

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

Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00277/23
Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

16 May 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter providing me with an opportunity to comment on the petition received by the Committee requesting that "Sycharth, the home of Owain Glyndŵr should be bought to safeguard the site for future generations".

Owain Glyndŵr is undoubtedly an important figure who played a key role in shaping Welsh history. His estates were in north-east Wales, with his main residences being at Sycharth and Glyndyfrdwy. Both properties were deliberately destroyed by the English forces in the 15th century and never reoccupied. At the height of his rebellion Glyndŵr established his court at Harlech Castle, which he had captured from the English, and held parliaments there and at Machynlleth.

At Sycharth, Glyndŵr's residence was situated within an older earthwork motte-and-bailey castle. The earthen banks are still imposing to this day but there is no upstanding evidence for the internal buildings which were so eloquently described by the Welsh poet, Iolo Goch (1320-1398).

Sycharth is a Scheduled Monument, and so is already legally protected under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (soon to be replaced by protection under the new Consolidated Historic Environment Act (Wales)). The legislation safeguards the archaeological remains of the site for future generations. Cadw regularly monitors the condition of the monument and has worked proactively with the owners of the site, the Llangedwyn Estate, to implement conservation works to protect the integrity of the earthworks by improving drainage and repairing erosion caused by natural weathering.

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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.

Cadw also continues to work with the owners and the tenant farmer to ensure that the site is fully accessible to the public. There is a small on-site car park and access via path and stile, which have been recently upgraded with financial grant support from Cadw. The present interpretation panel was installed by Cadw in 2018 and includes an artist's depiction of the site as it might have looked at the time of Owain Glyndŵr. The interpretation draws on the results of Cadw's geophysical investigation work carried out to support the conservation of the motte and is our most up-to-date understanding of Sycharth.

Sycharth is privately-owned. Putting it up for sale would be the owner's decision and I am not aware that there is any desire to sell the property. There have also been no requests from the owner of Sycharth for the monument to be taken into Guardianship Care. However, I am satisfied that appropriate legal protection is in place to ensure the safeguarding of this historic site for future generations. By continuing to work collaboratively with the owners of Sycharth, there is and will continue to be public access and opportunities for visitors to appreciate the special qualities of the site.

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

Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism