

Dawn Bowden AS/MS  
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip  
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1327  
Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00180/23

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions Committee  
Senedd Cymru

28 March 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 March 2023 regarding Petition P-06-1327: Leisure Centre amenities free for children.

The Welsh Government provides funding, through Sport Wales, for local authorities to offer free swimming to children and young people aged 16 and under. The scheme provides a free splash session every weekend in every pool and two additional sessions in the summer holidays. Local authorities also provide targeted support to encourage young people from areas of deprivation to participate in the Free Swimming scheme - to have fun, learn a life skill and to enjoy the physical and mental wellbeing benefits of an active lifestyle.

The Welsh Government also provided £7m in one-off funding towards the Summer of Fun 2022, which formed part of our wider package of support to help with the cost-of-living crisis facing families across Wales. The initiative built on the success of the previous Summer of Fun 2021 and the Winter of Wellbeing, which were also one-off funding initiatives aimed at recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Summer of Fun 2022 aimed to provide all children and young people aged 0–25 in Wales with the opportunity to access free activities aimed at supporting their development and wellbeing. Further engagement with play, sporting and cultural activities at a wide range of venues, including leisure centres, has enabled children and young people to continue their recovery from the pandemic restrictions, with the added benefit of supporting families with the costs of activities over the summer holiday period.

The programme supported a universal entitlement to free at the point of entry play, sporting and cultural activities for all children and young people aged 0-25 to help towards reducing the cost of living for families across Wales. It also supported the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of participating children and young people aged 0-25, enabling them to better engage with learning and to re-engage with wider society following the Covid-19 pandemic.

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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.

Activities were delivered between 1 July and 30 September 2022 inclusive. £5.5m of funding was channelled through local authorities across Wales, with the remaining £1.5m allocated between a number of organisations with a track record of working with children and young people. It is hoped this funding provided further sustainability for the providers operating in this space, to move towards a more sustainable footing both financially and in terms of what they can offer to children, young people and their families.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Bowden'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D' and 'B'.

**Dawn Bowden AS/MS**

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