

SH 23

Ymgynghoriad ar ail gartrefi

Consultation on second homes

Ymateb gan: unigolyn di-enw

Response from: anonymous individual

#### Inquiry into and Consultation on Second Homes

I am concerned that insufficient attention may be given to the position of homes which were once “primary” but now, under current thinking and classifications, are regarded as “secondary”, even though they continue to be owned by a Welsh family and are a “home from home” and, indeed, may also become the final (e.g. retirement) home for someone. The point was raised in the consultations prior to the recent decision by Gwynedd County Council on the tax payable on second homes, but no exception was granted, so it must be assumed that the elected representatives in that county are content with the likely consequences. Consider this.

In the mid-nineteenth century my great-grandfather had to give up farming and came to live in what is now my house in Aberdyfi. My grandfather was brought up there. He was indentured to a pharmacist in Barmouth. On qualifying, he had to go to London to find work but he kept the house as his home, from which he established another chemist’s shop in the village. Two of his children were educated locally, e.g. one of my aunts went to Dr Williams School and thence to UC Aberystwyth. After my grandfather’s death, my grandmother made it her principal home as she had also been born and brought up in the village.

Over 80 years ago, in 1940, my mother and I (an 8-week old baby) came to live there with my grandmother. After my grandmother died, my aunts and uncle continued to use it as a family home. In due course I inherited it (the fourth generation to own it). I too regard it as a “home from home”. It is not let. The increase in the Gwynedd tax premium to 100% brings the amount payable close to the Council Tax on my other home in affluent SE England, even though it is a tiny “two up, two down” cottage. I can find the means to pay the tax now payable but the amount will probably be a significant deterrent to my children and grandchildren (the sixth generation that might live there). As the cottage is a highly desirable situation (but with no garage or parking) the result is likely to be that a property which has remained in the same family for well over 150 years will be sold, but not to a local person. It will not therefore increase the amount of affordable housing.

Is that really to be the intended consequence of measures such as taxing “second homes” at penal rates? To sever long family connections with Wales or to make it difficult for people to keep their family homes in their homeland? There must be (and are) other solutions (such as exceptions).

Otherwise, I understand the reasons for, and support, measures to provide housing for local people. I inherited another small house in the village which I did not sell. I let it only to people to enable them to stay and work in the locality.