recommend what robust technical advice and guidance is available.

In December 2018 I issued a statement outlining an intention to introduce a whole of Wales approach to tackling nitrate pollution. The aim of the measures proposed would be to reduce water and air pollution from agricultural sources including from all poultry farms in Wales, irrespective of size. The proposal would require nutrient management planning and prevent nutrient applications in excess of the nitrogen requirement of the crop. Field and holding limits would also apply. These measures would reduce losses of phosphorus and nitrates to waterbodies. It would also ensure all agricultural businesses in Wales would need to have sufficient land available to safely apply the nutrients being produced by livestock.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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

The effect would be to prevent over-intensification in localised areas. The spreading of poultry manure in high risk areas or during inappropriate conditions would be prohibited, reducing losses of nitrate and phosphorus.

The proposed measures would also contribute to reduced ammonia emissions, due to requirements specific to poultry manures. This includes covering poultry manure stored in field heaps, which does not have bedding mixed into it, and the mandatory incorporation of poultry manure into the ground as soon as practicable, and within 24 hours at the latest, when applied to bare soil. The proposed measures would form part of the regulatory baseline which will provide the foundation upon which future payments will be made. Future payments may be impacted if there are breaches of regulations.

The proposal is in line with the polluter pays principle as businesses operating in ways which present the greatest risk of pollution would see the greatest impact, whilst those already following good practice recommendations would be least affected. Consideration is being given to the substantial body of evidence relating to the proposal and the potential impacts before making a final decision.

Sustainable Farming and our Land set how future farm support will be designed around the principle of sustainability. The new sustainable farming payment will reward farmers for delivering sustainable land management outcomes, one of which is clean air. We are identifying what actions can be included in the future sustainable farming scheme to improve air quality. Although we are still at an early stage, the scheme could deliver the same or better environmental outcomes as lowering the environmental permitting thresholds.

We have taken on board the recommendations of Plantlife and we have set out in the draft Clean Air Plan what improvements we think are needed to lower ammonia emissions from farming. This includes working with Natural Resources Wales to explore the scale of the environmental challenge in the farming sector. The plan includes a mix of actions which can be delivered either by the new scheme or by legislation. I encourage the petitioners to respond to the consultation and give their views on our approach to reducing air pollution. They can respond to the consultation on our website: www.gov.wales/clean-air-plan-wales. The consultation ends on 10 March.

Sustainable Farming and our Land demonstrates our intention to support sustainable farms which make an important contribution to the economy, the natural environment and our rural communities. This includes us having the appropriate legislation to protect our natural resources. We have stricter ammonia thresholds for new and expanded poultry units than in England. This means poultry farms in Wales are more likely to have to carry out detailed assessments when applying for an environmental permit. We are also introducing regulations to tackle agricultural pollution and, through the Clean Air Plan, bring in other improvements to lower ammonia emissions from farming.

It is important these proposals are based on good evidence. Maps showing the size and location of poultry farms are a crude assessment because they do not take into account any mitigating measures or the housing system. For example, modern multi-tier housing produces much less emissions per bird. This is why we are working with Natural Resources Wales on whether our proposals in the Clean Air Plan and the Sustainable Farming Scheme need to be targeted more locally. We are also part of the Nitrogen Futures project which is exploring options for protecting habitats and species that are vulnerable to increases in atmospheric pollution. We will look to use the learning from this project when it becomes available later this year. Updates on the project are available on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee website: <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/nitrogen-futures/>

Natural Resources Wales are currently preparing Area Statements which will set out a local evidence base for the sustainable management of natural resources. Local Development Plans, Public Service Board Well-being Assessments, National Park and AONB plans must *have regard* to this evidence. The evidence will be a material consideration for planning decisions.

Area statements will also identify the opportunities where working together can help us deliver the national priorities, build ecosystem resilience and make the most of the benefits Wales' natural resources and ecosystems provide for well-being.

Regards

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

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



17th June 2020 **Petition no P-05-815**
Submission to Petitions Committee for meeting 23rd June 2020
Response to NRW: ED for Evidence, Policy and Permitting (28.2.20)
and Welsh Minister for EERA (17.3.20)
Correspondence to secretary@brecon-and-radnor-cprw.wales

Dear Petitions Committee,

Thank you for inviting our further comments on the responses from the ED for Evidence, Policy & Permitting NRW and the Welsh Minister for EERA. We welcome this opportunity.

We are extremely grateful to the Committee for continuing to pursue our case. In spite of the welcome good intentions emerging during our petition, the situation on the ground has deteriorated drastically. The authorities will have seen the recent press reports about the green Wye. The concentration of IPU's is contributing to the accelerated dying of our rivers but instead of urgent action, more are being approved.

The Covid-19 viral pandemic is causing scientists all over the world to question our increasing dependence on intensive poultry and pig-farming but Wales is blindly stumbling on without data or evidence.

The respondents have not addressed the basic statistics and distribution of IPU's. We do not have the personal resources to monitor the whole of Wales but have supplied comprehensive evidence from Powys Planning Application data showing that there are more intensively farmed chickens in Powys alone than the 7.2 million shown by the 2019 National Statistics for both intensively and non-intensively farmed broilers and egg-layers in the whole of Wales.¹ We have also produced a distribution map.²

By contrast, **NRW** only records bird numbers for units requiring Environmental Permit (over 40,000 birds) and **Powys LPA** "*has no responsibility for monitoring numbers*" (Professional Planning Lead letter 12/6/20).

The Role of NRW

If there is no adequate basic statutory evidence about bird numbers and distribution of IPU's in Wales, how can **NRW** comply with the Env(Wales) Act which requires it to:

"promote sustainable management of natural resources", "manage adaptively, by planning, monitoring, reviewing and, where appropriate, changing action", "consider the appropriate spatial scale for action", "take account of all relevant evidence and gather evidence in respect of uncertainties"

We warmly support the **NRW** initiative to strengthen the GN20 ammonia guidance and extend the scope beyond nationally and internationally designated areas and we accept that this does provide LPAs with "*advice on potential cumulative and in-combination effects*" but only with respect to ammonia/nitrogen emissions from rearing sheds and parts of free-ranges. We will respond to the Consultation.

At present, where an Environmental Permit is required, the **NRW** evidence base and planning advice are fixed to the permit application date and do not always reflect the guidelines current for the Planning Application. We trust this indefensible institutional lag will not persist with the new guidelines

We do not understand the ambition of "aligning" Environmental Permit thresholds with EIA thresholds (85,000 for broilers and 60,000 for hens - the current EP threshold is 40,000). The newly exempt units would be mainly, but not exclusively, free-range egg-layer units which have been regarded by **NRW** evidence as the most potentially polluting³. In Powys, this would remove a dozen units containing 1 million birds out of regulation by Environmental Permit, when both **NRW** and **WG** have been extolling the control attained though permitting in their previous responses. It is also in direct contradiction to para 3.3 of the current (28/2/20) **NRW** response which suggests the WG could usefully lower the Permitting thresholds below 40,000.

NRW GN21 says: (planning) "*Applications need to include a manure management plan. The plan needs to include:*

- *Calculation of total Nitrogen and Phosphate produced from proposed poultry unit and all other sources of nutrient imported or produced on the holding."*

In spite of the critical importance of phosphates for rivers, including SACs, we are not aware of ever seeing phosphate calculations mentioned in an application, Officer's Report or in **NRW** advice.

Where SACs, SPAs, RAMSARs are concerned, **LPAs** appear to rely on **NRW** ammonia/nitrogen and hydrological advice to "cover" their Habitats Regulation Assessment duties. **Powys CC** says "*Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is able to draw on monitoring data for the water quality of rivers in order to assess the contributions that an additional development would make in order to inform its consultation responses on planning applications.*" (Professional Planning Lead letter 12/6/20). In approving P/2015/0955, Wern Llanyre free range egg development on land draining ultimately into the Wye SAC, an objection from the Wye and Usk Foundation was withheld from the public website (third party representations were still published at this date) and no LPA Habitats Regulation Assessment was completed.

The role of the WG

The Minister says of her agriculture pollution measures announced in December 2018, due in January 2020 but still nowhere to be seen, "*The effect would be to prevent over-intensification in localised areas.*"

It is much too late for prevention. **WG**, **NRW** and **Powys CC** have sat back, in full knowledge of our evidence for over-intensification, watching it get steadily worse. Powys has had **54** more applications since our petition submission on 24/1/18. Only **2** have been refused and both these have been resubmitted.

Powys LPA has seen **156** applications in the past 5 years (since 1/7/15). Altogether, there are currently **27** applications awaiting determination and the record suggests they will virtually all be approved. By contrast, neighbouring Ceredigion LPA (half the area of Powys) has seen **5** and only **1** is awaiting determination. It is time for urgent action.

The proposed whole-Wales measure for tackling nitrate pollution demonstrates that the Minister recognises there is a problem but Wales is lagging behind the rest of the UK.

Scotland 2011

Activities likely to cause diffuse pollution are regulated by the [Water Environment \(Controlled Activities\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2011](#) (more commonly known as the Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR)) and their [further amendments](#).

<https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water/diffuse-pollution/>

England 2018

We published detailed [guidance on the rules](#) on 2 April 2018. The formal rules, the [Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution \(England\) Regulations 2018](#) came into effect on that date.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-rules-for-water-in-england>

Northern Ireland 2017?

Slightly less clear but implemented 'programme of measures' (guidance) in 2015 followed by The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2017/81/contents> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/programme-measures-diffuse-and-point-source-pollution-agriculture-2015>

We dispute that the proposed WG nutrient management plans would prevent over-intensification. In practice, an intention to export manure to both Welsh and English destinations, where spreading cannot be effectively monitored, is enough to allow a farm without sufficient spreading land to gain both an Environmental Permit and planning consent. Besides, how could spreading regimes reduced from 250kg to 170kg total nitrogen per hectare per year in nitrogen-vulnerable zones be implemented when there are so many intensive units approved on the basis of the 250kg calculations? We also believe that extreme weather conditions and rapid weather swings will make it difficult for farmers, even with the best will in the world, to organise minimal-risk manure management. Although these improved anti-pollution strategies are sorely needed, they will have trouble keeping up with climate change and will be partial mitigation, not a magic cure. We anticipate a long transition period which our deteriorating environment cannot afford. Rather than excusing the further proliferation of intensive farms, these measures should be used to address existing problems and go hand in hand with an immediate moratorium on further development where over-intensification already threatens their successful implementation.

Relations between LPAs WG and NRW

As we have repeatedly pointed out the three levels of control are not working together, each showing a readiness to pass the buck without always acknowledging the statutory duties and remit of the others.

NRW has demonstrated in various responses that it is acutely aware of the negative environmental impacts of IPU's and is *"supportive of identifying areas where tighter controls would be required due to local sensitivities"*. **NRW** says there *"appears to be opportunities for WG to review evidence, thresholds and controls, which apply to Environmental Permitting Regulations, and also through the development planning and management processes."*

NRW refers to its limited planning remit and says *"The planning authority is responsible for determining planning applications and in so doing will decide which and how in-combination and cumulative effects will influence their planning decision on a development, and they will also decide on the information to be submitted by an applicant."*

Nevertheless, **NRW** has not acted decisively on the "Dutch Case", ruling to guide LPAs like its English counterparts. Given the state of the Wye, the adequacy of NRW river quality monitoring program must be questioned.

WG has set up the T&CPIAWG and announced agricultural pollution regulation. Neither initiative has produced any results yet. If and when they do, implementation will inevitably be subject to a long transition. We note **WG** says the evidence base for Area Statements will be a Material Planning Consideration, at odds with the **NRW** description.

Powys LPA (this is the only LPA we know well enough to comment on) believes PPW and its own recent LDP, in which it repeatedly refused to incorporate a section on intensive livestock farming, supports consent so long as **NRW** has no concerns. The Professional Planning Lead response (12/6/20) to a consortium of concerned residents sets out the way in which decisions are made. The public is effectively shut off from contributing to decision making: third party representations are not made available on the planning website, EIA applications are now decided under delegated powers but, if they are called in to the Planning Committee by the local Councillor, Committee Members are told they must not read any letters to them from the public.

Our Questions

Our submissions are inevitably becoming more detailed and technical in keeping with the NRW and WG responses but we have some basic questions.

1. Will the **WG** explain whether they are satisfied with the planning process which leads to approval of such an environmentally damaging density of IPU's in one LPA. If not, how will they intervene?
2. Can **NRW** provide a position statement on the "Dutch Case" advising LPAs of their independent duties to undertake proper, full HRA procedure to protect designated rivers.
3. Can NRW explain the "alignment" of Permitting with EIA thresholds.
4. Will the **WG** tell us about the constitution, ToR and proceedings of the Health Working Group announced by Mark Drakeford in early 2019. Is this group considering pandemic risks, anti-microbial resistance and health risks to neighbours arising from IPU's.

In view of the urgency of the situation and wide-spread public concern, we also have three **Requests** which we hope the committee will consider and convey to the **WG & NRW** respondents.

Our Requests

1. In 2018 Wales Environment Link called for *"NRW and Local Authorities pausing any granting of permissions (planning applications and permits) and NRW undertaking an assessment of in-combination effects on water and air quality (including compliance checks) for each catchment with Intensive Livestock Units (ILU)"* . **We want this to happen now for appropriately targeted areas which must include all Powys LPA. We want NRW action to be supported by WG.**

2. **WG and NRW, should map intensive livestock units through Wales, match their density to river catchments, to background ammonia and nitrogen deposition levels/loads and to sensitive habitats. This should form an evidence base essential to ensure SMNR in livestock farming.**
3. **NRW must have the resources to research and implement a river recovery plan which targets the more distant sources of pollution as well as the immediate water-body environment. In as much as climate change is resulting in low water volumes in rivers, water extraction must be more firmly regulated than the current permit threshold (20cu.m/day). Water extraction and phosphate management should be included as a material planning consideration in planning determination.**

Attached

Powys Professional Lead Planning Response (12/6/20)

Wye & Usk Foundation objection to IPU P/2015/0955

WEL "Restoring our Freshwaters" (2018)

BRB-CPRW IPU Applications awaiting determination in Powys

¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-11/survey-agriculture-and-horticulture-june-2019-730.pdf>

² <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=19k4NDqAtNeG8MbNbGu-9yd9bQBc&ll=52.495291891220724,-3.766346143718799&z=9>

³ <https://cdn.naturalresources.wales/media/686008/eng-report-218-powys-poultry-pilot-study.pdf>

P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee: Annex - Powys Professional Lead Planning Response, 17.06.20

Thank you for your email and attached letter dated 26th May 2020 addressed to the Council's Leader, Chief Executive and Head of Service for Property, Planning and Public Protection regarding intensive livestock units in Powys. Your letter has been forwarded to me to provide a response on behalf of the Council.

You have raised particular questions in your letter, which for ease of reference I have copied below in blue typeface and then responded to each beneath.

We understand that The Welsh Government has instructed that the environmental and residential impact of IPU's must be looked at cumulatively, so could you please explain what processes you have in place to consider the wider environmental and human health impacts, and how the impacts of the existing factory farms on the environment and human health are actively and regularly measured (e.g. dip-sample air and water quality measurements)? And who has overall accountability for this? The planning lead's reference to someone 'at a higher level' is worryingly vague!

Cumulative and in-combination impacts are material planning considerations which are taken into account and considered in the planning application decision making process. This happens in several different ways, for example:

1. The policies of the adopted Powys Local Development Plan, 2018 (LDP) require applications to consider such impacts.
2. Some applications, depending on the scale, size and location are subject to statutory assessment processes which consider cumulative and in-combination impacts and in so doing inform the decision-making process.
3. Consultees on planning applications are also able to consider cumulative impacts. For instance, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is able to draw on monitoring data for the water quality of rivers in order to assess the contributions that an additional development would make in order to inform its consultation responses on planning applications.

Whilst the Environmental Health Service reviews and comments on planning applications in relation to environmental health matters, such as private water supplies, noise, dust, odours and flies, it has no duty or requirement to undertake pro-active monitoring post development. NRW is the principal environmental regulator for Wales.

We cannot find a single occasion where Powys has refused permission for an IPU based on the impact on those living close by, nor on the cumulative effects of the emissions, namely ammonia, other gases and particulates. We are therefore forced to question if approval is weighted towards seeking ways to accommodate, without genuine consideration of the many negative impacts on neighbouring residents and the wider community.

According to legislation, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the policies of the development plan – the LDP - unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Impacts on neighbouring residents and the wider community are material considerations that can and are taken into account when deciding planning applications. The consultation process on planning applications, including consultation with statutory bodies such as NRW or the Council's Environmental Health Service, ensures that the impacts arising from a specific development proposal are considered, alongside the cumulative and in-combination impacts from existing and proposed developments. The Authority welcomes comments on planning applications from neighbouring properties and local communities so that these too can be considered as part of the decision-making process.

Is anyone in Powys keeping count of how many million birds are now accommodated in the IPU's in our County? Could you please explain how Powys considers this growing risk to public health increased by each additional factory farming unit approved?

In terms of the responsibility for monitoring livestock numbers, poultry keepers must register with Welsh Government and with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). Where there is a suspected notifiable disease outbreak, for instance, APHA is notified and investigates, and should the outbreak be confirmed, enforcement is undertaken by APHA with the support of the Council's Animal Health Services.

As a Local Planning Authority, the Council holds information about the applications that have been received, but it is not required to complete monitoring returns to Welsh Government as it does for certain other types of development. However, it is possible that the forthcoming Technical Advice Note may specify additional requirements in this respect.

We ask that you urgently:

1. Implement a moratorium in respect of all current and future IPU and other intensive factory farm applications until you are able to accurately take stock of the current situation.

As a Local Planning Authority, the Council has a statutory duty, as set out in legislation, to determine planning applications. The Authority is therefore unable to impose a moratorium on any type of planning application because to do so would conflict with this statutory duty.

2. Undertake a comprehensive environmental survey to ascertain if current air and water quality in parts of Powys with a concentration of IPU's are near, or already beyond, saturation point.

There is no requirement upon the Council to undertake such an environmental survey although Welsh Government might stipulate evidence requirements as part of the forthcoming Technical Advice Note on intensive livestock units in order to inform future development plan policies.

Air and water quality are material planning considerations that are considered as part of the determination of applications for intensive livestock units. All planning application proposals for intensive livestock units are subject to consultation with various statutory bodies, including NRW and the Council's Environmental Health Service, to ensure that the environmental impacts are reviewed by the relevant statutory body.

In addition, various regulatory assessments may be required depending on the type, scale and location of the application. For example, a Habitats Regulations Assessment, and potentially an Appropriate Assessment, is required where applications would impact on a European designated site such as a Special Area for Conservation to ensure that its conservation status is not unacceptably affected.

3. Properly assess the human health considerations to residents posed by the already large number of factory farms present in Powys (based on actual studies rather than desk-based predictions).

Please refer to the response to number 2 above. Human health considerations such as impacts arising from odour, dust, noise and other emissions are material planning considerations that are taken into consideration by the Authority when determining planning applications.

4. Provide details of how Powys CC takes into account the provisions of the 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' when determining applications.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been embedded into the planning system in Wales in several ways. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provided the following statutory purpose for the planning system in Wales – any statutory body carrying out a planning function must exercise those functions in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in WFG Act.

By law, the Authority must determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan in place unless material considerations indicate otherwise. As part of its preparation, the draft LDP was assessed against the seven Well-being goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), to ensure its policies met the goals. Material considerations include, for instance, Planning Policy Wales which has been revised and updated to reflect the sustainable development principle, the seven well-being objectives and five ways of working introduced by the WFG Act.

5. Cease determination of all IPU applications until the new Intensive farming TAN is in place to properly guide planning officers in their decision-making process.

Please refer to the response to number 1 above. The Authority has a statutory duty to determine the planning applications that we receive from our customers.

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

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 5.3

P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals

This petition was submitted by Linda Joyce Jones having collected a total of 95 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge Welsh Government to regulate commercial bus operators and give powers and funding to Local Authorities to run services that best meet the needs of local people. As well as providing access to employment and education, public transport is a social, health and wellbeing issue which is growing as bus services are being rapidly reduced, affecting the mental and physical health and well being of many residents who will become socially isolated and unable to get to basic services.

Additional Information

Bus operators are cutting many core services which were previously operating with little or no subsidy. Operators are not tendering for new contracts and some are requesting 6 figure sums as a subsidy to continue which is unaffordable for Local Authorities who are facing budget pressures. Local Authorities cannot run services in competition with operators.

Passenger journey times for those accessing employment take too long as direct services are being cut if still exist at all and some are overcrowded. The majority of residents attending the many public meetings we have held are older people who are concerned about accessing services, attending health appointments and becoming isolated. Loneliness is a huge issue in our society. It is our aim to enable older people to live in their own homes longer. It is our aim for them to stay mentally and physically fit and active. Public bus transport is now a huge urgent issue that needs addressing quickly.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Arfon
- North Wales

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-05-895
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00773/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

07 April 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 24 March regarding Petition P-05-895, Rosa's Legacy.

We are continuing to work closely with the AWW who are looking at the support offered by Local Authorities in Wales for pet owners who are unable, for a variety of reasons, to look after their animals. The issue of charges levied by private vets is of course a business decision but we are encouraging BVA to work with their members to advise the Welsh Government on what is possible.

You will appreciate following the outbreak of Covid-19 some of our work areas have had to become less of a priority. This is to ensure our delivery partners have prioritisation for procedures as and when circumstances change and resources become limited. Our priority is to continue to deliver services that protect public health, safeguard animals from statutory diseases and to ensure animal welfare is not jeopardised.

We will arrange to meet with members of the AWW, including the BVA, to discuss these issues once priorities have changed and we will update you further when possible.

Regards

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

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

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

P-05-895 Rosa's Legacy: Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 16.06.20

To the Chair and Members of the Petitions Committee of the Senedd Cymru.

P-05- 895: Rosa's Legacy Introduce a scheme to help people access veterinary care for their companion animals.

Thank you for having my petition as an agenda item and for asking me to respond to the correspondence you have received.

The Minister's response to you - 7/4/2020

I would like to thank Lesley Griffiths MS for her response and in doing so may I say I totally understand that our Welsh Government's attention has to be focused primarily on the Covid-19 pandemic at this time.

I am very pleased to see that Lesley is now working with and involving CAWGW (Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales) . However I am still puzzled as to why the Welsh Government should be consulting with Local Authorities as it's my understanding this matter is not within their remit.

I agree with Lesley that the setting of fees by private veterinary practice's is a business decision. But this is a matter the RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) as the body who claims to regulate the profession in the UK **can** act on **if** they choose to do so . The BVA (British Veterinary Association) is not an organisation every veterinary surgeon has to join and they have no regulatory powers. The BVA have already stated to Members that they " do not have a position on this issue ". However as I stated in my previous submission I find this statement very puzzling as their Members must be aware of the issues I have flagged up.

Brief Update

Animal welfare is a matter devolved to our Welsh Senedd and Government. The Welsh Government have said that the welfare of animals is a high priority for them. The UK and Welsh Government's have jointly acknowledged that animals are sentient beings. In previous submissions both CAWGW and myself have touched on the issue of how such companion's improve the wellbeing of their owners.

I still feel the rapid corporatisation of the veterinary industry here in Cymru is a crucial issue here. That wagon roles ever forward to the detriment of animal welfare and us companion animal owners. In my part of North West Wales only one independently run veterinary practice remains **1**.

As Professor Noel Fitzpatrick MRCVS points out " **It's estimated that up to half of all primary care veterinary practices across the United Kingdom are now owned by venture capital equity groups....Some of these groups own hundreds of primary care practices, most have centralised referral centres and some have pet crematoria, own-brand drugs, online pharmacies, laboratories, out-of-hours surgeries, locum agencies and both online and retail shops** " **2.**

Again I wish to make clear that I am not attacking individuals within our veterinary profession . I consider that the corporate takeover affects them deeply too. As the rise in calls to the charity Vetlife confirms. **3.**

I am convinced that the current economic situation we find ourselves in when we come out of lockdown will months down the line have a significant effect on the choices people are forced to make in regards their companion animals.This combined with the corporates holding so many of the cards will result in a disastrous outcome for many.I really fear the card of " economic euthanisea " will be played time and time again . This to my mind should play no part in a modern Cymru- one in which animals like My late Rosa are Members of people's families and are classed as Sentient beings.

Conclusions- Next Steps.

Nearly two years after losing My beloved Lady Rosa I find myself increasingly frustrated by what I witness others going though with their beloved family members. On a personal level the pain I experience deep down inside remains. My battle against being overwhelmed by it is constant.

This is made worse by the knowledge and realisation that the very profession and the body who claims to be their regulator (RCVS) seems totally oblivious to what I and many others go through and the very valid points that we raise . The manner in which the RCVS plan to conduct their forthcoming long awaited " Under Care Review " speaks volumes. They (RCVS) have confirmed to me that they have no plans to involve any Member of the Senedd, only the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Welsh Government (herself a veterinary surgeon). Plus they will draft the legislation then consult the pet owning public **4.**

1. I would like to be actively involved in the collaboration that the Minister Lesley Griffiths MS refers to.

2. I would like Members of our CCEC to be informed about the issues I raise particularly surrounding the corporatisation of the veterinary profession in Cymru. Could this be an issue they look at as a Committee?

3. I think it may be of benefit if the CMA (Competition Marketing Commission) were approached to see if they have any concerns in regards to the corporate takeover.

Once again may I offer my heartfelt thanks for the diligent way Members have considered this matter. As always I would be willing to help you in any way I can.

Cofion.
Linda Joyce-Jones.
Arfon Constituency.
16/6/2020 .

1. <http://www.independentvets.co.uk/>
2. Professor Noel Fitzpatrick " Becoming The Supervet " page 256.
3. <https://www.vetlife.org.uk/>
4. <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/news/rcvs-publishes-outline-plan-for-review-of-under-care-and-247/>

Agenda Item 5.4

P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs.

#OperationGoldfish

This petition was submitted by Holly Rosalie Homer collected 498 signatures online and 1,918 on paper, a total of 2,416 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to ban goldfish from being given away at funfairs.

Goldfish are still being given away as prizes at funfairs all over the country, they are complex creatures that can live up to 25+ years and grow between 25-45cm. They are kept in poor conditions and given away to someone who won on an impulse and due to this they usually only last a couple of months. This is an archaic tradition that through recent education we've realised is unethical.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central

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-05-933
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00435/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

27 February 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 12 February, regarding Petition P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs #OperationGoldfish, which was discussed at your meeting of 4 February.

I note the Committee's request for the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group to be asked for advice on this matter and I can confirm a discussion point on the giving of animals as prizes has been added to the agenda for the next meeting on 31 March. My officials will ensure a copy of the minutes are provided to the Committee Clerk for information.

With regard to the Showmen's Guild, I have received a letter in which they confirm, for over 50 years, it has had a resolution to its constitution ensuring all members take account of the welfare of goldfish. Alternative prizes are also available so a goldfish has to be chosen by a winner. If a goldfish is chosen, RSPCA care leaflets are given to every winner. Therefore, the Guild argues this is no different to a person buying a goldfish from a pet shop.

I trust this letter satisfactorily answers the questions raised by the Committee but please do contact me if further information is required.

Regards
Lesley

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

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

Pack Page 138

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-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs. #OperationGoldfish, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 17.06.20

Thank you for taking time to discuss this matter and for investigating the matter further. I note that your letter states the showman guild ensures all members take account of the welfare of goldfish. Can you please confirm how they go about this? The letter states the member takes account of the welfare, which implies the onus is on the member. Are the members or the guild itself monitored or checked? What measures are in place to ensure they are complying with the guidelines? If checks are not undertaken by the guild, as the responsibility is on the member; if they are undertaking incorrect practise then would they change or improve their practise and would they know they were acting incorrectly? Without refresher or checks in place, people can often become complacent or information becomes outdated. I can confirm that within a pet shop we have spot checks, mystery shoppers, area manager checks, we have to document all sales and customers details in line with our licensing agreement. We monitor the water, we have exams, tests and constant refreshers to keep our expert advice correct and up to date.

It says that for over 50 years they have had a resolution to its constitution ensuring all members take account of the welfare of the goldfish, however over those 50 years our society has evolved, culture changes, what is perceived as right/wrong changes, what should/shouldn't happen changes, laws change. Has their protocol been updated in the last 50 years to reflect this? Has it even been reviewed throughout the 50 years and if so, how often? Have they supplied a copy of their protocol/advice they give to members? If it hasn't been updated or changed then it clearly is outdated like the tradition which they are trying to defend.

I also note that they claim other prizes are available. Is it compulsory for every stall to offer alternatives? Has this claim been verified, as when I visited Barry island there are large signs which state "Goldfish if you win" (see link to newspaper article which has pictures of the stand) – they are clearly heavily promoting live animal prizes compared to alternatives. Are the alternative prizes on different stalls? Are alternative prizes only available if requested? What are the other prize choices they offer? A high value pet with a small plastic tub for a home versus a small stuffed toy with a nominal value? Surely a high proportion of people would prefer a perceived higher valued item to get their monies worth. As there is the option to win a goldfish, of course consumers will opt for this, it seems fun and the stalls push this. By simply banning this archaic tradition then people wouldn't have the option to win a goldfish on a whim, without education.

It is reassuring that they do offer alternative prizes, which shows that if they stopped offering live animals as prizes then they have an alternative/ back up they can use. As the guild reference alternative prizes it is evident that these alternatives are successful for them, so why still use these poor live animals?

Also is it morally right for Welsh Government to continue to allow live animals to be given away as prizes? We as a society have evolved and animal welfare is a very important topic. Thankfully a lot of archaic traditions have stopped and this is a tradition which should be

stopped.

The showmen's guild argue that there isn't any difference between obtaining a goldfish from a funfair or a pet shop, whereas in fact there are a lot of very distinct differences. In pet shops I know that (as I work in one myself) there are certain laws you must adhere to, animal welfare criteria that must be met and external bodies can turn up unannounced to perform a pet welfare report at any time, which if failed holds serious consequences for duty and all managers. You must hold a pet shop license to be able to sell animals (to obtain this you must again, adhere to strict animal welfare guidelines) which has to be renewed every year. Pet shops are permanent buildings whereas some funfairs that offer prize goldfish are travelling ones, which begs the question where is the security? What happens to any goldfish that they didn't manage to sell or 'give away' over the temporary summer period they were set up? You often hear horror stories of them being thrown away, chucked in the sea, given away for free or just binned at the end of a season, which all sounds far fetched, however, what are you to do with a plastic tub of hundreds of goldfish you didn't manage to sell?

When a person goes to a funfair they do not go with the intention of leaving that day with a 25 year commitment of a pet that can ultimately cost hundreds of pounds and eventually need a tank the size of your sofa. It is entirely a win made on an impulse. I'm not denying that going to a pet shop can lead to an impulse buy of a goldfish, however, there will be a professional aquatics expert on hand to ensure the customer is fully capable and understanding of the needs of this pet they are looking to purchase and they can be refused a sale if necessary. In my experience, 9 times out of 10 when I explain to a customer that a goldfish cannot simply go into a bowl of unfiltered water and that they will in fact live up to 25+ years that customer will swiftly change their minds and go for a much easier option. Also, if you do win a goldfish as a prize from a funfair, how long is it in the bag for before you go home? Lots of people travel over half an hour to go to funfairs, and the maximum time a fish should be kept in a plastic bag for moving purposes is half an hour, so that fish is already suffering before it's even arrived at it's new home. Once you have arrived home, where are you going to put the fish? As they require a minimum of a 50 litre tank that has been set up for at least 72 hours prior to purchase, to ensure the water has been dechlorinated, the filter is functioning correctly and the water has reached the right temperature, of about 18 – 22 degrees Celsius.

If the act of giving away an animal as a prize was blanket banned across the country, then this temptation to win an animal would be eradicated for good, saving countless animals lives and removing them from the category of a 'prize' and ultimately giving a living animal the respect it deserves; which would be a huge step forward in the animal rights movement.

It is also disappointing to read that the showman's guild has given incorrect information in relation to the RSPCA. The leaflet they offer is not from the RSPCA and in fact my previous letter states how the information is incorrect; so much so it could result in the death of the animal. I have, and continue to work closely with the RSPCA who also support the motion to ban goldfish being given away as a prize. If they were working with the showman's guild then the RSPCA wouldn't be in support of this motion as they would be confident the animal's

welfare was cared for. The RSPCA has successfully achieved the support of the Newport, Conwy and Caerphilly Councils that have passed the ban, again confirming that the RSPCA do not work with the showman's guild. Please see attached email from Lewis from the RSPCA, which categorically confirms that they do not work with them and have not provided any support or information to use in their leaflets. As the showman guild has provided incorrect information about their working relationship with the RSPCA, then it does beg the question of the integrity of the guild and also the accuracy of the rest of the information they have provided to Welsh Government.

<https://www.barryanddistrictnews.co.uk/news/17718471.woman-aims-to-stop-fairs-goldfish-prizes/> - This is the link to the picture of the goldfish stand at Barry Island.

<https://www.barryanddistrictnews.co.uk/news/17932235.barry-operation-goldfish-campaigner-supports-caerphilly-council-pets-prize-concern/> - Here is a link to show OpGold working with the RSPCA in getting Caerphilly councils support in the motion.

Please also see attached an email from [REDACTED], the public affairs adviser, for RSPCA Cymru confirming that the information the showmen's guild has provided is incorrect.

P-05-933 Ban Goldfish from being given away at funfairs. #OperationGoldfish, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee: additional information from RSPCA Cymru in relation to the Showman's Guild, 17.06.20

The RSPCA have worked with them in the past, but have not had any direct correspondence with them for about 25 years so we can't necessarily endorse whatever they're doing at the moment, and we don't know what care information they might be giving out with our name on it.

According to our records, we came to an agreement with the Guild in 1955 that they would include guidance in their rule book/code of practice on the giving of live animals as prizes, although we still took the position that animals should not be given as prizes at all. This included conditions about how fish should be kept and a requirement that an RSPCA care leaflet is given with each fish (see below). Their 2019 rules booklet still refers to the original rule from 1958 which suggests that hasn't changed since then.

From our files, the last date of correspondence appears to be 1995. At some points during the 70s, we were sending thousands of copies of our leaflets to the organisation for them to distribute to their members, but the last reference to leaflets was in 1990.

In relation to their care advice - it's generally lacking in detail and there are several points where our current guidance does differ from theirs. For example we advise a stocking guide of 0.5cm of fish per 2 litres of water. whereas they advise 0.5cm per 1 litre. There's no information in their guide about filtration and water testing, which is a surprising omission as this is critical for good water quality, and nothing about how long the tank takes to establish (should be. around two weeks before adding any fish, whereas they suggest adding fish immediately). They also describe goldfish as social and need the company of other fish, which isn't the case as 'they are fine being kept alone.

The RSPCA remains committed to ending the giving of pets as prizes, with those animals that are given as prizes often suffering as a result.

Agenda Item 5.5

P-05-941 Biodiversity Remit for NRW

This petition was submitted by Initiative for Nature Conservation Cymru (INCC) having collected 873 signatures online and 322 on paper, a total of 1,195 signatures.

Text of Petition

The Initiative for Nature Conservation Cymru (INCC) is calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to explicitly include 'Biodiversity' when setting their strategic remit to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for 2020 / 2021 and in future. Specifically the remit should include:

- NRW will ensure that biodiversity is central to its core purpose of pursuing sustainable management of natural resources by:

1. Working towards an overall improvement in the status of Welsh wildlife and preventing or at least minimising the risk of any further extinctions as a consequence of human activities.
2. Establishing sustainable, bigger and less fragmented areas for wildlife, this should initially focus on the consolidation and extensions to existing National Nature Reserves and other protected areas, followed by the establishment of new areas.
3. Prioritising the need to obtain favourable or recovering status for conservation features on all statutory nature conservation sites (SPAs, SACs, SSSIs and NNRs).
4. Developing and improving an effective network of Marine Protected Areas which are sufficient to ensure the adequate protection of marine life and sustainable fisheries around Wales.
5. Ensure that more people are actively engaged with biodiversity issues, and aware of the significance of biodiversity to their health and wellbeing.

Additional Information

Since the inauguration of NRW six years ago, there has been a steady and noticeable deterioration in Wales' commitment toward biodiversity and nature conservation. Wales has been described as one of the most nature depleted areas of the world having already caused the extinction of many of its native plant and animal species. A great number of the species that do remain are now rare or threatened, surviving in fragments of their often isolated habitats.

INCC believes that the people of Wales and the wildlife they share their community with deserve better. Greater commitment from Welsh Government and NRW is required if Wales is to stand any chance of reversing the declines in biodiversity and preventing further wildlife extinctions from occurring.

An effective way of demonstrating this commitment toward reversing the decline in biodiversity would be to ensure that the Welsh Government explicitly includes 'Biodiversity' as part of the NRW strategic remit.

Given the continued losses to wildlife and the perceived lack of prioritisation toward nature conservation within NRW, it is clear that 'Biodiversity' cannot simply remain as an implied part of NRW's functions. It has to be made explicit and given the appropriate prioritisation.

If there is no change, future wildlife extinctions in Wales are inevitable.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-941
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00673/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

01 April 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 12 March, regarding Petition P-05-941 Biodiversity Remit for Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

Welsh Government recognises the escalating nature emergency, and reversing the decline in biodiversity is one of our top priorities. Key to meeting our objectives is the legislation I outlined in my previous correspondence (LG/000072/20) which will bring biodiversity into the heart of decision making in public life. This letter also set out how legislation applies with regard to NRW's remit and biodiversity.

NRW are already subject to a statutory duty to maintain biodiversity. Under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act, the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty requires public authorities, including NRW, to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. To fulfil their duty, action for biodiversity is embedded in NRW's statutory requirements for the sustainable management of natural resources. NRW have integrated their plan for compliance with the Section 6 duty into their organisational plans, with the high level commitments in the [Corporate Plan to 2022](#) and will report on compliance in their published annual reports.

The 2018-19 report is available [here](#); page 11 refers specifically to the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty, and reporting on well-being objective 3 from p25 onwards sets out work being carried out for biodiversity.

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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.

This work helps to deliver the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales, restoring resilient ecological networks across Wales. These are networks of habitat in good ecological condition linking protected sites and other biodiversity hotspots across the wider landscape, and providing maximum benefit for biodiversity and well-being. Our [Natura 2000 sites](#) are core to resilient ecological networks. Action such as the SSSI Baseline Evaluation project will enable the delivery of the future Protected Sites Terrestrial Monitoring Programme and provide operational information to inform site management.

Integrating biodiversity into how we set our budgets was a crucial part of this last year resulting in the announcements of additional money for biodiversity in the Welsh Government's 'A Budget to build a more prosperous, more equal and greener Wales' published in December. The budget provides additional funding for biodiversity projects including:

- £15m for improvements to our Natura 2000 sites
- £4.5m for the National forest
- £1.145m for the Peatland Restoration programme
- £0.5m for a Biodiversity Taskforce to pilot approaches to capacity and capability building for systemic change.

NRW will be a major delivery partner in these projects and will also be working with Welsh Government to develop an Environmental Growth Plan by autumn 2020.

I am currently in discussions with NRW regarding their 2020-21 Remit Letter which will be issued in due course and made publically available. This letter will set out Welsh Government's expectations for their role in delivering for biodiversity, over and above their core delivery.

I understand you have also written to NRW who will respond to the operational issues raised in the petitioners' letter.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". 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

MENTER AR GYFER
CADWRAETH NATUR CYMRU



INITIATIVE FOR NATURE
CONSERVATION CYMRU

Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

15th June 2020

Dear Petitions Committee

INCC's Comments following the Minister's response (LG/00673/20) to the petition (P-05-941) - Biodiversity Remit for Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and further evidence in relation to the Minister's response (LG.00673/20) to the INCC Petition (P-05-941) - Biodiversity Remit for Natural Resources Wales.

INCC welcomes the progress made by Welsh Government in light of the petition, particularly the recognition of the nature emergency and the added emphasis on NRW as the major facilitator to halting and reversing the decline in nature in Wales (NRW Remit Letter 2020-21).

However, in her response (LG.00673/20) the Minister continues to celebrate the 'tools' (policies and documents) without consideration of whether NRW has the resources, structure and organisational ethos to apply those tools effectively enough to counter the escalating nature emergency.

The Minister fails to acknowledge the very real need for NRW to change if it is to deliver more for nature. This lack of acknowledgement regarding NRW's ability to deliver effectively creates a distorted representation of Welsh Government's true commitment toward halting and reversing the decline of nature in Wales.

It is clear that NRW needs to alter its approach toward delivering for nature conservation to fully meet the escalating nature emergency in Wales. A stronger, more explicit biodiversity remit would enable the organisation to change its mind-set to better prioritise nature conservation. Resources could be better applied and importantly, skilled and experienced staff would be at the heart of biodiversity decision making.

As highlighted in previous correspondence (16.02.2020), one of the current failings of NRW is their silence regarding the planning process in Wales. Planning represents both a means to protect habitats and species from harm as well as an opportunity to secure biodiversity gains in the long-term. Given the escalating nature emergency, NRW should be influencing the process far more than at present and working with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to ensure a collaborative approach to securing biodiversity gains. Instead, NRW have reduced their input to just a reductionist list of specific areas for comment and many local sites are being lost as a consequence. This contributes to the continual erosion of the landscape's overall resilience to support wildlife and the well-being of local communities.

If NRW was to have a stronger, more explicit biodiversity remit then the organisational management would be better placed to plan and deliver for the long-term (a necessity for nature conservation). Even the much welcomed project funding (highlighted in the Minister's response) appears to be relatively short-term in its delivery. Although these projects have a capacity to deliver for nature, they are often (on account of their funding) short-term, rushed and unsustainable in the long-term. If NRW are to fully play their role in meeting the escalating nature emergency, then projects need to have funding guaranteed over longer periods of time and delivered by an NRW which is well resourced with skilled and experienced nature conservationists. This would ensure that funding can build on already identified best practice.

Information received from NRW (ATI-19096a) shows that as the Statutory Environmental Body and leading organisation charged with nature conservation responsibilities in Wales, NRW does not have a clear awareness of its own staff skill-set with regard to the skills and experience needed to halt and reverse the declines in nature.

It is imperative for any organisation to employ and retain staff that have the skills and experience needed to further the organisation's objectives, and to ensure that those staff work in areas within the organisation where their skills and experience are best placed to effect positive change. This is even more important in nature conservation as it depends on highly skilled nature conservationists, taxa experts and habitat managers to determine the appropriate course of action required to halt and reverse the declines of particular species and/or habitats. The skills of a taxon expert take a life-time to build and cannot be substituted or easily replaced.

Since the creation of NRW in 2013, there has been a dramatic reduction in the number of skilled and experienced staff (and job roles) able to help the organisation halt and reverse the declines in nature. Furthermore, NRW do not currently hold information on the number of staff employed by the organisation who are recognised habitat and/or species specialists, nor are there records regarding taxa experts within the organisation, their particular expertise, or whether they have a remit to influence delivery for their area of expertise.

If the organisation charged with halting and reversing the declines in nature has little knowledge of its own internal skill-set with regard to overcoming the challenges facing Wales and its escalating nature emergency, then it is difficult to conclude that the organisation has the appropriate biodiversity remit for the job.

I would like to thank the Committee for debating this petition and if you require any further information regarding this response please feel free to contact me.

Yours Faithfully



Robert

Robert Jones Parry
Chief Executive Officer
Initiative for Nature Conservation Cymru (INCC)

████████████████████

Agenda Item 5.6

P-05-804 We need Welsh Government funding for play!!

This petition was submitted by RAY Ceredigion and was first considered in March 2018, having collected 328 signatures online.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to provide annual designated funding to provide financial support to all Local Authorities in fulfilling their duty in line with their Play Sufficiency Assessments in order to avoid further closure of open access play provision such as RAY Ceredigion

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-804
Ein cyf/Our ref JM/00148/20

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

16 April 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your further letter of 24 February updating me in respect of your Committee's current consideration of the petition from RAY Ceredigion about funding for play.

I note the Committee's request for the correspondence received to date from the petitioner, Play Wales and the Children's Commissioner for Wales to be formally considered as part of my current Play Review and confirm my agreement to this request.

The aim of the Review is to assess where we are now with respect to play policy and to inform how we develop and progress the play agenda in future years. The review will consider the progress made in achieving our vision for play and whether our vision remains relevant. It will also set out the steps that need to be taken to progress the play agenda in order to achieve the vision.

A number of areas have been identified by the Play Review Steering Group for consideration under the review. These include:

- Settings Registration / Regulation / Exceptions;
- The Play Sufficiency Duty and Cross Policy Working;
- The Workforce; and
- Spatial Justice and Societal Involvement.

I have also agreed to look again at funding arrangements as a part of this review, though given the wider financial position, I am not able to make commitments or

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Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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Gohebiaeth.Julie.Morgan@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.Morgan@gov.wales

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

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

promises ahead of the review's findings.

Under the current circumstances, and with the range of activities currently underway to address the Coronavirus pandemic, I have asked officials to reconsider the timescales for the review. Once the position becomes clearer, I will write again with more details.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Julie', is positioned below the closing of the letter.

Julie Morgan AC/AM

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

Dyddiad /Date:
Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:
Llinell uniongyrchol/Direct line:

10 February 2020
D Hopkins



CLILC • WLGA

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

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Petition P-05-804 'We need Welsh Government funding for play!'

My sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your letter of 21st June, 2019.

This petition has been submitted by RAY Ceredigion, and asks the National Assembly for Wales to provide annual designated funding to provide financial support to all local authorities in fulfilling their duties in line with their Play Sufficiency Assessments.

The WLGA understands that organisations such as RAY Ceredigion would like to see specific funding for the services they and others provide across Wales. However, in its support of local authorities and the wide range of services they deliver, the WLGA view, which reflects that of local authorities, is that all services should normally be funded through the annual Revenue Support Grant, and the distribution of funds at a local level is then a matter for local democratic processes.

There are exceptions in terms of specific grants, and where these are time limited the WLGA understands and accepts that they are meant to target particular policy areas as prioritised by the Welsh Government from time to time. These may be revenue or capital grants.

But the general position of the WLGA is to secure the overriding majority of funding for distribution to local authorities through the agreed formulae which exist for that purpose, and for spending decisions to be taken locally.

I trust that this makes the WLGA position clear.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely

David Hopkins

Pennaeth Addysg, Dysgu a Diwylliant Dros Dro
Interim Head of Education, Learning & Culture

Dr Chris Llewelyn
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

Cymdeithas Llywodraeth
Leol Cymru
Tŷ Llywodraeth Leol
Rhodfa Drake
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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.

**P-05-804 We need Welsh Government funding for play!!, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Committee, 27.04.20**

Hi my comments are the same as before – the play sufficiency duty enacted by the Welsh Government on local authorities cannot be delivered with no ring fenced funding and this has led to the loss of a number of valued playwork delivery organisations over the last few years, the loss of many open access play sites (all have disappeared in Cardiff). Therefore my petition requests that the Welsh Government demonstrate their commitment to children in Wales having access to sufficient play opportunities by providing designated funding direct to local authorities for them to deliver or commission delivery of on the ground playwork so that children can access their right to play under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as outlined in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure Section 11. Currently there has been intermittent funding provided as part of Welsh Government underspend, that has been distributed at the end of financial years (none in 2019 – 2020) with a timescale of weeks in which to allocate expenditure and this leads to very short term results. Those who signed this petition request that regular and sufficient ring fenced funds are delivered across Wales in the shortest time possible. Play benefits children in numerous ways, and is integral to their health, development and wellbeing and has been shown to build resilience in those who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged and children (safe Places to Play and Hangout, NafW report) showed that children prioritise play that is delivered close to home and by trusted playworkers. This is what we want for children across Wales.

Agenda Item 5.7

P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales

This petition was submitted by the Contaminated Whole Blood UK Group, having collected 159 signatures.

Text of Petition

This petition calls on the Welsh Assembly to end the unfairness and discrimination in financial support for all victims of the infected blood scandal for those infected in Wales, by changing the scheme to at least mirror the provisions for those infected in England.

Many categories of victim infected in Wales are potentially worse off under the scheme by £20,000 or more. Thousands of people were infected as result of receiving infected blood or infected blood products given to them by the NHS until at least September 1991. Over two thousand people have already died.

Following devolving of powers, the responsibility for support of victims and their families, for those infected in Wales, sits under the Welsh Assembly. The schemes for support are operated by the Welsh Infected Blood Support service (WIBSS) which is administered by Velindre NHS Trust and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) who are ultimately accountable to the Welsh Assembly.

For those infected in England, the comparable scheme is run by EIBSS, ultimately accountable to parliament in London. Even though the victims were all infected by the NHS pre - devolution, the EIBSS and WIBSS have vastly different provisions in financial support. The determining factor as to which scheme you fall under is where the victim was infected not where they live. There are two schemes that those under the WIBSS cannot access. They are called the 'Special Category Mechanism' and 'The discretionary top up scheme'. The net effect of all this is that many categories victim infected in Wales are potentially worse of under the scheme by £20,000, more if they have children, irrespective where of where they live. Two people living in say Cardiff, both infected by the NHS, both with the same impact might receive £20,000 difference in support simply because one of the two had the 'good fortune' to be infected in England.

We call on the Welsh Assembly to intervene end this injustice now.

Additional Information

Who are we: we are an self organised peer support group that has victims of the infected blood scandal right across the uk

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ContaminatedWholeBloodUK/> Where can details of the comparative schemes for those infected in England and those infected in Wales be found: For Wales infected people it is here <https://wibss.wales.nhs.uk/> For those infected in England the comparable scheme is found here <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/england-infected-blood-support-scheme>

What has happened so far:

A number of attempts from various organisations have tried to raise the issue through the inquiry being led by Sir Brian Langstaff and by making the press aware such as this piece which is focussed on the differentials between Welsh and Scottish schemes <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-43898899>

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00669/20

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

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

25 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 24 February on behalf of the Petitions Committee about petition P-05-831 'End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for the victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales'.

Discussions remain ongoing both at Ministerial and official level on the work to achieve financial and scheme parity. Arrangements are being made to meet with Haemophilia Wales and Mick Antoni, Chair of the Cross Party Blood Group, to discuss proposals that the Society has put forward and to update them on the ongoing work.

I will write to you again once this meeting has taken place to update you further.

As the work progresses on changes to the current scheme, those affected will be kept informed as plans are developed.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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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.

Agenda Item 5.8

P-05-905 Call for an Independent judicial Inquiry into the reorganisation of services within Cwm Taf Health Board

This petition was submitted by Mark Adams and Robert Bevan having collected a total of 387 signatures.

Text of Petition

This petition calls on the Welsh Government to undertake a fully independent judicial inquiry into the management and implementation of the NHS South Wales programme at Cwm Taf Health Board and its impact on the services provided to the public of Rhondda Cynon Taff at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital.

Additional Information

There is great public concern regarding the transfer of services from Royal Glamorgan Hospital to both the Prince Charles Hospital and the Princess of Wales Hospital. These service transfers have had a major effect on residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf. Residents want to see the return of these services.

Rhondda Cynon Taf has a population of 235,000 with major housing developments taking place in the south of the borough and in the neighbouring authority of Cardiff which are close to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. These developments will have additional impact on public services and in particular the Health Service and Social Care. Residents are continually raising concerns about access to these services since some of the changes have taken place. Issues such as journey times in the case of emergency treatment, ongoing attendances at clinics and the poor transport links for family and friends to visit – these are just some of the comments.

The service areas residents have major concerns about are;-

- Maternity –already subject to investigation
- Paediatrics
- Special Baby Care Unit

- Accident and Emergency Department
- Trips and falls by the elderly resulting in fatality whilst hospitalised
- Out of Hours services
- Cardiac Services
- Impact on GP / Primary Care services where practices are primarily run by locums, this is a chronic situation in the Rhondda in particular – failure to recruit GPs

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central



Private and Confidential

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

Dear Janet,

P-05-905 Call for an Independent judicial inquiry into the reorganisation of services within Cwm Taf Health Board

Thank you for your letter of 24 February 2020 in relation to the above, in which you ask me to respond to the issues raised in the petition and provide further information about the current status of the changes implemented under the South Wales Programme (SWP).

As you are aware from my response to another petition, Cwm Taf University Health Board (the UHB) has recently considered the status of changes implemented as a result of the SWP. The relevant information, as considered by our Board in January, is summarised in section 1 of the enclosed Board paper. The paper also summarises the background to the SWP itself. As set out, in the paper, it is clear that many elements of the SWP recommendations (as endorsed by all relevant health boards and by Welsh Government) have been fully or partially implemented in the UHB. The outstanding recommendations, in relation to emergency medicine and inpatient paediatric services are currently being reconsidered by the project described in the paper, in the light of the current context.

The Board will consider the recommendations of this project over the coming months. I see no grounds for asking the Minister to instigate a judicial inquiry into the UHB's actions.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sharon Hopkins
Prif Weithredydd/Chief Executive

Cyfeiriad Dychwelyd/ Return Address:

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg, Pencadlys, Parc Navigation, Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Headquarters, Navigation Park, Abercynon, CF45 4SN

Cadeirydd/Chair: Professor Marcus Longley Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive : Dr Sharon Hopkins

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg yw enw gweithredol Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg
ICwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board yw enw gweithredol o'r Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Local Health Board



AGENDA ITEM

3.3

CTM BOARD

SOUTH WALES PROGRAMME – PROGRESSING OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Date of meeting	30/01/2020
FOI Status	Open/Public
If closed please indicate reason	Not Applicable - Public Report
Prepared by	██████████, Programme Director
Presented by	██████████, Executive Medical Director (SRO)
Approving Executive Sponsor	Executive Medical Director
Report purpose	FOR APPROVAL

Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt/consideration at Committee/group)

Committee/Group/Individuals	Date	Outcome
PID and Resources Paper previously approved by Management Board	18/12/2018	ENDORSED FOR APPROVAL

ACRONYMS

A&E	Accident and Emergency (Emergency Medicine and Emergency Department are now the preferred terms)
CHC	Community Health Council
CRG	Clinical Reference Group
ED	Emergency Department
EM	Emergency Medicine

MIU	Minor Injuries Unit
PCH	Prince Charles Hospital
POW	Princess of Wales Hospital
RGH	Royal Glamorgan Hospital
SWP	South Wales Programme
UHB	University Health Board
UHW	University Hospital of Wales
WAST	Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust

1. SITUATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Situation

A number of recommendations of the South Wales Programme (SWP), agreed by all health boards in South Wales in 2014, remain unimplemented. Perhaps most importantly, consultant led 24 hour emergency medicine services continue to be delivered from three sites in the Health Board: Princess of Wales Hospital (POW), Bridgend, Royal Glamorgan Hospital (RGH), Llantrisant and Prince Charles Hospital (PCH), Merthyr Tydfil.

Inpatient paediatric services also continue to be delivered at RGH. The SWP recommendations included a transition to a nurse led minor injuries unit (MIU) and an end to inpatient paediatric services at RGH.

Other recommendations of the SWP, including in relation to maternity and neonatal services have been fully implemented.

Recent service and staffing pressures have highlighted that the rationale for the changes recommended by the SWP remain valid and have only become more pressing.

As a result, in November 2019, the Health Board established a project, within the regional context, to take forward the implementation of the remaining recommendations of the SWP. As a first step, and in recognition of relevant recent changes, the project is considering and assessing alternative options, in addition to the original specific SWP recommendations, as described below, in order to ensure the very best model of care.

1.2 Background: The South Wales Programme

Introduction to the South Wales Programme

The South Wales Programme (SWP) within NHS Wales was set up in 2012 to look at the future of four **consultant-led** hospital services:

- maternity services
- neonatal care
- inpatient paediatrics
- emergency medicine (EM)

These services were selected for consideration due to their fragility, in terms of their ability to deliver safe and sustainable models of care, as then configured (see below for further information on the rationale).

The SWP was a partnership of the five health boards serving people living in South Wales and South Powys, working with the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WAST). The then Cwm Taf UHB and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB were partners in the SWP.

Extensive work was undertaken over a two year period to prepare plans for the future configuration of services, central to which was clinical leadership, engagement and professional advice, complemented by broader stakeholder engagement and formal periods of engagement and consultation. Much of the work was undertaken through the vehicle of specialty specific Clinical Reference Groups (CRGs), with multi-disciplinary clinical membership drawn from across the region.

Further extensive information continues to be available via the SWP website¹.

Recommendations of the South Wales Programme

Following extensive public consultation in 2013, the recommendations of the SWP were finalised. Decisions on the outcome of the programme were taken by health boards and WAST at Board meetings in February 2014 and the collective position of all partner organisations was confirmed in March 2014.

In headline terms, the primary recommendation of the SWP was that the consultant-led services within the scope of the programme should, in future, be strengthened and delivered from five hospitals within the region:

- University Hospital of Wales (UHW)
- Morriston Hospital
- Grange University Hospital (then referred to as the SCCC)
- Prince Charles Hospital (PCH) – within CTMUHB
- Princess of Wales Hospital (POW) – within CTMUHB (then ABMU)

A key consequence of this was a reduction in consultant led services to be delivered in future from the Royal Glamorgan Hospital (RGH) in maternity, neonatal, in-patient paediatric and emergency medicine services, but with a refocussing on the development of innovative new models of acute medicine at RGH, and an increased role in diagnostics, outpatient and ambulatory care across South Wales.

¹ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/SWP/home>



Rationale for the South Wales Programme recommendations

The clinically-endorsed rationale for the changes recommended by the SWP was set out, in detail during the public consultation process² and is summarised below:

- NHS Wales was facing unprecedented challenges, as set out below, and there was a need for timely action to ensure the continued delivery of safe and sustainable services.
- Although most patients in South Wales and South Powys received very good treatment, and standards were improving, the highest quality of care was not delivered for everyone all of the time.
- There was a concern that NHS Wales would start to fall behind other countries in keeping people well and in treating illness and injuries.
- There was a desire to ensure that people did not have to come to hospital unless absolutely necessary, and so there was a need to strengthen primary care and community services.
- It was considered necessary for the sickest patients attending hospital to have rapid access to treatment from senior clinicians, whatever time of day or night.
- There was a desire to offer everyone the benefits of medical advances.
- It was recognised that modern, safe and effective medicine could only be delivered by teams of doctors, nurses and therapists with regularly used specialist skills. It was further recognised that this could not be provided in every hospital because there were not enough specialists, but even if there had been more, they would not have been able to keep up their skills because they would not have been seeing enough patients.
- Each specialist team had, and was supported by, doctors-in-training – the specialists of the future. There was an identified need for more of these doctors-in-training and training had become more complex, as medicine had become more specialised.
- Doctors-in-training needed to see large numbers of patients to ensure they had the necessary experience and skills to specialise.
- Because the service was trying to run services in too many places there were frequent shortages of doctors-in-training and consultants.
- Not only did this make providing safe services difficult, it made it harder to fill consultant posts and impacted on the quality of teaching for the doctors-in-training that did exist.
- It was concluded that the NHS in South Wales could not continue as before. Consultant-led services in the scope of the SWP needed to be provided together, in fewer hospitals as part of a wider integrated healthcare network.

² <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1077/SWP%20consultation%20document%20FINAL.pdf>

- The evidence was deemed to be clear that doing this would improve the outcomes of care for patients even if they had to travel further for this treatment.
- It was also concluded that, if we did not take immediate action, there would be a very real risk that we would be forced to take emergency measures when one of these services failed.

The above rationale needs to be tested in its details, but remains valid. In some respects, the situation described by the SWP has since become more urgent (see below).

Current status of the SWP recommendations in CTMUHB

Implementation of the recommendations was, and remains, primarily a health board responsibility, with regional planning mechanisms being put into place to ensure the ongoing coordination of implementation and additional work across health board boundaries.

The position agreed through the SWP, with a specific focus on services at RGH, together with the current status in CTMUHB, is set out in the table below:

Services	Agreed position at end of SWP in 2014	Current status
Obstetric and Neonatal services	Consultant-led obstetric and neonatal services should not be delivered from the RGH site in the future.	Fully implemented Consultant led obstetric and neonatal services now delivered from PCH and POW. There is a new midwifery led birth centre at RGH (the Tirion Centre) and a new neonatal unit opened at PCH in March 2019.
Acute Medicine, Ambulatory Care and Diagnostics	RGH should develop a significant role in diagnostics and ambulatory care, supporting the wider network of hospitals within a South Wales Central Alliance, and become a 'beacon site' for developing innovative models of care in	Partially implemented A new 50 bed Acute Medicine Unit, co-located with the RGH ED was opened in September 2015. The unit bolsters the ability to treat patients with complex comorbidities and minor injuries ³ .

³ An audit by the Society for Acute Medicine (2015) showed there was an increase in the percentage of patients seen by a consultant within eight hours of admission by day and within 14 hours for overnight admissions, putting the consultant team in the top 5 of 82 participating acute medicine departments. A GMC Survey (2015) reported acute medicine in RGH as an "above outlier" for overall satisfaction and adequate

	acute medicine and diagnostic services.	A Diagnostic Hub at RGH, providing regional services, was opened in February 2018.
Services	Agreed position at end of SWP in 2014	Current status
Inpatient Paediatric services	Consultant-led inpatient paediatric services should not be delivered from the RGH site in the future.	Not implemented, but planning has progressed A consolidation of RGH and PCH inpatient paediatric services on the PCH site was originally scheduled to take place in June 2019 and was subsequently postponed several times. To ensure a safe and seamless transition, and allow time to consider and develop new models at RGH, this move is currently planned for late 2020.
Emergency Medicine (EM)	Twenty four hour consultant-led EM services should not be delivered from the RGH site in the future. The RGH Emergency Department (ED) should, over time, move from a consultant-led service dealing with major cases to a nurse practitioner led service dealing with minor injuries (MIU), co-located with a GP out of hours service and enhanced selected 24 hour medical intake ⁴ .	Not implemented Consultant-led 24 hour emergency medicine services continue to be delivered from three sites in the UHB (POW, RGH and PCH) and there is no currently fully developed plan for an alternative service model.

experience. Since implementation there are higher zero day lengths of stay as the model includes capacity for rapid diagnostics and consultant review. The presence of a senior decision maker at the front door of an acute medical intake has reduced the overall bed occupancy.

⁴ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1077/QAs%20-%20Programme%20Board%20Recommendations%20Final.pdf>

2. SPECIFIC MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THIS MEETING (ASSESSMENT)

2.1 Current issues with delivery of ED services in CTMUHB

As stated above, CTMUHB has continued to deliver consultant-led 24 hour emergency medicine services from three sites. This situation is becoming increasingly unsustainable and safe services cannot be sustained beyond the immediate short term without unacceptable risks to patient safety.

A November 2019 *Targeted Visit Report* of a Health Education and Improvement Wales visit to the PCH ED recommended that “work regarding the amalgamation of the Royal Glamorgan and Prince Charles Hospitals in line with the South Wales plan continues”.

The recent Wales Audit Office/Healthcare Inspectorate Wales *Review of quality governance arrangements at Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board*⁵ stressed that the UHB “needs to take a strategic and planned approach to improve risk management across the breadth of its services. This must ensure that all key strategies and frameworks are reviewed, updated and aligned to reflect the latest governance arrangements”.

Staffing levels, in relation to activity levels, at all three EDs are well below national workforce benchmark levels.

The following recent developments in the RGH ED significantly increased the risk of the need take urgent action to ensure service continuity:

- In the evenings of both 25 and 26 December 2019, due to sickness of middle grade ED doctors, the ED department at RGH was not able to maintain normal medical staffing levels.
- With support and agreement from WAST, ambulances were, therefore, diverted to PCH on both nights. The department remained open to minor injuries and any patient self-presenting.
- In the last week of December 2019, the Health Board received the resignation of the only substantive ED consultant at RGH from April 2020. In addition to the loss of middle grade locum doctors, this expected retirement means that the current staffing model at RGH, already heavily reliant on agency staff, becomes further challenged.

⁵ <https://www.audit.wales/publication/joint-review-cwm-taf-morgannwg-university-health-board>

2.2 Project to implement the remaining recommendations of the SWP in CTMUHB

Purpose, aim and scope of the project

Following engagement with clinicians and managers across the health board, the Health Board has formally established a project, within the South Wales regional context, to address the remaining implementation of the SWP recommendations within the health board, specifically including the development and implementation of:

- local service models for emergency medicine, across the Health Board footprint and within the regional context
- an appropriate paediatric service model at RGH
- completion of the acute medicine beacon site model at RGH
- the already planned transfer of consultant led inpatient paediatric services from RGH to PCH.

The aim of the project is to develop and agree service models by Spring 2020, with implementation commencing in September 2020 (noting the interrelationship and interdependencies with actions to ensure service continuity in the meantime).

Key work-streams within the project include:

- Communications and engagement
- Data analysis, modelling and evaluation
- Transport and patient access
- Workforce and OD
- Finance
- Capital and accommodation.

Establishment and governance of the project

Informal discussions between the Medical Director and senior clinicians about the need to revisit and progress the recommendations of the SWP commenced in October 2019. Following these discussions, a Project Initiation Document (PID) was subsequently drafted and approved by the Health Board Management Board in October, with the identification of the Medical Director as Project Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).

To support the SRO, a project team including a Programme Director and a Quantitative Planner were identified during November and December 2019, to work alongside current Planning and Programme Management Office departments. A clinical lead is to be appointed.

Because of the regional dimension to the project, and in line with the agreement at the end of the SWP, the project has a dual line of accountability:

- within the Health Board, via an internal project board and the SRO, to the Board
- regionally, via a regional project board, to the Regional Planning and Delivery Forum

The internal Health Board project board has been established and met for the first time on 7 January 2020.

The establishment of the project has been reported formally to the South Central and East Wales Regional Planning and Implementation Group at its January meeting and this was well received, with a commitment from partner organisations to engage appropriately. The regional project board is planned to meet for the first time in February 2020.

Project ways of working

As with the SWP, and in alignment with the Health Board values and behaviours, the project is being conducted with a focus on:

- safety, quality and patient experience
- clinical leadership and involvement
- open engagement and communication with internal and external stakeholders, including staff, the public, elected representatives and partner organisations

The initial work on the project has been informed by a Health Board-wide Clinical Leaders Workshop held on 29 November 2019.

Ongoing clinical leadership and engagement is being ensured through the role of the SRO, the membership of the internal and regional project boards, the planned appointment of a clinical lead and, importantly, through the re-establishment and operation of the following Clinical Reference Groups (CRGs), as used by the SWP:

- Emergency Medicine (chair briefing 14/1/20; first meeting 13/2/20)
- Acute Medicine (chair briefing 9/1/20; first meeting 12/2/20)
- Paediatrics (chair briefing 27/1/20); first meeting TBC)

In view of the relevant links and interdependencies, there will also need to be close working with, and consideration of the implications of changes for, surgery, anaesthetics, critical care, primary care and other services.

Key external stakeholders have been briefed informally by the Chair, Chief Executive and Executive Medical Director on the establishment of the project and the Programme Director has, together with the Assistant Director of Planning and Partnerships, briefed Community Health Council (CHC) officers on 17 January 2020. A further, formal, briefing is being provided at the CHC Service Planning Committee on 27 January 2020, following the publication of this Board paper.

A formal engagement and communications plan is being finalised and includes arrangements for:

- engagement and communication with staff across the Health Board and their union representatives
- ongoing formal engagement with the CHC (including at a planned additional Service Planning Committee on 14 February, at which it is intended to agree the wider programme of formal public engagement)
- both formal and informal engagement events with the public (including through already planned 'Let's Talk Healthcare' events)
- engagement and communication with other key stakeholders, including elected representatives, local government and Welsh Government.

2.3 Options for further consideration by the project

Within the context of the newly established project, it is recognised that the overall rationale for the SWP recommendations (as summarised above) remains valid and the need for action has only become more urgent since the recommendations were made, consulted on and accepted. It is, however, recognised that, in the six intervening years, there have been specific changes that create a different context within which the specific SWP recommendations for emergency medicine in CTMUHB should be reconsidered. These changes include:

- the footprint of the new CTMUHB, which includes three emergency departments (RGH, POW and PCH) and which potentially facilitates service delivery and staffing options that may have been more difficult to implement across health board boundaries
- the development of emergency department service models elsewhere in the UK that may provide lessons for service delivery in CTMUHB and South Wales
- further development of the 'care closer to home' concept within the Health Board
- the implementation of a Major Trauma Network in South Wales from April 2020
- the planned opening of the Grange University Hospital, and subsequent changes to services delivered by Nevill Hall Hospital in Aneurin Bevan UHB

- further exacerbated staffing issues affecting the nursing, as well as the medical, workforce
- extensive new housing developments in the areas of the Health Board adjacent to Cardiff
- increasing experience of ambulatory care models.

As a result of the above, the project SRO, in discussion with relevant clinicians and managers across the Health Board and with input from the new project board, has, through a process of ongoing iteration, developed the following high level options for potential further consideration:

Option	Specific features	Common features
Option 1	Implementation of the remaining SWP recommendations Transition the RGH Emergency Department (ED) from a consultant-led service to a 24 hour nurse practitioner led Minor Injuries Unit (MIU).	Implementation of already planned move of inpatient paediatrics from RGH to PCH in September 2020
Option 2	Implementation of the remaining SWP recommendations with additional service changes Transition the RGH Emergency Department (ED) from a consultant-led service to a 24 hour nurse practitioner led Minor Injuries Unit (MIU). Increase access to 'care closer to home' across the Health Board for those not requiring ED services, through enhanced access to primary care and community services (in and out of hours), in line with the agreed transformation programmes of the Regional Partnership Board.	Development and implementation of an appropriate paediatric service model at RGH (tailored to interface appropriately with the selected ED service model) GP admissions and paramedic differentiated admissions (of appropriate acuity) direct to RGH wards 24 hours
Option 3	No significant changes to the existing RGH ED service, beyond those required by the establishment of the Major Trauma Network and the transfer of paediatric inpatient services Twenty four hour consultant-led EDs to continue at RGH, POW and PCH.	Ongoing development of RGH acute medicine, ambulatory care and diagnostic services, in line with the SWP
Option 4	Overnight reduction in the hours of consultant led ED at RGH	



	<p>Consultant-led EDs to continue at RGH, POW and PCH, but with an overnight reduction in the hours of the RGH ED (exact operational hours to be determined based on modelling of demand).</p> <p>Determine how best to deliver a nurse practitioner-led Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) on the RGH site during the hours when a consultant-led ED is not provided.</p>	
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Modelling work, informed by that done by the SWP, has commenced to assess the patient access and flow implications of the above options, and to help define more specific and detailed 'optimal' service models under each option, with clinical involvement through the emerging CRGs and using the most up to date data available.

Following discussion at the first project board, it is recommended that:

- in light of the Health Board's wider approach and commitment to the Regional Partnership Board transformation programmes, it would be inconceivable that Option 1 would be implemented without the types of additional service change that are described under Option 2. As such, Option 1 should be rejected at this stage
- Option 3, which was deemed to be unsustainable by the SWP, remains unsustainable and difficulties in mainlining services on a day to day basis have only increased. As such, Option 3 should be rejected at this stage.

It should be noted that members of the project board discussed potential alternative approaches, differing from the recommendations of the SWP, based on a focusing of ED services on a single site within the health board (either at an existing site or in a newly built hospital). This is incompatible with clinical pathways and sustainability of services.

As a result of the above considerations, it is recommended that the options set out in the Recommendations section of this paper (Section 5) should be prioritised for further, more detailed, development and assessment within the project structure, primarily through the work of the CRGs and the associated modelling.



2.4 Service continuity

Until changes developed and recommended by the current project are implemented, there will need to be a parallel focus on ensuring safety and workforce sustainability relating to the ongoing delivery of EM services at all three EDs within CTMUHB. This work will be, primarily, an operational matter and will not be conducted under the auspices of the project. There will, however, be a need to ensure close ongoing liaison between the two processes, with an emphasis on ensuring that ongoing operational decisions remain compatible with the emerging direction of the project.

3. KEY RISKS/MATTERS FOR ESCALATION TO BOARD

The following are key risks and issues relating to, and stemming from, the project:

- There is a need to ensure that operational action is taken to ensure safe service continuity of service provision prior to the implementation of future project recommendations. This will be particularly challenging from 1 April 2020, following staff resignations.
- Any service changes will be controversial and contested by relevant stakeholders.
- The need for urgent responses to changing circumstances, prioritising patient safety, may lead to decisions and changes needing to be made by the Health Board without as much analysis/engagement/consultation etc. as would be optimal.
- The regional nature of the project, with the need for involvement of other health boards in the development, assessment and implementation of solutions and the overall governance, may compromise rapid decision making.
- Resource constraints, including in relation to capital investment may compromise the ability to implement optimal service models.



4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Quality/Safety/Patient Experience implications	Yes (Please see detail below)
	To be considered within the scope of the project.
Related Health and Care standard(s)	Safe Care
	All standards applicable
Equality impact assessment completed	No (Include further detail below)
	To be addressed as part of the project.
Legal implications / impact	Yes (Include further detail below)
	To be considered within the scope of the project.
Resource (Capital/Revenue £/Workforce) implications / Impact	Yes (Include further detail below)
	To be considered within the scope of the project.
Link to Main Strategic Objective	To Improve Quality, Safety & Patient Experience
Link to Main WCFG Act Objective	Provide high quality care as locally as possible wherever it is safe and sustainable

5. RECOMMENDATION

The Board is invited to **APPROVE** the continuation of the project and the further consideration of specified options, in ongoing engagement with internal and external stakeholders, with progress reports to be provided to each Board meeting.

Specifically, it is recommended that the project should focus on the further development, assessment and evaluation of the following options and the development of proposals for implementation, as shown in the table overleaf:



Option	Specific features	Common features
<p>Option A</p>	<p>Implementation of the remaining SWP recommendations with additional service changes</p> <p>Transition the RGH Emergency Department (ED) from a consultant-led service to a 24 hour nurse practitioner led Minor Injuries Unit (MIU).</p> <p>Increase access to 'care closer to home' across the Health Board for those not requiring ED services, through enhanced access to primary care and community services (in and out of hours), in line with the agreed transformation programmes of the Regional Partnership Board.</p>	<p>Implementation of already planned move of inpatient paediatrics from RGH to PCH in September 2020</p> <p>Development and implementation of an appropriate paediatric service model at RGH (tailored to interface appropriately with the selected ED service model)</p>
<p>Option B</p>	<p>Overnight reduction in the hours of consultant led ED at RGH</p> <p>Consultant-led EDs to continue at RGH, POW and PCH, but with an overnight reduction in the hours of the RGH ED (exact operational hours to be determined based on modelling of demand).</p> <p>Determine how best to deliver a nurse practitioner-led Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) on the RGH site during the hours when a consultant-led ED is not provided.</p>	<p>GP admissions and paramedic differentiated admissions (of appropriate acuity) direct to RGH wards 24 hours</p> <p>Ongoing development of RGH acute medicine, ambulatory care and diagnostic services, in line with the SWP</p>

Agenda Item 5.9

P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74

This petition was submitted by Andrew Lye having collected a total of 69 signatures.

Text of Petition

The NHS in England, Scotland and Wales all offer Bowel Cancer screening every 2 years between the ages of 60 and 74.

In England and Scotland, you can request a screening kit every 2 years after 74. This is NOT available to those over 74 in Wales.

This petition asks the Welsh Government to make bowel cancer screening available as it is in England and Scotland.

Ending the screening at 74 in Wales suggests that we do not value our seniors in the same way as they do in England and Scotland.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid Wales

**P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74, Correspondence –
Bowel Cancer UK to Committee, 07.02.20**

I have received notification that the issue of Bowel Screening opt in for the over 75s was discussed at the petitions committee earlier this week.

This is currently an important campaign area for us in Wales and we are currently working with the Older People's Commissioner to explore whether the Government position can be changed. I would be glad to brief the committee on the progress (or lack of!) we have made on this issue in the last 12 months.

I attach a note below from the widower of a gentleman who died from bowel cancer which I received just this week (I have her permission to use her name and her husband's name was Clive):

“Opting back into bowl screening. My husband wasn't screen after 73yrs because the next appointment fell after his 75th birthday. He was diagnosed at 76 stage 4 ascending bowel cancer. Untll this time he had no illness except diet controlled diabetes. On diagnosis we were told if it was diagnosed earlier he may have lived. The doctors told us at time of diagnosis that they were able to treat him so he went through 4 major ops and 2 complete courses of chemo. The excellent consultant in Velindre stated to me if only they had found it early he would have survived as until his diagnosis he was very fit man. He was 76 when diagnosed and died aged 81. If only screening was open to over 75yrs after which age the bowel cancer becomes more prevalent. Some people may live longer and not cast the health services so much money to no avail. Yours Mrs A Probert”

I look forward to hearing from you

Kind regards

Lowri



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-05-936
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00554/20

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

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

16 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 12 February, as Chair of the Petitions Committee, with further questions relating to petition P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening after the Age of 74.

As per your request, please find enclosed a copy of the letter from the Chair of the Wales Screening Committee (WSC) to the Chair of the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC) seeking clarification on the Committee's recommended age range for bowel screening. WSC has not yet received a response to this correspondence, but I will share with the Committee once received.

Cost issues do not form part of the rationale for not allowing self-referral into the bowel screening programme outside of the age range. Therefore the Welsh Government has not costed screening post 74, either on a population basis or in the form of self-referral.

The statement in my letter in response to the Petitions Committee that *"all screening programmes have the potential for harm"* is in reference to a quote from Sir Muir Gray, former Programme Director of the UKNSC: *"All screening programs do harm. Some do good as well and, of these, some do more good than harm at reasonable costⁱ."*

We know that regular bowel cancer screening in the recommended age range reduces the chance of dying from bowel cancer by about 16%, but it is also important to consider that screening does have potential disadvantages which include: the psycho-social consequences of receiving a false-positive test result; the potentially significant complications of having a colonoscopy or a false-negative test result, the possibility of over-diagnosis (leading to unnecessary investigations and/or treatment) and the complications of any associated treatment.

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.

All screening programmes are introduced for specific age cohorts for which the evidence shows screening provides an overall benefit. Screening outside the recommended age range may well benefit particular individuals but the decision to provide screening to any particular age cohort is based on an assessment of the evidence for the total sum of the harm caused compared to the total sum of the benefit achieved. In other words, it is important that the assessment demonstrates that on balance, screening will do more good than harm in that population.

Rather than expanding the screening programme to include people outside of the recommended age range, our efforts are focussed on expanding the age range in line with UKNSC recommendations (to include those aged 50-59) and encouraging older people who are in the eligible age range to take part in screening when invited.

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

¹ Raffle A, Gray M. Screening. Evidence and Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007

P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74, Correspondence – Bowel Cancer UK to Committee, 24.03.20



Briefing Paper for Welsh Assembly Petitions Committee

Bowel Cancer Screening: self- referral from 75

March 2020

Bowel Cancer UK strongly believes that there should be parity across all four nations of the UK to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to have bowel cancer either prevented or detected early.

Currently in Wales, people who are aged 75 and over are not eligible to self-refer back into the screening programme as they are in England and Scotland. Welsh Government rationale for this is outlined below, but simply put, due to insufficient research studies being carried out, there is a lack of evidence that allowing those in this age cohort to self-refer would provide a benefit on a population base. The Welsh Government has therefore made a policy decision not to allow this group to continue to participate in ongoing bowel cancer screening.

As a result of this, we would expect the Welsh Government to take the necessary steps to explore developing modelling and a robust evidence base which enables them to review their position and allow those who are over the age of 75 to self-refer back into the Welsh Bowel Screening Programme.

If sufficient evidence is unavailable or, a definitive conclusion cannot be drawn, then we would expect a pragmatic approach to this and based on the representation made by older people themselves, we would expect Welsh Government and Public Health Wales to do the right thing and allow self-referral as they do in Scotland and England.

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- 1) Introduction
- 2) Bowel Cancer in Wales
- 3) The UK National Screening Committee position on self-referral over the age of 75
- 4) Seeking to change the Government's Position
 - a) The view beyond Wales
 - b) Welsh Government Meeting
 - c) Older People's Commissioner
 - d) Wales Screening Committee
 - e) The SchARR Review
- 5) What are older people themselves telling us?

1. Introduction

Bowel cancer screening is a way of testing people without symptoms of the disease to see if they show any signs of early cancer. Screening of the eligible population provides the greatest opportunity to detect bowel cancer early, when treatment has the best chance of working. The bowel screening Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is designed to detect tiny amounts of blood in your poo which can indicate the presence of cancer or polyps (non-cancerous growths).

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland people aged 60-74 are invited to take part in bowel cancer screening. In Scotland, screening starts from age 50. People are invited to take part in screening every two years.

The Welsh Government has committed to lowering the screening age to 50 in line with Scotland and international best practice. Implementation of screening from 50 at a sensitivity threshold of FIT to 80 µgHb/g will be complete by 2023. England has not set out any clear timescales to date.

Whilst it is fantastic news that the screening age is to be lowered to 50, currently in Wales and Northern Ireland (unlike England and Scotland) participants are not permitted to self-refer back into to screening programme once they reach the age of 75.

2. Bowel Cancer in Wales

In Wales, 1 in 13 men and 1 in 18 women will be diagnosed with bowel cancer during their lifetime. It is the fourth most common cancer in Wales UK, and the second biggest cancer killer, with up to 16,000 people dying each year. In Wales, 2,300 people are diagnosed and 900 people die each year. Approximately 60% of those diagnosed with the disease will survive for five years or more.

The risk of developing bowel cancer increases with age. Nearly 6 in 10 cases are diagnosed in people age 70 or over¹. Regular bowel cancer screening has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by over 16%, with new treatments increasing survival rates.

3. The UK National Screening Committee position on self-referral over the age of 75

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) provides advice on screening to all four nations. It periodically reviews its position in light of new technologies and interventions. It currently does not make explicit recommendations around screening from the age of 75. The only reference to self-referral is made in the January 2016 guidance which states that:

“Eight out of 10 people with bowel cancer are over 60 years old. Screening is routinely offered every two years to men and women between the ages of 60-74. [People over the invitation age range can self - refer²](#).” (Click on the link to see the recommendation)

¹ UK National Screening Committee, August 2018

² UK NSC bowel cancer recommendation January 2018

This was raised at a recent meeting with the Welsh Government (see below). However, Bowel Cancer UK was informed that this was a presentation error and in fact the recommendation was only relevant to NHS England. As such, Welsh Government does not include recommendations for those who are aged 75 and over.

4. Seeking to change the Government's Position

In April 2019, Bowel Cancer UK in Wales was contacted by a north Wales constituent who had, in late 2018, made an approach to his GP when he turned 75 to ask about bowel screening. He was told that those over the age of 75 are no longer able to self-refer back into the programme. Following his GP visit, he wrote to his local Assembly Member to outline his concern as follows:

“My concern arises not only because of my age but also because my mother died of the disease. The latter is not a genetic risk factor but has served as a warning. Survival with bowel cancer is strongly dependent upon early diagnosis which is afforded by effective regular screening. For this reason both my wife and I have always participated in the NHS Wales biennial screening program available at present only for those aged 60-74. The GP in question confirmed that screening is not now available to me because of my age”.

In response to this letter, his Assembly Member wrote to Vaughan Gething, the Welsh Government Health and Social Care Minister. The return correspondence was received on 3 January 2020. This was shared with Bowel Cancer UK. In it, he stated:

“Population screening is not without risk so there needs to be a balance between the benefits and harms of the screening test being offered. For asymptomatic bowel screening above the recommended age group, the additional risks from false positive results and any follow – up investigations outweigh the potential benefits in an older population”

He went on to say:

“I would like to reassure you that the decision not to offer screening to those outside the recommended age group is not based on economic factors”.

In May 2019, further correspondence was sent to the Minister outlining an extensive literature review which had been conducted by the north Wales constituent involved and stated:

“Firstly the Minister states that Wales, like the rest of the UK, follows the expert advice of the recent UK NSC policy of 2018 which recommends that bowel cancer screening be offered to both men and women only up to 74 years of age. However, my concern derives from the difference in reaction to that recommendation by Scotland and England. Both of these nations allow faecal blood tests on patient request for those older than 74 years.

“The letter of the Minister suggests that this difference in reaction to the recommendation in Wales derives in the main from a perception that the risks of screening always outweigh the potential benefits in elderly patients. I have

examined the literature evidence for this view in order to satisfy myself that it is generally correct. Unfortunately I have failed to find conclusive evidence”.

In response to this letter, the Minister wrote back in June 2019 stating:

“That on the balance of available evidence, the UK National Screening committee does not recommend screening from the age of 74 years”.

The letter also stated that:

“Self-referral for men and women over the age of 74 is due to be considered in the autumn”

Bowel Cancer UK in Wales, working alongside the constituent involved, requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the matter in person. A meeting was offered with civil servants. It was at this time, that we were informed that that the Welsh Government had asked Public Health Wales to do some insight work into the issue of self-referral for those over the age of 75.

a) The view beyond Wales

It was also during this time, that Bowel Cancer UK in Wales wrote to experts and members of the UK National Screening Committee and also sought clarification from NHS England on their decision to allow self-referral for this cohort. We received the following from Public Health England:

“The UK NSC uses published evidence to justify recommendations on most aspects of programme: age, interval, tests, etc. The large research studies that underpin the cancer screening programmes were done a while ago and stop around 70/75 years. This means that there is an absence of evidence about whether screening does more harm than good at these ages. In that circumstance, recognising that cancer is commoner as you get older, the English programmes decided to allow self-referral over 70/75”.

b) Welsh Government Meeting

In October 2019 we met with the Welsh Government and patients. Below is an extract from the minutes:

“It was accepted that although the risks of screening are generally greater in an older population that the overall health of individuals is variable, and that individual risk assessments should be coproduced in every clinical contact. It was also agreed that it was not the initial screening test but the follow-up investigations that provide most risk. Welsh Government colleagues added that evidence from the whole pathway – from screening test to treatment - needed to be considered when assessing benefit and risk.

“Bowel Cancer UK made a comparison with risk from diagnostic pathway. Welsh Government colleagues commented that it was important to make the distinction between the risks from interventions for someone who is symptomatic (when clinical presentation should lead to appropriate

intervention) and someone who has no symptoms, perceiving themselves to be healthy (when there is a possibility for over diagnosis and unnecessary treatment as well as anxiety). Evaluation of a population screening programme has to take account of potential harms as well as benefits”.

In this meeting Bowel Cancer UK highlighted that there is a lack of research studies on which the decision not to provide screening to people over the age of 74 had been made. Welsh Government uses this lack of evidence base as a reason not to recommend self-referral. However Bowel Cancer UK argues that the UK Screening Committee and the Welsh Screening Committee should be seeking to develop new research studies to develop an evidence base. Until this is done, the Wales Screening Committee should be adopting the pragmatic approach to allow self-referral.

Welsh Government colleagues have suggested that Bowel Cancer UK make a request for modification to the bowel screening programme directly to the UK National Screening Committee for them to firm up their position. We are currently exploring all options, however it is unlikely that a modification would be made without rigorous data analysis to develop the evidence base as outlined above.

Based on representations that had been made to Bowel Cancer UK from members of the public who had been adversely affected by this policy position, we put forward the argument that this could be seen as ageism against those over 74 who were concerned about developing bowel cancer. The meeting notes state that *“Welsh Government Colleagues said it was emphatically not a policy affected by ageism, but by the evidence and UK NSC recommendation”.*

It was suggested that the constituent write to the UK Screening Committee to ask if he could join their public involvement group. This has been followed up and the request has been accepted, though to date he has not started in the role.

c) Older People’s Commissioner

Following the meeting and being dissatisfied with the rationale being offered regarding lack of evidence, Bowel Cancer UK wrote to the Older People’s Commissioner. A meeting took place on the 13 January 2020. Lack of data and evidence to make recommendations in the wider screening context were discussed. The Commissioner and Bowel Cancer UK wrote jointly to the UK NSC in February 2020, to state that both considered the development of an evidence base for the case for extending the screening programme beyond the age of 74, or for allowing older people to opt in, is a matter of urgency, and to ask the Committee, as a first step, to confirm how the evidence base could be strengthened, whether any steps are being taken to fill gaps in research, and if so, what they are. To date we have not received a response to this letter.

d) Wales Screening Committee

Bowel Cancer UK approached the Welsh Government to ask for the minutes of the Wales Screening Committee meeting that the Minister had referenced in his earlier letter was due to take place in the autumn of 2019. Due to changes that had been made to the website, the minutes had not been posted online, however civil servants sent an excerpt as follows:

“4.3 Bowel screening outside the recommended age range

The Public Health Wales representative presented a paper on self-referral into the bowel screening programme over the UKNSC recommended age range that had been commissioned by the Welsh Government. It was noted that there are no colorectal cancer screening trials that have specifically reported the effectiveness of screening in average to high risk individuals under 50 years of age or over 75 years of age, therefore, the benefits and risks are not fully known in this population.

It was noted that the only countries to allow self-referral over the age of 74 are England and Scotland with the USA allowing referral from a GP up to the age of 85. It was estimated that only 1.5% of the population who are over 74 would self-refer in Wales amounting to an estimated additional 85 colonoscopies per year.

It was agreed that although this is a relatively small number of referrals it should be seen in the wider context of the current demand on colonoscopy services and the optimisation of the bowel screening programme. The Committee agreed it was necessary to get clarification from the UKNSC on its position with regards to self-referral or await phase 2 of the ScHARR report that should provide the analyses required to support a decision, but there was no evidence to warrant changing the recommendation at present.

Action 6: Chair to write to UKNSC”.

e) The ScHARR Review

Following this communication, Bowel Cancer UK wrote to the School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR) at Sheffield University to find ask whether their next phase of modelling around screening will indeed include self-referral modelling for those over the age of 75.

A response was received on 9 March 2020 outlining that their understanding was that the decision to allow persons over the age of 74 to opt back into the screening programme (in England and Scotland) is not based on a cost effectiveness analysis, rather this was a pragmatic decision as outlined in the NHS England response above.

They confirmed that phase two of the research has been completed and that it will be written up in the next few weeks.

Whilst the current scope of the phase two modelling did not set out to answer questions around self-referral from 75, they indicated that further analysis could be done. Bowel Cancer UK has made an offer to convene a meeting with Public Health Wales and Welsh Government colleagues to see if the report could indeed provide insight to help develop a sound evidence base with which to review the current position.

No response has been received to date.

5. What are older people themselves telling us?

Whilst Bowel Cancer UK continues to influence this policy area, regular representations are made to the charity by older people themselves who are frustrated by the current position.

Those who are contacting both Bowel Cancer UK and the office of the Older People's Commissioner are being told to contact Bowel Screening Wales helpline and lodge an official complaint.

Mrs Probert has given permission to share her experience:

My husband Clive wasn't screened after 73yrs because the next appointment fell after his 75th birthday. He was diagnosed at 76 stage 4 ascending bowel cancer. Until this time he had no illness except diet controlled diabetes. On diagnosis we were told if it was diagnosed earlier he may have lived. The doctors told us at time of diagnosis that they were able to treat him so he went through four major ops and two complete courses of chemo. The excellent consultant in Velindre stated to me if only they had found it early he would have survived as until his diagnosis he was very fit man. He was 76 when diagnosed and died aged 81. If only screening was open to over 75yrs after which age the bowel cancer becomes more prevalent. Some people may live longer and not cost the health services so much money to no avail. Yours Mrs A Probert"

Correspondence from the Older People's Council for Ynys Mon

I have been approached by people concerned that the bowel screening stops at the age of 74. It is my understanding from NHS Wales that that age is under review. It is also my understanding that the Older People's Commissioner for Wales has written to the Welsh Government regarding this issue too. I would be grateful if you could let me know the current position regarding this issue and how individuals or groups can make known their views too.

Whilst concluding this evidence briefing for the National Assembly's Petitions Committee, the UK is dealing with the national coronavirus emergency and all adult cancer screening programmes have been suspended for a period of eight weeks.

We fully appreciate that our severely overstretched NHS is facing unprecedented demand at the moment. We know that the Welsh Government, along with senior NHS colleagues will not have taken the decision to pause the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme lightly and there are a number of reasons why NHS health boards requested this pause, including the reallocation and availability of staff over the coming weeks and months.

This is not an ideal situation, but at times like these there is a need for pragmatism. The hope is that the service will resume as soon as it safe to do so and that the wider issues of self-referral for those over 75 be considered once our screening services return to normal and that the Welsh Government take the necessary steps to explore developing a robust evidence base which enables them to review their

position and allow those who are over the age of 75 to self-refer back into the Welsh Bowel Screening Programme.

For more information please contact Lowri Griffiths, Head of Wales, Bowel Cancer UK Lowri.griffiths@bowelcanceruk.org.uk



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru Older People's Commissioner for Wales

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

30 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Petition P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74

Thank you for your letter of 24 February about the petition on bowel cancer screening submitted by Andrew Lye.

As the petition states, in Wales there is no provision for asymptomatic people over the age of 74 to opt in to the screening programme, unlike their counterparts in England and Scotland. Older individuals in Wales and Bowel Cancer UK have also raised this lack of parity as a concern directly with me. I met representatives of Bowel Cancer UK on 13th January 2020 to discuss their concerns.

I understand that the current evidence base for screening people over the age of 74 is insufficient to enable the UK National Screening Committee to balance benefits and harms and make recommendations. I therefore wrote jointly with Bowel Cancer UK to the UK Screening Committee to state that we consider that the development of an evidence base to allow proper consideration of the case for extending the screening programme beyond the age of 74, or for allowing older people to opt in to screening as they do in England and Scotland, is a matter of urgency.

We have asked the Committee, as a first step, to let us know: how they believe the existing evidence base could be strengthened; whether any steps are being taken to fill gaps in research, and if so, what they are. We await the Committee's response.

Yours sincerely,

Heléna Herklots CBE
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

03442 640 670

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau yn Gymraeg

Adeiladau Cambrian
Sqwâr Mount Stuart
Caerdydd CF10 5FL

Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL

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.

Pack Page 189

www.olderpeoplewales.com

P-05-936 Offer Bowel Cancer Screening After the Age of 74 – Petitioner to Committee, 15.06.20

Many thanks for the documents you sent to me. They are most interesting and suggest they back up the comments I raised in the initial petition.

I am reminded of the old adage that says it's sometimes easier not to do something than to actually do it. I had this feeling whilst reading the response from the Health Minister, Vaughan Gething, who seems to prefer to sit on the fence as research studies had not proven its benefits. Yet nothing seems to be happening to conduct that research.

However, I must congratulate the Minister in saying that he wishes to see bowel screening to be extended to those aged 50 to 59. But I ask, when does he intend to announce this? I know Senedd elections are due in less than 11 months time, but we cannot wait for that to be a manifesto promise as 900 people, every year, are dying in Wales, from bowel cancer. Or, 75 die every month.

The papers suggest that I am not the only person raising the issue of extending bowel cancer screening beyond the age of 74. Mrs Probert eloquently expressed her view as did the Older People's Council for Ynys Mon. So this suggests people are coming forward, but it seems to be getting no further. Then my petition was launched.

Bowel Cancer UK **STRONGLY** believe there should be parity across all 4 nations and concludes that we should allow those over the age of 75 to self refer back into the Welsh Bowel Cancer Screening Programme.

In conclusion, I am saying that whilst my petition won't halt all 75 deaths every month in Wales, the sooner it's introduced, we see some gradual drop in numbers and I hope the Welsh Government will at the same time extend the scheme to those aged 50 to 59 and actively promote its take up. A double whammy.

If the Minister is holding back as he awaits research, he should get it commissioned and then make a decision in due course on whether or not to retain the new policy. But then evidence seems to suggest that the current policy **IS** ageist as I asserted in my petition.

I hope the Petitions Committee will adopt the petition and ask the Minister to take action as soon as possible. I thank you for sending me the documents and for allowing me to participate in this form.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Lye

P-05-862 Tackling school bullying

This petition was submitted by BlowforBradley Campaign having collected 1,463 signatures.

Text of Petition

We believe that bullying in schools is often ignored and the issue is not confronted in too many cases. Schools are required to have an anti bullying policy but too often this is merely a paperwork statement which is not acted upon.

We want the Welsh Assembly to produce a standard bullying framework which is enforceable by law. The after effects of school bullying often affects victims throughout their lives therefore changes are required as the current system is a failure. Schools often fail to record bullying incidents as such for fear of damaging their reputation and victims who speak out often find themselves punished themselves, harming their self esteem even more.

We insist that bullying is recorded and acted upon as such with better recording, cctv, reporting, compulsory parental interaction.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Llanelli
- Mid and West Wales

Comisiynydd
Plant Cymru
Children's
Commissioner
for Wales

To: Janet Finch
Saunders, AM
Chair of the Petitions
Committee

Via email only

04 March 2020

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the new anti-bullying guidance, Rights, Respect, Equality.

As you note in your letter, a new national approach to preventing and tackling bullying has been of high priority to me in my term as Commissioner. A full explanation of the background and details of my policy position can be read here: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/our-work/policy-positions/bullying/>

My work in this area has been firmly based in evidence from children and young people's experiences, drawing on data from my 2015 nationwide consultation *Beth Nesa*, where bullying was identified as the top priority for change by both the 7-11¹ and 11-18² age range, and my subsequent 2018 nationwide consultation of over 10,000 children and young people³. My work is reinforced by wider evidence in Wales which shows the extent of bullying.⁴

I have made recommendations about anti-bullying approaches in my last two Annual Reports⁵ ⁶, both of which were accepted by Welsh Government, and this includes my call to Government to introduce a duty on schools to monitor and record bullying incidents, as noted in your letter. I have also made several other recommendations which relate to the new guidance; in my 2017 report *Sam's Story: Listening to Children and Young People's Experiences of Bullying in Wales*⁷, over 2000 children and young people shared their own portrayals of the experience of bullying. Analysis of these showed several key messages from children and young people about their experiences and informed the 18 recommendations I made in my *Sam's Story* report, several of which related directly to the development of Rights, Respect, Equality.

¹ <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/What-Next-7-11.pdf>

² <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/What-Next-11-18.pdf>

³ <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/What-Now-Report.pdf>

⁴ <https://gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2015/151022-health-behaviour-school-children-2013-14-key-findings-en.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Annual-Report-2017-18.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/A-Year-of-Change-CCFW-Annual-Report.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Sams-Story.pdf>

Tŷ Ystumllwynarth/Oyermouth House
Llys Siarter/Charter Court, Phoenix Way
Abertawe/Swansea SA7 9FS
01792 765600

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post@childrenscommissioner.wales

Croesawn ohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg yn ogystal â'r Saesneg ac mewn amryw o fformatau
We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh and English as well as alternative formats



I was therefore greatly pleased that Rights, Respect and Equity, is statutory for Governing Bodies and Local Authorities. At consultation stage, this guidance did not have statutory status and my response called clearly for Government to re-think this in order for the guidance to have the necessary impact on the experiences of children and young people.

I congratulate Government for taking this step and for introducing new statutory requirements for schools to develop robust anti-bullying policies informed by children and young people, which set out how bullying will be recorded and monitored, and how anti-bullying will be embedded into the curriculum.

In addition, the guidance as a whole advocates a whole school approach to anti-bullying informed by children's rights and in which participation is a central element. It is informed by the perspectives of children and young people throughout, in particular drawing on my Sam's Story report.

However, it is now important for Government to ensure schools are supported to implement this new guidance. Implementing effective whole school anti-bullying approaches is challenging, and Government must ensure this is part of the professional learning offer for initial teacher education and continued professional development, and the consortia have an important role in this. Awareness and understanding of the guidance must also be developed for school Governing Bodies.

It is also vital that there are effective mechanisms for schools and local authorities to be held accountable for their implementation of the guidance. Estyn has an important role here; reviewing how well schools and local authorities are implementing this guidance must be included as part of Estyn's future inspection arrangements.

My office will be continuing to assess the effectiveness of support and accountability arrangements so that this new approach truly has the impact that it should for children and young people.

Yours sincerely,



Sally

Sally Holland
Comisiynydd Plant Cymru
Children's Commissioner for Wales

**P-05-862 Tackling school bullying, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee,
15.06.20**

We have discussed the points raised not only amongst ourselves but with the Safer Schools Campaign and Safetyguide. We unanimously feel that whilst the revised guidelines are a small step in the right direction they dont go anywhere near far enough to actually protect victims from bullying.

Whilst it is claimed these are 'statutory' there is actually no mention of changes to legislation to enact this. There has to be accountability and training to comply included to become effective. There is still no recourse to be effective.

We feel that more victims will suffer and lives ruined and lost unless this goes a stage further. Laws cover this within workplaces why not within education?

Kindest regards

Byron John

Agenda Item 5.11

P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage

This petition was submitted by Active Music Services having collected 1,745 signatures online and 481 on paper, a total of 2,226 signatures.

Text of Petition

* We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to produce an urgent National Plan for Music Education with dedicated central funding in line with the rest of the UK. This will ensure that affordable musical instrument and vocal tuition is available as a right for all children in Wales.

* The Music Services in Wales are integral to the development of Music Education as part of the creative curriculum across all domains.

* The contribution made by the Music Industry and Music Services to the economy and the well-being of the people of Wales is too important to ignore.

* Young people in Wales studying music at A-level has halved in 10 years while GCSE entries have fallen by 40%.

* Austerity is not an excuse for the Welsh Government to allow the decline of Music Services. Austerity should be the reason to invest in the equality of access for all and the sustainability of our communities.

Please sign this petition to support the campaign to stop the decline of Music Education in Wales.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

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

13 March 2020

Dear Janet

Petition P–05–880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage

Thank you for your letter dated 9 March regarding the above petition.

As outlined in your letter, the Minister for Education attended a meeting of the Committee on 16 January to discuss the Music Services Feasibility Study. The Music Service Feasibility Study was commissioned by the Welsh Government in response to recommendations made by the Committee in its 2018 report on funding for and access to music education in Wales.

Following the meeting on 16 January, we felt that progress relating to the Music Services Feasibility Study seems to be taking longer than anticipated. We therefore wrote to the Minister setting out this concern and to seek further information.

We received a response to this letter on 28 February and considered it at our meeting on 5 March. The letter stated that a meeting of stakeholders in music services took place on 29 January giving them an opportunity to provide feedback on the Music Services Feasibility Report and consider next steps. According to the Minister, Welsh Government officials are currently

considering the views from this meeting and will be able to update the Committee once the feedback received has been fully evaluated.

At our meeting we agreed to monitor progress and write to the Minister for another update once the next meeting of the stakeholders in music services has taken place.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Mary Jones." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Helen Mary Jones AM

Chair of the Committee

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Senior Consultant: Dinah Pye AGSM, Dip. Ed, CFPS
Welsh Woman of the Year Winner

Dear Petitions Committee

Petition:P-05-880

15.6.20

Thank you again for the recent update and the communications between Janet Finch-Saunders and the Chair of the Culture Committee regarding the Music Services Feasibility Report.

I am aware that the Education Minister and her staff have responded orally to the disappointment of the report but as yet I am unaware that a written response has been produced and made public. Although there are other extreme circumstances that may be taking priority I am concerned, due to the cost and delays of the feasibility report, that there has been sufficient time since Jan 12th for the Minister to have made written responses to the Culture Committee, the Welsh Government and the public.

Following the meeting of the Stakeholders on 29th Jan there appears to have been no progress even though the Covid 19 lockdown was not in force until the end of March. I am aware that a National Plan with appropriate funding for front line music services, as requested in my petition, has been recognised as a way forward with the possibility of it becoming part of the New Education Curriculum for Wales. This is welcome progress but there does not appear to be any debate or decision taken at Government level regarding any future developments for the NP's inclusion, role or status.

This could not be a worse time to be considering the role of music in the wellbeing of our nation but with schools preparing for some reopening, the possibility of the further roll out of the new curriculum in the not too distant future, I remain very concerned that there has been no virtual meetings of the stakeholders to consider the complexities involved.

Music has played an incredible vital role in keeping all nations uplifted during these unprecedented times and with a plethora of coverage showing the importance of music in society I remain disappointed that again the Welsh Government is dragging its feet in realising that music will be important in the New Normal Society.

Yours sincerely

Dinah Pye

Handwritten signature of Dinah Pye.

HEAD OFFICE

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UK Tel: 01685 813318 International Tel: +44 1685 813318

E: info@activemusicservices.co.uk

www.activemusicservices.co.uk

Agenda Item 5.12

P-05-925 Don't leave Wales behind – teach menstrual wellbeing in schools

This petition was submitted by Jade Morgan having collected a total of 846 signatures.

Text of Petition

My name's Jade, and for 15 years I was told the severe pain I was experiencing as part of my menstrual cycle was completely normal. I suffered from excruciating pain, fatigue, and bowel and bladder related problems – all whilst trying to get through school, navigate puberty, and pass my exams.

I wish I had known that what I was experiencing wasn't normal – but symptoms of a common condition called endometriosis which affects 1 in 10 women from puberty to menopause. Endometriosis is just one of many menstrual conditions affecting young people – others include PCOS, PMDD, and adenomyosis. I don't want anyone suffering with a menstrual health condition to do so alone like I did.

By working with Endometriosis UK, I hope we can do exactly that by persuading the Welsh Assembly to teach menstrual wellbeing in schools. Not only would this help break down the taboos around menstrual health and encourage people to talk openly about their periods, but also by teaching what is and isn't normal to experience.

Had I been taught at school what is and isn't normal when it comes to menstrual related pain, I could have sought help and saved myself years of confusion and heartbreak.

For many, school is a happy time to look back on. And whilst I definitely had some good times, it's the falling asleep at the back of the class and having to quit school gymnastics that I remember most. Teachers would treat me like I did not want to be there and never even asked why. In reality I was just too tired and in too much pain to function.

From 2020, children in England will learn about menstrual wellbeing as part of the school curriculum. A subject I can only wish was on the curriculum

when I was at school. As teachers may not have ignored me, but empowered me to get the help I needed.

Whilst it's a huge step forward that those in England will now learn about menstrual wellbeing, let's not leave those in Wales behind. The Welsh Government are now reviewing the curriculum and we have the opportunity to make sure children in Wales get the education they need.

Please sign my petition to get menstrual wellbeing in the Welsh curriculum.

Together, we can stamp out the stigma and give children with menstrual conditions the support they deserve. Period.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Monmouth
- South Wales East

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-925
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00501/20

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

23 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Petition P-05-925 Don't leave Wales behind - teach menstrual wellbeing in schools

Thank you for your letter dated 12 March in relation to the above Petition, which is presently being considered by the Committee.

The Curriculum for Wales framework gives every school in Wales the opportunity to design and adopt their own curriculum. It encourages schools to build their own vision for their learners within the context of the four purposes and the learning defined at a national level.

Schools will have the flexibility to select the content which best meets the needs of their learners in their specific context. Learners will have a range of needs and backgrounds, and the Framework offers schools and practitioners the ability to choose the specific experiences, knowledge and skills, as well as the specific topics, activities and contexts that will best support learning within the Framework.

Within the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning Experience (AoLE) in particular, it is important there is a sufficient degree of flexibility to support learners. The 'descriptions of learning' in the guidance for each AoLE includes key learning and details how learners should progress as they journey through the continuum of learning. A Description of Learning under the 'Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits' statement of What Matters specifically relates to enabling learners to "..... recognise the connection between the physical and emotional changes that can occur in different contexts." Within this description of learning, learners are supported to develop their understanding along the learning continuum to be able to not only

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Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

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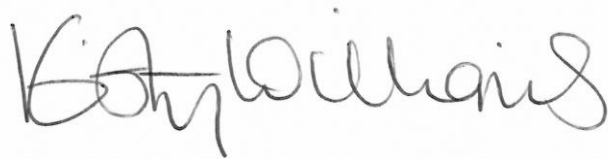
understand and recognise the connections between physical and emotional changes that occur but to be able to adapt and modify behaviour to support their physical and emotional health. The Developing Physical and well-being has lifelong benefits” statement of What Matters also has a description of learning which enables learners to “recognise some of the behaviours, conditions and situations that affect my physical health and well-being, and I know how to respond and get help in a safe way”. Progression along this continuum will enable learners do develop knowledge and understanding on how to manage behaviours and conditions.

Within these descriptions of learning schools are given the flexibility to cover puberty and menstruation at a developmentally appropriate stage and also provide learners with the knowledge and confidence to seek support and help to deal with the physical and emotional changes that occur throughout life.

As part of the newly published guidance, we are also clear that growing up will have a critical impact on learners’ health and well-being and settings and schools should consider how they will support learners to understand and manage the developmental changes as well as how those changes affect learners in a range of different ways.

I hope this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely

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

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

Agenda Item 5.13

P-05-938 Make Welsh universities consider the Welsh Baccalaureate as an A Level

This petition was submitted by Bronwen Rosie Clatworthy having collected a total of 71 signatures.

Text of Petition

As it is compulsory for young people studying AS and A Levels to complete the Welsh Baccalaureate, surely universities in Wales should accept the qualification, just like other A levels, for all courses.

Additional Information

An example of courses in Wales that do not accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as an A Level, is Speech and Language Therapy at Cardiff Met University. There are no other Speech and Language Therapy courses in Wales.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Blaenau Gwent
- South Wales East

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-938
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/00692/20

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

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

01 April 2020

Dear Janet Finch-Saunders AM,

Thank you for your letter regarding petition P-05-938, asking for further information on our work to raise awareness of the Welsh Baccalaureate and to improve how Universities include the Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) in their offers. Please find below a response to the points you raise in your letter.

Detail of how the work to compile a list of universities which accept the Welsh Baccalaureate in their offers is progressing

Qualifications Wales' work to produce a list of universities that accept the SCC is ongoing. However, this is not as straightforward as it may sound. For example, their work has identified that whilst most universities accept the SCC, there remain differences between faculties within these universities. Another challenge is that the information is dynamic – universities and faculties regularly review and update their entry requirements. We have written a [blog](#) to show what has been happening over the past year which may prove useful.

A response to the petitioner's comments that there is a difference between the qualification being accepted as additional to 3 A levels and being as equivalent to A level

As explained in my previous response to the committee, many universities now include the SCC in offers. The Certificate is recognised as comparable in challenge to an A level and receives the same number of UCAS points. However, as autonomous bodies, it's up to universities to decide their own admissions processes and criteria. Whilst we agree that there is a difference between the qualification being accepted as additional to 3 A levels and being accepted as equivalent to A level, it is ultimately for universities to set the entry requirements to their courses. While there are differences in individual institutions' and

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Back Page 204
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.

faculties' policies, the overwhelming picture that Qualifications Wales has seen from their engagement and evidence gathering is that the SCC is valued and seen as making a positive contribution to learners' applications to university.

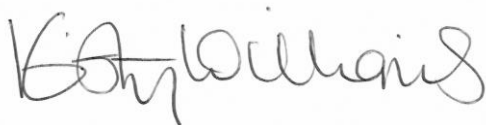
How the Welsh Government is raising awareness of the qualification and encouraging universities to recognise the Bacc as an A level equivalent

A communications task and finish group has been set up to coordinate work on promoting the Welsh Bac and includes representatives from Qualifications Wales, WJEC, FE, regional consortia and Welsh Government.

Activity has been agreed and work is underway to deliver a stakeholder campaign. This will include refining key messages to improve understanding of Welsh Bacc amongst learners, parents, schools, higher education institutions and businesses. The campaign will include development of a microsite PR, social media, presentations and multimedia content.

Promotional activity is currently on hold due to Welsh Government communications guidance on Coronavirus. However, the elements of planning work that can be undertaken are progressing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

Agenda Item 5.14

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.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central

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/0385/20

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

16 March 2020

Dear Janet,

I wrote to you on 13 February in response to 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 indicated I would write to you again after receiving advice on whether the forthcoming consultation on Changing Places Toilets should also include proposals to strengthen the provision to expect baby-changing facilities in both male and female toilets.

I have decided the consultation will include proposals to strengthen the provision to expect baby-changing facilities in both male and female toilets through changes to Approved Document M.

Yours sincerely,

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

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Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.James@gov.Wales

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

Agenda Item 5.15

P-05-898 Ban the Use of A Boards in Wales

This petition was submitted by Angharad Paget-Jones having collected a total of 80 signatures.

Text of Petition

A petition to ban the use of A board advertising in Wales. A boards not only clutter our pavements but pose a huge risk to disabled people as getting past them in a wheelchair or if you're visually impaired often means you're forced onto the road to by-pass them.

This is especially an issue on shared spaces such as city centres as well as coastal towns where the pavements are narrower.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Aberavon
- South Wales West

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/00381/20

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

25 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 6 March 2020 regarding Petition P-05-898, the petition to ban the use of A boards in Wales.

In my letter to you last July, I informed you that this matter would be discussed at the Disability Equality Forum. This meeting took place on 15 January and was chaired by the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip.

At the meeting, following representations from the RNIB and others, it was agreed that A Boards pose a real danger to visually impaired people, but it was also acknowledged that A Boards are only one object in a range of practices on the high street that serve as obstructions for disabled people. These other obstructions include cobbled stones, bollards and tables and chairs outside cafes and restaurants.

Listening to all the views it was therefore agreed at the meeting that this issue could be considered as part of the continuation of Welsh Government's work on the Social Model of Disability.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
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.

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.

Disability Wales will be delivering further workshops later this year with a view to setting up a Working Group to deliver agreed proposals to look at the development of resources, including a toolkit. They are also going to provide E-Learning Modules on the Social Model of Disability and look at the removal of social barriers affecting disabled people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Julie James AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol

Minister for Housing and Local Government

P-05-898 Ban the use of A boards in Wales, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 15.06.20

The a board campaign is important now more than ever, with shops being allowed to open shortly they're going to take up pavement room blocking it up making it difficult for blind people, wheelchair users and pushchairs to by pass. Now with social distancing rules in place we need the extra pace now more than ever. Please consider this as soon as possible.

Kind regards,

Angharad Paget-Jones

Agenda Item 5.16

P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

This petition was submitted by Gethyn Mon Hughes having collected a total of 2,216 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to withdraw its objection, and offer support, to the proposal for Network Rail to permit the Anglesey Central Railway to be re-purposed into an 18 mile traffic-free multi-user path from Amlwch through to Gaerwen. Having been out of service for the past 26 years, it is our belief that the line could no longer serve any useful purpose for passenger services or freight between Gaerwen and Amlwch. Instead, the Lôn Las Môn multi-user path would be open for use by families, walkers, runners, equestrian users and leisure cyclists, including those with disabled access requirements.

Additional Information

Unlike the neighbouring counties of Gwynedd and Conwy, Anglesey has very few sections of traffic free paths. Although two national cycle routes are in existence on the island, they are primarily B-roads which are signposted principally for use by experienced road cyclists. Sixty percent of people who do not cycle state fear of traffic as a reason for not using a bicycle as a means of transportation. A traffic free route such as Lôn Las Môn is crucial to encourage more people to cycle for leisure and transport purposes. In addition, with an average of one rider involved in a road traffic incident every day across the UK, equestrian users on Anglesey would also benefit from a traffic free route, away from fast moving vehicles which pose a major hazard for both horse and rider. Once completed, the multi-user green-way would be a traffic free long-distance corridor from the South West to the North East of the island, allowing users to link with the Anglesey coastal path as well as other footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways. The project would also have knock-on economic benefits for the tourism sector on Anglesey. This is demonstrated by the Camel Trail in Cornwall, a disused railway trail of a similar length to the proposed Lôn Las Môn trail at 17.3 miles. In 2015 users of the Camel Trail spent around £6.7m and generated approximately £13m of business turnover. With obesity, mental health issues, as well as levels of type 2 diabetes increasing at an alarming rate, Lôn Las Môn would allow the public to exercise in a traffic free environment, away from vehicle emissions

and pollutants, and over terrain which is readily accessible to those with disabilities and access needs. The benefits to residents, businesses and visitors that would result from this project are substantial and would undoubtedly improve the quality of life for everyone on Anglesey.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Ynys Mon
- North Wales

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

Network Rail
St Patrick's House
17 Penarth Road
Cardiff
CF10 5ZA

16 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Petition P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

Thank you for your recent letter to Bill Kelly regarding the petition on a potential multi-use path on the disused branch line between Gaerwen and Amlwch. Bill has asked me to follow up and respond in my role as Senior Public Affairs Manager for Wales and Borders.

For background, Anglesey Central Railway Ltd. (ACRL) have held a licence to carry out basic maintenance on the line for a number of years. Their long-term aspiration is to restore the branch as a heritage railway and in 2016 we formally started the industry consultation required to progress a long-term lease of the line. At this time ACRL were the only interested party actively involved in discussions with our route community rail team.

We recognise that more recently, the future use of the line has been subject to considerable debate locally, and that Lôn Las Môn have developed alternative proposals that would instead see the line re-purposed as an active travel route. Although negotiations towards a lease with ACRL were already well advanced, we felt it was important to be fair in our dealings with all parties and so we agreed to discuss their proposals and provide them with guidance on the industry disposal process.

We also explained to them that during the industry consultation phase in 2016, the Welsh Government and freight industry had made it clear that they would only support the disposal of the disused line if the ability to restore passenger or freight services on the line was maintained.

Earlier this month, Lôn Las Môn requested that we open formal negotiations on a lease with them for an active travel route, with the ACRL negotiations still ongoing. Although we have considered this request very carefully, including taking counsel from our legal and property teams, we feel that lease negotiations with ACRL are now advanced to a stage where it would be unfair to Lôn Las Môn, or indeed any other interested party, to start negotiating a lease with them in tandem.

Of course, should the lease negotiations with ACRL not progress to completion, or if the terms of the lease are not complied with, there may be future opportunities to discuss an alternative use for the line. However, it is worth noting that Welsh Government recently reiterated their desire to see a rail solution maintained on the branch.

As we have suggested previously, to both Lôn Las Môn and ACRL, we would encourage continued dialogue between both parties and other stakeholders on Anglesey to explore potential opportunities for collaboration.

Yours sincerely,



Sam Hadley, Senior Public Affairs Manager, Wales and Borders
cc: Adrian Williamson, Lôn Las Môn



Lôn Las Môn

P-05-913 - Pwyllgor Deisebau 23.06.20 / Petitions Committee 23.06.20

Dear Sirs, Madam

We would like to respond as follows to the letters & enclosures from Network Rail – Cymru Wales dated 16th March 2020. We fully understand the delay in getting this letter from Network Rail out to ourselves due to the situation we have all found ourselves in under the Covid 19 Pandemic and it has changed many things in Wales and how we look at walking, cycling and access to safe spaces / traffic free environments. Answering the specific paragraphs in Network Rails letter we would add:

1. We have over the last year had a number of discussions with Sam Hadley who has as he says been very even handed with our proposal and approach to the alternate scheme for this disused line, the only disappointment is that despite our best efforts with our consultants at Michael Chown and John Grimshaw <http://www.johngrimshawassociates.co.uk> we were unable to follow up with a face to face or Zoom type meeting with Network Rail to discuss with them our proposals in more detail including options for step in and an option to take on the lease if the Heritage Group failed to obtain sufficient funding for their scheme. We did make the request to open a line of discussion re an alternate lease actually back in October of 2019, it was only in March 2020 did they acknowledge such, which was a little disappointing.
2. We have been aware of Anglesey Central Railway Ltd (ACRL) licence to carry out basic maintenance and clearance on the line, this came to an end in April of this year and was limited to a short 2-mile section of line in the middle of the island. Network Rail made us aware of the formal industry consultation of which WG and others were required to respond to if a long-term lease were agreed for the line and or disposal of. We have asked so see sight of this consultation, but nothing has been forthcoming i.e. what was asked of WG and the Local Authority and were the general public of Ynys Môn asked for their views and opinions. This petition which was only open for a very limited period (1 month) showed that there was a strong appetite for a Multiuse Path in favour of any Commuter or Heritage Rail. It seems clear that before any disposal or lease is agreed to it should be a matter of the residents on the island to have a say on and not just a private company and UK Gov Department.
3. As respect of the industry consultation with options for freight and or passenger services, it's very unlikely that freight would ever be used on the line given that there is no heavy industry left on this portion of the island that would need or warrant freight services that could not be met via road based carriers. Of recent the Rehau plant Amlwch also recently closed down and they used exclusively road transport, the Associated Octel plant in Amlwch is slowly being demolished and taken away which was the last freight use of the line in 1993/4 when the line was finally closed. As regards light rail or passenger services, the North of the island is well served by bus services and even the Local Authority are exploring ideas for decarbonising bus services by looking at hybrid buses and hydrogen powered buses which get more into the countryside and villages, far more than a train service would which only serves a limited number of villages / towns. Relate to this matter is the cost of a ticked a Rover

Ticket which can take you to a number of places on the island is only £4.50, how much would a rail ticket cost and how much would it need to be subsidised by to make viable?

4. We do standby our proposal which has been fully costed at £5m and a full feasibility including integration with current Active Travel, National Cycle and walking routes is ready to be commissioned. We see from the Network Rail letter that they have indicated that *“should the lease negotiations with ACRL not progress to completion, or if the terms of the lease are not complied with, there may be future opportunities to discuss an alternative use for the line.”* This we welcome, it does go onto say *“However, it is worth noting that Welsh Government recently reiterated their desire to see a rail solution maintained on the branch”* This is borne out by letter we have received from Ken Skates AC/AM dated 4th June to Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP Secretary of State for Transport (see attached) The third from last paragraph which reads *“My letter also set out other priorities for rail re-openings and my officials have recently lodged an expression of interest for the New Ideas Fund, for the restoration of passenger services on the line between Gaerwen and Amlwch on Anglesey”* We find this quite strange given that in the recent consultation on opening new stations Llangefni which lies on the centre of the island was not considered for re-opening in favour of other larger population centres in North Wales i.e. Deeside. We acknowledge that the Minister has a portfolio to push forward but we urge the WG and Minister to consider the breadth of support for a much-needed Multiuse path across the island.
5. We have indicated in our previous responses the benefits a Multiuse path could provide which are far more wide ranging than passenger, freight or a heritage service:
 1. **Health** (refer to Dr Dyfrig ap Dafydd letter) see previous petitions committee response
 2. **Schools**, the route passes by 7 secondary & junior schools lie along its length
 3. **Active Travel**, the line passes through three business and industrial estates, with the growth in cycling in recent months this path could provide greater connectivity
 4. **Business**, cafes, campsite, B&Bs and pubs along its route would all benefit and as other former railway paths have shown micro business grow up along them servicing its users
 5. **Tourism**, one running group has approached us with the view to running a Metric Marathon along its length 26km as opposed to 26 miles, no road closures needed as route travels through a number of villages. Start of end being in Amlwch which in itself would be a boost to the town. Increased footfall from walkers & hikers wanting a more level path than the coastal path, this includes better provision for wheelchair users holidaying on the island
 6. **Environment**, the uninterrupted 18-mile traffic free route passes two large bodies of water & nature reserves such as Gors Dryga, it’s potential as a Green Corridor is enormous to biodiversity and wildlife connectivity from North to South on the island.
 7. **Cycling**, one thing the Covi19 pandemic has shown is the growth in cycling, numbers of new and returning cyclists have grown by a reported 300% with national and local cycling shops barely keeping up with supply which you only need to go out on the local lanes and existing cycling paths to see how busy they all are. One key factor though is the need for Safe Spaces i.e. Traffic Free environments are the safest for all concerned, whether they are new or returning to cycling or adaptive cycling. We have a duty to provide better for all these users instead of just pavements and country roads.
6. This is a scheme to be run by Lôn Las Môn CIC, we are not looking for the Local Authority to run or manage the scheme, we just need the WG to consider what it could bring to Ynys Môn and call on them to help us pause any signing of any long term lease on the line until it’s been put before the Senedd or the island so that a democratic decision can be made on its disposal.

“Greenways & Multiuse Paths are traffic-free routes connecting communities to all kinds of destinations for commuting, everyday journeys, leisure and recreation”.

Continued...



Lôn Las Môn

Yours Sincerely

Adrian Williamson

For and on behalf of Lôn Las Môn

List of Appendices;

Appendix 1 – Ken Skates AC/AM letter dated 4th June 2020

Appendix 2 – List of UK wide former Railways converted into Rail Trails, Railway Paths, Greenways and Multiuse Paths

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref:KS/220/20

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport



4 June 2020

Dear Grant,

I wrote to you on 2 March about the UK Government's Restoring Your Railways fund and investment in the Wales and Borders rail network. Thank you for your reply of 6 May.

I am writing now, following a report undertaken for me by Transport for Wales, to request formally UK Government investment in the delivery, by early 2024, of four new stations across the regions of Wales which are my shortlisted priorities for potential developments under the New Stations Fund 3. These are - in no particular order as they are all of the highest priority - Deeside Parkway, on the Borderlands Line in North Wales; Carno, on the Cambrian Mainline in Mid Wales; St Clears on the Great Western Mainline in West Wales; and Ely Mill on the City Line in Cardiff, in South Wales.

In combination, which is why I have not prioritised between them, the Transport for Wales report demonstrates that there is a compelling case for all four to be developed as an integrated programme to improve access to the rail network across the regions of Wales. This package will make a major contribution to improved rail connectivity, supercharge our post Covid19 recovery, and develop our public transport for the future. Our new station openings will be key to Building Back Better.

In the cases of Deeside Parkway and Ely Mill, both will be key components of their respective Metro developments with major contributions to improved urban connectivity, employment/economic growth and reduced car use. New stations in Carno and St Clears would support strong employment and sustainable economic growth through improved regional connectivity. They share extensive community and third party support (community councils, local authorities and community groups) within rural communities that have limited public transport opportunities and have historically been overlooked, particularly since the closure of previous stations in these communities and of Laura Ashley's famous factory in Carno. Carno station will adjoin a new community hub/museum at the factory site and there will be great synergy between the two developments.

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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.

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

Each is deliverable, and is operationally viable, and will offer regular services to national hubs. Carno will also require Network Rail to expedite the planned upgrade of the adjacent level crossing to avoid increased risk.

Transport for Wales has an unsurpassed delivery record over the previous two rounds of NSF. I have requested Transport for Wales to submit the completed NSF application forms directly to your NSF team on my behalf. Given that the UK Government continues to maintain responsibility and funding for rail infrastructure enhancements, I requested in my letter of 2 March, a fair allocation of the Restoring Your Railways funding for enhancements in Wales to develop a rail infrastructure enhancement programme delivering on our priorities and those of our partners. Your commitment to meeting the full costs of our new station building programme would be a positive first step to deliver transformative benefits to those communities.

As set out in my letter of 2 March, I do have further priorities for rail investment, including new stations at Greenfield and Magor, supported by MPs and MSs, and I would be glad to assist with any evaluation process in these cases.

My letter also set out other priorities for rail reopenings and my officials have recently lodged an expression of interest for the New Ideas Fund, for the restoration of passenger services on the line between Gaerwen and Amlwch on Anglesey and an expression of interest for the Accelerating Existing Proposals fund to restore the line and services to Abertillery in South Wales. My priorities are not limited to these cases, as you will recall from the attachment to my 2 March letter, and I will continue to press the case strongly for them, including the Aberystwyth – Carmarthen and Bangor – Caernarfon reopenings.

I would be very glad to have a discussion with you on these important issues, and the forthcoming Williams Rail Review outcome, and I am also content for my officials and Transport for Wales to have any detailed discussion with your own officials on any of these schemes.

I am copying this letter to Members of the Senedd, the Secretary of State for Wales, and to the other Wales and Borders MPs to whom I copied my 2 March letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales

Agenda Item 5.17

P-05-918 Improve disabled access to Treforest train station as a priority

This petition was submitted by Katie Phillips having collected 156 signatures online and 72 on paper, a total of 228 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to prioritise upgrades to Treforest Railway Station to enable disabled students to access the University of South Wales sustainably and with dignity.

Treforest railway station provides the primary public transport access to the University of South Wales. Transport for Wales has promised to invest in railway stations across Wales as part of a 15 year improvement programme but for many disabled young people wishing to access a university education independently, these improvements will come too late.

Current arrangements at the station require disabled people to call for help then wait for station staff to come and virtually manhandle them across the footbridge. This is inappropriate and falls short of the access standards we should expect for disabled people in the 21st century. We the undersigned ask the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to prioritise improvements to Treforest station, in particular to provide suitable disability access.

Additional Information

The lead petitioner started this petition after witnessing the current disabled access provisions in action during the first week of term. The provision fell short of that she would want to see for her friends and families with disabilities, especially those for whom the current provision would not be enough.

The Equality Act 2010 makes provision for reasonable adjustments to be made to enable disabled people to access education, employment and other services. Given Transport for Wales announcement of planned improvements, it seems entirely reasonable for this key station to be a priority, preferably before the next intake of students starting their university education in September 2020.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Vale of Glamorgan
- South Wales Central



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-918
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/08772/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

17 March 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December regarding 'Petition P-05-918 - Improve disabled access to Treforest train station as a priority'. Please accept my apologies for the delay in response while my officials liaised with Transport for Wales (TfW) on this matter.

TfW are developing plans for Treforest station which will bring vastly improved access arrangements and better facilities for customers. TfW's plans include a new accessible footbridge and level boarding providing step-free access from street to train. Construction at the station is expected to begin in September. Teams are currently undertaking the necessary preparatory and design works which are required ahead of construction taking place.

Delivery of the works at Treforest is integrated with a wider, complex programme of works for the transformation of this part of the rail network (known as the 'Core Valley Lines'), as part of the South Wales Metro project. This is an ambitious, multi-million-pound project, and TfW's current plans will take around five years to complete. TfW have a significant amount construction, engineering and infrastructure work to do to upgrade our rail network so that it's ready for Metro services. These works include electrification of the railway, upgrading all stations and signalling, and building new stations.

The construction schedule for Treforest station takes account of a wide range of factors including the impact of planned works on the transport system, the availability of the railway for possessions/blockades required to undertake works, and the availability of teams and other resources to undertake works.

Once complete, Metro will provide customers with quicker, more frequent, more environmentally friendly services on modern, comfortable, accessible Metro trains.

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

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Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
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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.

In the interim, assistance is provided by the Conductor on the train who can provide a ramp for train access. Platform 2 is accessible to wheelchair or powered mobility scooter users.

TfW has already begun work on improving the accessibility of the Wales and Borders network. TfW has recruited an Accessibility and Inclusion Manager, whose role is to help deliver crucial improvements to make it as easy and accessible as possible for passengers with reduced mobility to use services with confidence and as little hassle as possible and has also formed an Accessibility Panel that represents many forms of disabilities across Wales and Borders. The panel help to make policy decisions and will be invited to take part in testing the new rolling stock design to ensure that it's as accessible as possible to a wide-range of needs.

TfW operate an Assisted Travel team to help passengers to book assisted travel, reserve a seat or wheelchair space and answer any questions about the accessibility of stations and trains. Passengers may call the Assisted Travel team on 033 300 50 501, 8am to 8pm every day except Christmas Day. If passengers book assisted travel in advance, TfW can arrange for a conductor or station staff to help them on and off the train, and can arrange the following:

- Make a ramp available to get passengers on and off the train
- Guide passengers through the station and on or off the train
- Find passengers a seat on the train
- Reserve a seat or wheelchair space, if this is possible, on TfW services or those of other rail companies
- Help with making connections with other train companies in one single booking
- Help with luggage

*Yours ever,
Ken*

Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy and Transport

**P-05-918 Improve disabled access to Treforest train station as a priority,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 15.06.20**

Thank you for your time in considering and looking into my petition regarding the disabled access at the Treforest Railway Station. I am glad to hear that improvements for this station and its accessibility have been planned and will begin to take place in September, enabling them to benefit many students who shall be beginning their studies in this coming academic year. I'm sure it will help those who are less able to travel confidently and independently furthering their education at the University of South Wales and allow them to travel to Treforest train station.

Many thanks,
Katie