

Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1460
Ein cyf/Our ref JS/10086/24

Carolyn Thomas AS/MS
Chair — Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

14 October 2024

Dear Carolyn,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Chair of the Petitions Committee and thank you for the letter from the Committee sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip on 06 September regarding Petition P-06-1460 — Explore options for transferring ownership of historical assets from Crown Estate to Welsh Government. I am replying since the matter now falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

The Crown Estate's interests in Wales are extensive. It controls the seabed out to the twelve-mile limit, manages around 65% of the foreshore and tidal riverbed, including several ports, and is responsible for over 50,000 acres of common land. The management of the Crown Estate is, therefore, a wider issue for the Welsh Government, not least because of the implications for our energy policies. The Programme for Government includes a commitment to pursue devolution of powers needed to help reach net zero, including management of the Crown Estate in Wales. The Crown Estate is devolved in Scotland and we see no reason why the same powers should not be available to Welsh Ministers.

The Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales recommended that the Crown Estate should be devolved and we are committed to working with the UK Government to implement the Commission's recommendations. We recognise that the devolution of further powers would create additional resource requirements in Wales, since there is not an established Crown Estate function operating in Wales. We also need to understand how the Welsh Government's funding would need to change in response to any direct flow of revenue from Crown Estate assets in Wales.

The four historic sites — Caernarfon, Harlech and Denbigh Castles and Tintern Abbey — that are the subject of Petition P-06-1460, although owned by the Crown Estate, have been in State care for decades. Cadw, the Welsh Government's historic environment service,

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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.

therefore, maintains, conserves and manages the four sites and provides public access to them. Cadw pays nothing to the Crown Estate for the four historic sites.

As the petitioner notes, a transfer of these great medieval sites from the Crown Estate to the Welsh Government would have symbolic resonance, but I should like to stress that it would make no practical difference to the conservation, management or presentation of the properties. We do not, therefore, intend to take this forward independently of the Welsh Government's efforts to resolve the matter of the Crown Estate.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of your formal consideration of this petition and the next steps the Committee wishes to take.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the width of the name.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

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