

## Y Pwyllgor Deisebau

### Petitions Committee



Mark Drakeford AM,  
Chair, Health and Social Care  
Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

28 September 2011

*Dear Mark*

#### **P-03-292 Public Toilet Provision**

Your letter of 13 July indicated that you would consider including the above petition on public toilet provision in a future inquiry. The petitioner has submitted supporting information in a recent email to the Petitions Committee, which is enclosed for your information.

Yours sincerely

*William.*

**William Powell AM**  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
Encs: Supporting information

**From:** Louise Hughes  
**Sent:** 27 September 2011 08:24  
**To:** Petition  
**Subject:** Re: PET(4)-03-11 Agenda 27-09-2011

Dear Rhodri,

thanks for your e-mail regarding my petition - I'll keep my fingers crossed.

I wonder, could the committee be told that all my arguments still stand, but I would like the committee to be aware that this summer has been one of the busiest seasons ever in the rural areas. Presumably we had substantially more visitors because families have been strapped for cash and had their holidays in Wales rather than flying abroad. My Ward is on the Tywyn to Dolgellau coastal strip in Meirionnydd and, for the benefit of those on the committee not familiar with the area, it is an area of outstanding natural beauty being within the Cadair Idris mountain range. Part of my Ward is included in the information leaflets for the Snowdonia National Park as a particularly stunning area to walk, the committee may, or may not, have heard of Cregennon Lakes. Quite simply the scenery is breathtaking, wild and unspoilt. The beauty of the area comes to a shuddering halt when people try to use the discreetly landscaped toilet block - they can't, it's locked and closed for the foreseeable future. Now, we are all human beings and when we need to "go" and there is no alternative available we are forced to improvise and in this instance people are doing their business behind the toilet block. I will leave it to the imaginations of the committee members to visualise the mess and particularly the stench this leaves behind.

I go up to the Lakes once a fortnight to pick up litter and during the summer weeks I went weekly to clear up the piles of excrement, soiled sanitary towels and discarded nappies left behind by careless visitors. Not a nice job let me assure you! On one occasion there was even a pair of soiled trousers left behind by someone who was desperate and didn't quite make it. However, I did this because I am so ashamed that the toilet block has been decommissioned and I didn't want visitors from abroad to think we are a Nation of barbarians.

There has been furious debate in the area following the news that £650,000 was spent on a bat bridge over the new Porthmadog by-pass. £650,000!!! How many public toilets would that enormous amount of money keep open? And any feeble excuses about the money only being released by Europe (or whoever) on the proviso that the bat bridge

was included simply won't wash with local people. It's us who are left to literally "clear up the mess" when the Assembly decrees that no money is available to Local Authorities for public toilets. Our greatest asset here in

Meirionnydd is the beauty of the landscape, it draws people back here year after year and by closing established toilet blocks we are doing ourselves a massive disservice because they won't come back if the most basic of provisions is not available and who can blame them?!

I am asking the Petitions Committee to take my pleas seriously - there must be another way forward because this problem is not going to go away. Closing public toilets does not stop people needing to use them does it? They were built because there was a need for them and that need still exists today.

Please extend my gratitude and thanks to the committee for continuing to consider my petition.

Yours sincerely

Louise Hughes  
County Councillor