

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 5

Meeting date: 24 November 2025

Meeting time: 14.00

For further information contact:

Gareth Price

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

Petitions@senedd.wales

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(Pages 1 – 28)

2 New Petitions

2.1 P-06-1561 Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football: fund a national equality plan

(Pages 29 – 37)

2.2 P-06-1533 Review and update Provisions 2-10 of The Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008

(Pages 38 – 46)

2.3 P-06-1555 To review all guidance on Home to School Transport for all of Wales. Free access to an education

(Pages 47 – 59)

3 Updates to previous petitions

3.1 P-06-1258 Make individuals in Wales with Hidden disabilities eligible for the Blue Badge

(Pages 60 – 62)

3.2 P-06-1380 Make Blue badge Applications Lifelong for individuals who have a lifelong diagnosis

(Pages 63 – 75)



- 3.3 P-06-1476 1000 meter mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries
(Pages 76 – 77)
- 3.4 P-06-1499 Stop the use of term 'Universal Provision' as a reason to deny ALN
(Pages 78 – 80)
- 3.5 P-06-1502 Scrap Proposals for a Tourism Tax
(Pages 81 – 82)
- 3.6 P-06-1519 Implement safety measures at the A477 Red Roses junction to reduce accidents and stop any fatalities
(Pages 83 – 89)
- 3.7 P-06-1521 Give park home residents in Wales the right to a water meter
(Pages 90 – 99)

4 Papers to note

- 4.1 P-06-1511 Rebuild Cardiff's Lost Observatory at St Fagans Museum
(Page 100)
- 4.2 P-06-1526 Save Grassroots Sports – Welsh Government Must Step In!
(Page 101)
- 4.3 P-06-1530 Save Childcare Provision in Wales – Demand Fair Funding and a Fair Process for Providers and Parents
(Pages 102 – 103)

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder of today's business:

Agenda Item 1

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-06-1561 Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football: fund a national equality plan

This petition was submitted by Osamagbe Izevbigie, having collected 335 signatures.

Text of petition:

Despite progress in recent years, Welsh women's football still lacks equal development pathways, funding, and visibility. Girls face barriers to progressing beyond the grassroots level, especially after U19. We need a national plan that ensures parity across youth and elite levels by 2030. Wales cannot afford to lose more talent to inequality.

Additional information:

We call on the Welsh Government to provide the funding to enable the FAW and Sport Wales to deliver a 5-point plan:

- Create Women's U21 and U23 national teams
- Expand access through regional talent ID and outreach
- Guarantee equal media promotion
- Introduce a national player support scheme
- Publish a measurable 5-year national equality plan

This is about opportunity, fairness, and Wales leading the way in women's sport.

Senedd Constituency and Region:

- Cardiff South and Penarth
- South Wales Central

Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football: fund a national equality plan

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 24 Tachwedd 2025
Petitions Committee | 24 November 2025

Reference: SR25/12417/2

Introduction

Petition Number: Petition P-06-1561

Petition title: Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football: fund a national equality plan

Text of petition: Despite progress in recent years, Welsh women's football still lacks equal development pathways, funding, and visibility. Girls face barriers to progressing beyond the grassroots level, especially after U19. We need a national plan that ensures parity across youth and elite levels by 2030. Wales cannot afford to lose more talent to inequality.

More details

We call on the Welsh Government to provide the funding to enable the FAW and Sport Wales to deliver a 5-point plan:

- Create Women's U21 and U23 national teams
- Expand access through regional talent ID and outreach
- Guarantee equal media promotion



- Introduce a national player support scheme
- Publish a measurable 5-year national equality plan

This is about opportunity, fairness, and Wales leading the way in women's sport.

1. Background

As the Welsh Government's response to this petition explains:

National Governing Bodies of sports, including the Football Association of Wales (FAW), are independent organisations, and as such are responsible for their own governance, policies and procedures. It would therefore be for the FAW to decide on the appropriate player pathways for women's football at all levels, from the grassroots to the elite, and what age-grade teams should be established to support player development.

The Welsh Government funds Sport Wales (the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical activity), which in turn provides funding for national governing bodies, such as the FAW.

The Welsh Government does, however, occasionally fund sport policies directly, or attempt to influence sports governing bodies. For example, in May 2025 the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership [announced mental health support for football clubs](#). Previous Minister Dawn Bowden MS [wrote to the Welsh Rugby Union](#) expressing "concern" about its ban on transgender women competing in female only games.

2. Welsh Government action

2.1. Funding of Sport Wales

In comparison with the 2026-2027 revised baseline, revenue funding for Sport Wales increases from £23.19 million to £23.24 million in the 2026-27 draft budget (an increase of 0.2%). This compares to an average uplift of 2.2% to revenue budgets.

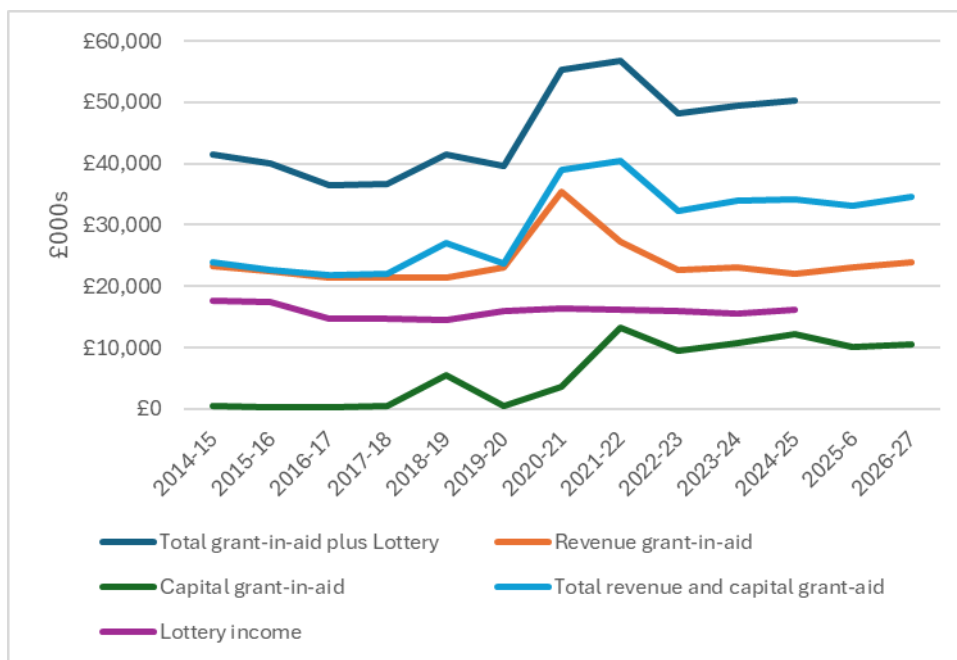
Over the same period, capital funding decreases from £10 million to £9.5 million in the 2026-27 draft budget (a decrease of 5%). This decrease is a result of £1m costs

of a capital loans scheme – the Sport Wales capital budget increases by £0.5 million.

In an October 2025 meeting with the Culture Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee, Sport Wales noted the low level of funding for Sport Wales compared with other sports councils:

The top-line figure to put us in a comparable state to the other home country sports councils would be about £20 million a year. To put us in line with the average for European countries, it would be £200 million.

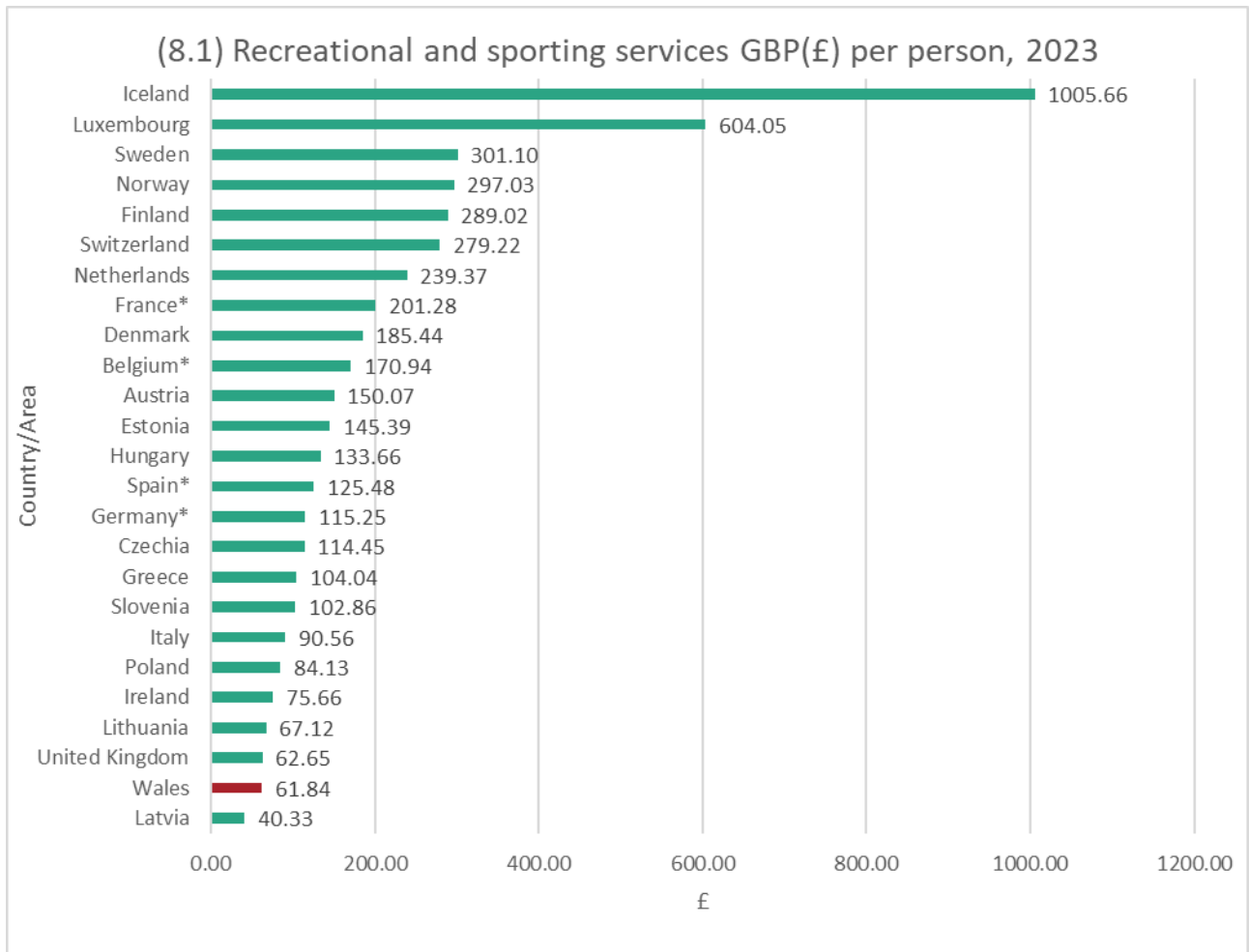
Sport Wales funding 2014-15 to present



NB. All figures provided by Sport Wales, except 2026-27 which are taken from the 2026-27 Draft Budget.

2.2. International comparison

Senedd Research has analysed total government spending on culture and sport in Wales and other European nations (the previous year’s data was included in the Committee’s 2025 A decade of cuts: impact of funding reductions on culture and sport report).



The average spend on recreational and sporting services in these countries is £180.24 per person. In Wales the figure is £61.84 per person, or 34% of the average of these countries. This placed Wales second from bottom of the group of 25 nations.

3. Welsh Parliament action

In January 2025 the Senedd’s Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee published the report [A decade of cuts: impact of funding reductions on culture and sport](#).

The Committee recommended:

The Welsh Government should increase funding for culture and sport until they are comparable (in terms of spending per head) with those of similar nations.

The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation in principle, saying:

Whilst we have an ambition to enhance budgets for these sectors in future years, this will be dependent on many other factors. Some of these factors are outside our control, including the UK Government's Spending Review to be concluded later this year.

The Scottish Government has taken a different approach, outlining a path in 2024 to investing "at least £100 million more annually" in culture by 2028-29.

The Committee will discuss the 2026-27 Draft Budget with the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership (whose portfolio includes sport) on 19 November 2025.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1561
Ein cyf/Our ref JS/00716/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

27 October 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter seeking my views on Petition P-06-1561 "Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football: fund a national equality plan".

National Governing Bodies of sports, including the Football Association of Wales (FAW), are independent organisations, and as such are responsible for their own governance, policies and procedures. It would therefore be for the FAW to decide on the appropriate player pathways for women's football at all levels, from the grassroots to the elite, and what age-grade teams should be established to support player development.

In 2021 the FAW published "Our Wales: For Her", their strategy for women and girls football in Wales and published an update on their progress against this last October ([Our-Wales-For-Her-Strategy-Progress-Report80.pdf](#)). I am also aware that the FAW is working with FIFA to revamp its girl's academy system and is growing its range of age grade teams with a view to having a better pathway for young girls to progress to the national team, as the petitioner suggests. Additionally, the FAW has recently been named as the winner of the Best Women's Football Initiative (sponsored by Women in Football) at the World Football Summit Awards 2025 for its "For Us. For Them. For Her. Cymru WEURO25 Legacy Campaign" funded through the Welsh Government's £1m Euro 2025 Partner Support Fund.

Regarding equal pay, the Welsh Government has set out a range of expectations on moving to eliminate inequality in all of its forms as well as celebrating diversity in Sport Wales's Term of Government Remit Letter.

The letter also makes clear that any remaining pay gaps based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, and other forms of discrimination which may exist, must be addressed.

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Correspondence.Jack.Sargeant@gov.wales

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.

In light of this, the FAW announced in January 2023 that it had reached an agreement with the Cymru Men's and Women's National Teams to achieve equal pay. The agreement covers the period up to and including the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup. I have attached a link to that announcement below.

<https://faw.cymru/news/equal-pay-agreement-reached-between-faw-national-teams/>

I hope this information will be helpful to you and your Committee members.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath the name.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

Agenda Item 2.2

P-06-1533 Review and update Provisions 2-10 of The Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008

This petition was submitted by Rebecca Smart, having collected a total of 2,185 signatures.

Text of petition:

We, the undersigned, request the Welsh Government to review and update provisions 2-10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008. Namely, local authorities' duty to assess learner travel needs and transport arrangements, including travel limits. Post-16 and nursery education travel. Equality in travel arrangements and promotion of the Welsh Language.

In 2021, Welsh ministers committed to reviewing the Measure, highlighting the issues; however, it remains unchanged.

Additional information:

This request follows sustained concerns from members of the public and independent bodies, including the Children's Commissioner for Wales, surrounding child welfare, such as safety, impact on mental well-being, education, and children's physical health.

In 2021, Welsh ministers noted issues with the current Measure, some of which extended beyond the scope of current legislation, saying a do-nothing approach was inappropriate. It concluded that interim work justified a comprehensive review of the Measure, preventing "further inequality, inconsistency in provision and further outdated codes and guidance".

However, members stated there was no time within the administration to begin a formal process to change the Measure before the pre-election period started, so it remains unchanged.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Ogmore
- South Wales West

Learner Travel / Home to School Transport petitions

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 24 Tachwedd 2025
Petitions Committee | 24 November 2025

Reference: SR25/12595-1

This briefing aims to inform Members for their consideration of two petitions for discussion at this meeting:

- P-06-1533 Review and update Provisions 2-10 of The Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008.
- P-06-1555: To review all guidance on Home to School Transport for all of Wales. Free access to an education

Petition Number: [P-06-1533](#)

Petition title: Review and update Provisions 2-10 of The Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008.

Text of petition: We, the undersigned, request the Welsh Government to review and update provisions 2-10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008. Namely, local authorities' duty to assess learner travel needs and transport arrangements, including travel limits. Post-16 and nursery education travel. Equality in travel arrangements and promotion of the Welsh Language.

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surrounding child welfare, such as safety, impact on mental well-being, education, and children's physical health.

In 2021, Welsh ministers noted issues with the current Measure, some of which extended beyond the scope of current legislation, saying a do-nothing approach was inappropriate. It concluded that interim work justified a comprehensive review of the Measure, preventing "further inequality, inconsistency in provision and further outdated codes and guidance". However, members stated there was no time within the administration to begin a formal process to change the Measure before the pre-election period started, so it remains unchanged.

Petition Number: P-06-1555

Petition title: To review all guidance on Home to School Transport for all of Wales. Free access to an education

Text of petition: All Children attending an education should be able to attend a school or college without any struggle. Our streets are no longer safe to walk on their own, especially those who are under 19 years of age.

With NO direct transport for an education for those who even HAVE to attend until their last day in year 11. These students struggle through underlying illness, hidden illness, or even undiagnosed. The students who live in poverty and struggle to even travel on a public bus.

The years leading up to GCSE or A-LEVEL are the critical time of an education. Students should NOT be fighting to gain an education. This should be made easy. A year 8 student tested his journey by foot from home to school one way. This was a total of 1hr and 10mins. He has no underlying illnesses and plays sport after school. Carrying 6kg in his backpack and coat. After this journey he complained of sore feet, his shoulders hurt and felt exhausted. This is before a 6 hour day in cool dry weather conditions.

There is no storage for spare clothes or even a dry room to dry clothes.

Absenteeism is going to rise.

More cars will be on our roads leading to emissions increasing. Statistics for a child killed in a serious accident will rise.

Please review this legislation for the children to have an easier way of accessing and education or even before a child is serious hurt.

A child's voice needs to be heard. They are our priority are they yours

1. The two petitions

These two petitions essentially call for the same thing – a review and changes to the legal framework for local authorities’ provision of school and college transport. One focuses on the legislation itself – the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 – and uses the term ‘Learner Travel’. The other focuses on the statutory guidance issued under the Measure and uses the term ‘Home to School Transport’. The two terms are generally interchangeable, although ‘Learner Travel’ is the legal term.

2. Background

Legislation relating to home to school transport / learner travel is set out in the [Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008](#). The Welsh Government also published [Learner Travel Operational Guidance](#) in 2014.

The Learner Travel Measure sets out that local authorities **must** provide free transport to pupils of compulsory school age if they:

- live further than the statutory ‘walking distance’ from the school (this is 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools); and
- attend their ‘nearest suitable school’.

The [Operational Guidance](#) states that local authorities need to consider the suitability of the school when deciding if the placement is appropriate for the learner. Deciding which school is the learner’s ‘nearest’ is a matter for the local authority to determine in accordance with their own learner travel and education policy.

One of the petitions specifies sections 2 to 10 of the Learner Travel Measure as needing reviewing and updating. These sections set out a range of duties and provide powers to local authorities.

- Section 2 requires local authorities to assess the travel needs of learners in primary, secondary or further education or training.
- Section 3 requires local authorities to make transport arrangements and provide free transport for eligible learners of compulsory school age if:
 - they live beyond the statutory walking distance from their nearest, suitable school (2 miles or more for primary schools and 3 miles or more for secondary school pupils (aged 11-16)); or

- there are no suitable walking routes.
- Section 4 requires local authorities to make other travel arrangements for example where learners have specific needs arising from a learning difficulty or a disability.
- Section 5 clarifies the limits of the duties under sections 3 and 4. For example, authorities are not required to provide arrangements if suitable education is available closer to home.
- Section 6 provides local authorities with discretionary powers to provide travel arrangements even when not required by law. Local authorities **may** use their discretionary powers to provide transport for learners who are not of compulsory school age or learners who are not attending their nearest, suitable school where it is a Welsh medium school or a faith school.
- Section 7 allows for local authorities to provide travel arrangements for learners aged 16 and over in further education or training, although this is not a statutory duty.
- Section 8 allows for local authorities to make travel arrangements to and from nursery education at their discretion.
- Section 9 sets out that travel arrangements must not favour certain types of education or training and must not discriminate between types of education or training.
- Section 10 requires local authorities to promote access to education and training through the medium of Welsh, including considering travel arrangements that support this aim.

3. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government began a review of learner travel arrangements in 2019, initially to consider issues around transport for post-16 learners. Progress was delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2020, the Welsh Government widened the scope of the review to consider the 4-16 age group, as well as the mileage thresholds for free transport eligibility.

On the publication of the One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket: Planning Buses as a Public Service for Wales White Paper (March 2022), the then Deputy

Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS, said the Welsh Government would take forward a wider programme of work that would consider a complete revision of the Learner Travel Measure.

At the same time, the Welsh Government also published the review originally announced in 2019. Among other things, the review found there was a need to update the operational guidance to ensure greater consistency. The review found there are wider issues beyond those covered by the current legislation including transport for older learners with Additional Learning Needs and for those in further education colleges. The review was completed shortly before the last Senedd election in 2021 and published in March 2022. It stated that although there were issues with the Measure, there was not enough time within the Fifth Senedd to begin a formal process to change the it.

The Welsh Government has highlighted that home to school transport accounts for a quarter of all local authority direct spending (i.e. not including delegated school budgets) on education. This is £207 million of £770 million in 2025-26.

An internal analysis and evaluation of learner travel was undertaken by Welsh Government officials during 2023. It said, given the planned reforms for the structure of the bus industry and significant challenges around budget pressures there should be no immediate amendment to the learner travel legislation.

One of the review's recommendations was to update the 2014 Operational Guidance. The Welsh Government is consulting on revised guidance between 11 June and 28 November 2025. Although the law underpinning learner travel has not changed, the guidance reflects changes to other legislation since the current guidance was published in 2014. The consultation document states that the aim of updating guidance is so that it:

- aligns with and amplifies legislative developments that have taken place since the guidance was originally published;
- provides clarity on transport provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN);
- strengthens guidance on Section 10 (promoting access to Welsh medium education) and Section 11 (promoting sustainable travel) of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure; and
- reflects some of the good practice that has been identified across Wales.

In May 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales held a summit bringing together representative bodies to discuss the challenges and practical solutions for improving learner travel. A [report of the summit has been published](#) and this set out a number of on-going workstreams.

4. Children's Commissioner for Wales

Issues relating to learner travel have been raised by many including parents, children and young people, and bodies who support them. Successive Children's Commissioners have [raised concerns for many years](#). These have included the length of walking distances and the suitability of walking routes. Although local authorities have to assess the safety of walking routes to schools, there is no duty to assess the safety of the routes that learners have to walk to catch school transport. The current Children's Commissioner, Rocio Cifuentes, has also [expressed concern](#) about the lack of school or college transport for post-16 learners and issues around transport for those with additional learning needs.

In her [response to the Welsh Government's Learner Travel Recommendations report](#), the Children's Commissioner said the review of the Measure was:

...totally inadequate, falling short of signalling any meaningful change to current guidance or legislation, and meaningful changes to children's experiences.

Learner travel again features in the Children's Commissioner's [annual report for 2024/25](#).

5. Welsh Parliament action

5.1. Plenary debate

There was a debate in [Plenary on 25 March 2025](#) regarding Learner Travel. Senedd Research published an [article](#) ahead of that debate.

5.2. Children, Young People and Education Committee

The issue of learner travel has arisen in a number of inquiries undertaken by the Children Young People and Education Committee:

[Pupil Absence](#) (November 2022) – the Committee heard that the cost of travel to and from school and its associated impact on school attendance. The Committee recommended that the Welsh Government should ensure that decisions on

learner travel are driven by the individual and specific needs of children and young people. The Welsh Government responded that it was looking at how they could take forward a wider programme of work to improve operator provision, and to better align transport with other wider policy aims, such as Welsh medium provision, support ALN pupils and consider provision to Further Education establishments.

Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare? (July 2024) - The Committee heard that learner travel challenges are greater for learners with ALN, and disabled and neurodiverse children and young people, with their ability to fully engage in all that schools can offer restricted by learner travel. The Committee also heard that the current guidance is applied inconsistently by different local authorities. The Committee noted its disappointment that the Learner Travel review (2024) was not more bold in terms of looking at more systematic change to the legislation underpinning learner travel. The Committee recommended that the Welsh Government prioritises the review and issuing of new statutory learner travel guidance. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation, confirming a review of the guidance was underway.

Routes into post-16 education and training (2025) – the Committee heard from a number of stakeholders that the cost and availability of learner transport to post-16 options impacted on learner choice. Its report was published on 12 November.

5.3. Petitions Committee

The Petitions Committee has considered two petitions in the Sixth Senedd in relation to home to school transport, in addition to the two referred to in this briefing.

P-06-1343 Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils (2023). This called for all learners in secondary schools to have free public transport to their catchment area secondary school. The Committee noted that work was ongoing and that the Bus Services (Wales) Bill would be passing through the Senedd. As significant work had been done on the issue, Members agreed that there was little more they could do and to close the petition on 4 November 2024.

P-06-1264 For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children (2022). The Committee noted that the issues covered by the Petition related to funding and was the responsibility of schools and local government to work together on safe routes to school. Members noted that significant activity had taken place in relation to learner travel since the petition was first considered in April 2022. The

Committee noted that work on bus transport for under 18s was ongoing and that the Bus Services (Wales) Bill would be passing through the Senedd and agreed to close the Petition on 2 November 2024.

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Agenda Item 2.3

P-06-1555 To review all guidance on Home to School Transport for all of Wales. Free access to an education

This petition was submitted by Tina Collins, having collected a total of 11,790 signatures.

Text of petition:

All Children attending an education should be able to attend a school or college without any struggle.

Our streets are no longer safe to walk on their own, especially those who are under 19 years of age.

With NO direct transport for an education for those who even HAVE to attend until their last day in year 11. These students struggle through underlying illness, hidden illness, or even undiagnosed.

The students who live in poverty and struggle to even travel on a public bus.

Additional information:

The years leading up to GCSE or A-LEVEL are the critical time of an education. Students should NOT be fighting to gain an education. This should be made easy.

A year 8 student tested his journey by foot from home to school one way.

This was a total of 1hr and 10mins. He has no underlying illnesses and plays sport after school. Carrying 6kg in his backpack and coat.

After this journey he complained of sore feet, his shoulders hurt and felt exhausted.

This is before a 6 hour day in cool dry weather conditions.

There is no storage for spare clothes or even a dry room to dry clothes.

Absenteeism is going to rise.

More cars will be on our roads leading to emissions increasing. Statistics for a child killed in a serious accident will rise.

Please review this legislation for the children to have an easier way of accessing and education or even before a child is serious hurt.

A child's voice needs to be heard. They are our priority are they yours?

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Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

Learner Travel / Home to School Transport petitions

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 24 Tachwedd 2025
Petitions Committee | 24 November 2025

Reference: SR25/12595-1

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Petition Number: [P-06-1533](#)

Petition title: Review and update Provisions 2-10 of The Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008.

Text of petition: We, the undersigned, request the Welsh Government to review and update provisions 2-10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008. Namely, local authorities' duty to assess learner travel needs and transport arrangements, including travel limits. Post-16 and nursery education travel. Equality in travel arrangements and promotion of the Welsh Language.

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Petition Number: P-06-1555

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- Section 2 requires local authorities to assess the travel needs of learners in primary, secondary or further education or training.
- Section 3 requires local authorities to make transport arrangements and provide free transport for eligible learners of compulsory school age if:
 - they live beyond the statutory walking distance from their nearest, suitable school (2 miles or more for primary schools and 3 miles or more for secondary school pupils (aged 11-16)); or

- there are no suitable walking routes.
- Section 4 requires local authorities to make other travel arrangements for example where learners have specific needs arising from a learning difficulty or a disability.
- Section 5 clarifies the limits of the duties under sections 3 and 4. For example, authorities are not required to provide arrangements if suitable education is available closer to home.
- Section 6 provides local authorities with discretionary powers to provide travel arrangements even when not required by law. Local authorities **may** use their discretionary powers to provide transport for learners who are not of compulsory school age or learners who are not attending their nearest, suitable school where it is a Welsh medium school or a faith school.
- Section 7 allows for local authorities to provide travel arrangements for learners aged 16 and over in further education or training, although this is not a statutory duty.
- Section 8 allows for local authorities to make travel arrangements to and from nursery education at their discretion.
- Section 9 sets out that travel arrangements must not favour certain types of education or training and must not discriminate between types of education or training.
- Section 10 requires local authorities to promote access to education and training through the medium of Welsh, including considering travel arrangements that support this aim.

3. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government began a review of learner travel arrangements in 2019, initially to consider issues around transport for post-16 learners. Progress was delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2020, the Welsh Government widened the scope of the review to consider the 4-16 age group, as well as the mileage thresholds for free transport eligibility.

On the publication of the One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket: Planning Buses as a Public Service for Wales White Paper (March 2022), the then Deputy

Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS, said the Welsh Government would take forward a wider programme of work that would consider a complete revision of the Learner Travel Measure.

At the same time, the Welsh Government also published the review originally announced in 2019. Among other things, the review found there was a need to update the operational guidance to ensure greater consistency. The review found there are wider issues beyond those covered by the current legislation including transport for older learners with Additional Learning Needs and for those in further education colleges. The review was completed shortly before the last Senedd election in 2021 and published in March 2022. It stated that although there were issues with the Measure, there was not enough time within the Fifth Senedd to begin a formal process to change the it.

The Welsh Government has highlighted that home to school transport accounts for a quarter of all local authority direct spending (i.e. not including delegated school budgets) on education. This is £207 million of £770 million in 2025-26.

An internal analysis and evaluation of learner travel was undertaken by Welsh Government officials during 2023. It said, given the planned reforms for the structure of the bus industry and significant challenges around budget pressures there should be no immediate amendment to the learner travel legislation.

One of the review's recommendations was to update the 2014 Operational Guidance. The Welsh Government is consulting on revised guidance between 11 June and 28 November 2025. Although the law underpinning learner travel has not changed, the guidance reflects changes to other legislation since the current guidance was published in 2014. The consultation document states that the aim of updating guidance is so that it:

- aligns with and amplifies legislative developments that have taken place since the guidance was originally published;
- provides clarity on transport provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN);
- strengthens guidance on Section 10 (promoting access to Welsh medium education) and Section 11 (promoting sustainable travel) of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure; and
- reflects some of the good practice that has been identified across Wales.

In May 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales held a summit bringing together representative bodies to discuss the challenges and practical solutions for improving learner travel. A [report of the summit has been published](#) and this set out a number of on-going workstreams.

4. Children's Commissioner for Wales

Issues relating to learner travel have been raised by many including parents, children and young people, and bodies who support them. Successive Children's Commissioners have [raised concerns for many years](#). These have included the length of walking distances and the suitability of walking routes. Although local authorities have to assess the safety of walking routes to schools, there is no duty to assess the safety of the routes that learners have to walk to catch school transport. The current Children's Commissioner, Rocio Cifuentes, has also [expressed concern](#) about the lack of school or college transport for post-16 learners and issues around transport for those with additional learning needs.

In her [response to the Welsh Government's Learner Travel Recommendations report](#), the Children's Commissioner said the review of the Measure was:

...totally inadequate, falling short of signalling any meaningful change to current guidance or legislation, and meaningful changes to children's experiences.

Learner travel again features in the Children's Commissioner's [annual report for 2024/25](#).

5. Welsh Parliament action

5.1. Plenary debate

There was a debate in [Plenary on 25 March 2025](#) regarding Learner Travel. Senedd Research published an [article](#) ahead of that debate.

5.2. Children, Young People and Education Committee

The issue of learner travel has arisen in a number of inquiries undertaken by the Children Young People and Education Committee:

[Pupil Absence](#) (November 2022) – the Committee heard that the cost of travel to and from school and its associated impact on school attendance. The Committee recommended that the Welsh Government should ensure that decisions on

learner travel are driven by the individual and specific needs of children and young people. The Welsh Government responded that it was looking at how they could take forward a wider programme of work to improve operator provision, and to better align transport with other wider policy aims, such as Welsh medium provision, support ALN pupils and consider provision to Further Education establishments.

Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare? (July 2024) - The Committee heard that learner travel challenges are greater for learners with ALN, and disabled and neurodiverse children and young people, with their ability to fully engage in all that schools can offer restricted by learner travel. The Committee also heard that the current guidance is applied inconsistently by different local authorities. The Committee noted its disappointment that the Learner Travel review (2024) was not more bold in terms of looking at more systematic change to the legislation underpinning learner travel. The Committee recommended that the Welsh Government prioritises the review and issuing of new statutory learner travel guidance. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation, confirming a review of the guidance was underway.

Routes into post-16 education and training (2025) – the Committee heard from a number of stakeholders that the cost and availability of learner transport to post-16 options impacted on learner choice. Its report was published on 12 November.

5.3. Petitions Committee

The Petitions Committee has considered two petitions in the Sixth Senedd in relation to home to school transport, in addition to the two referred to in this briefing.

P-06-1343 Provide free public transport for all secondary school pupils (2023). This called for all learners in secondary schools to have free public transport to their catchment area secondary school. The Committee noted that work was ongoing and that the Bus Services (Wales) Bill would be passing through the Senedd. As significant work had been done on the issue, Members agreed that there was little more they could do and to close the petition on 4 November 2024.

P-06-1264 For school transport guaranteed for all comprehensive children (2022). The Committee noted that the issues covered by the Petition related to funding and was the responsibility of schools and local government to work together on safe routes to school. Members noted that significant activity had taken place in relation to learner travel since the petition was first considered in April 2022. The

Committee noted that work on bus transport for under 18s was ongoing and that the Bus Services (Wales) Bill would be passing through the Senedd and agreed to close the Petition on 2 November 2024.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Petition-06-1555. To review all guidance on Home to school for ALL of Wales. Free access to an education.

Dear Chair,

Thank you for forwarding the information collated regarding the above mentioned petition which I instigated, as part of my role within the Save the School Transport RCT campaign.

I'm grateful for the time you've spent as a committee considering this matter, which effects pupils and parents all across Wales as is evident from the response to the petition.

It's clear that the Learner Travel Measure and the accompanying guidance is not working as it should in it's current form, and our calls are clear – a review is long overdue, and we need a system that supports children to access education.

A review has been initiated by government a number of times, but three times, the review has been delayed or pushed back. In the meantime, there are increasing concerns about student safety which comes through clearly in the lived experiences of both students and parents which we've collated over the course of our campaign and which has previously been shared with the committee.

The current consultation on guidance suggests that it is reasonable for a 5 to 10 year old to walk 45 minutes one way to school, so potentially 90 minutes a day to and from school, and for a 11 to 19 year old to walk 75 minutes one way, so a total of 150 minutes a day to and from school. This is absurd, especially in winter when it is dark both in the mornings and evenings and also in wet weather. Many of the routes deemed safe are not safe in the eyes of pupils nor their parents, and it is clear – we would not expect adults to walk such distances and such routes to reach a place of work.

Where public transport options are available, affordability is a huge factor with many parents telling us of the financial difficulties this is placing on them with some having to choose between being able to afford food for their family or sending their children to school on certain occasions. Other parents have had to give up work, or reduced their hours, in order to be able to take their children to and from school meaning that they are left in poverty. Given the increasing child poverty levels in Wales, as well as the increasing attainment gap, this should be of great concern.

The Cabinet Secretary references Heledd Fychan MS' debate on Home to school transport which took place on the 8th October, and her advocacy for our campaign. I watched the debate and must admit, I thought the response was appalling and failed to address the concerns expressed by us as parents and pupils. This has been the case for the duration of the campaign, with all of our requests to meet with both RCT Council Cabinet members and the Welsh Government ignored. We weren't even invited as a campaign group to attend the Learner Travel Summit in Pontypridd when it took place earlier this year, despite our interest and research into this issue.

On countless occasions now, we've presented valid information collected from students and parents from not just RCT but all of Wales which would improve the Learner Travel Measure and guidance so that it supports all pupils. And though the Welsh Government has done some things, such as the introduction of the £1 bus fare, too many barriers remain to access education linked to transport.

To take just one recent example -a bus company in Bridgend has gone on strike which impacts both pupils, their parents and all reliant on the bus in that areas. In RCT, we've also had parents reporting since 1st November that some secondary school children are being

charged £1.50 per journey or being advised by the public bus drivers to download the my travel app even if they are 15 years old or younger. There's a great of confusion, and also misinformation, leading to the policy being inconsistently implemented. This has to be addressed, and urgently.

Further, public bus services remain in many areas unreliable, and there are also safeguarding issues identified as well as concerns over how the policy impact children with ALN, disabilities or mental health issues. Furthermore, the measure does not take into account the geography of Wales, and especially the steep inclines which we see in our Valleys. This means that cycling isn't an option for many of our pupils, so that walking is the only active travel option for many.

The Bus Bill, currently going through the Senedd, could address some of these concerns but unfortunately, we understand it is not currently intended that school transport forms part of the Bill. We urge the Welsh Government to reconsider.

In the report produced following the Learner Travel Summit, reference is made to parental responsibility. Parents understand their responsibilities, but currently, we don't see an understanding from local authorities in terms of how this one size fits all approach fails to take into account the individual circumstances of each family. Some families for instance have children in different schools, miles apart, and no means of getting them there as car ownership is low in many of our communities. Some have children with health conditions or anxiety which makes it difficult for them to go on public transport or walk to school, yet this is often disregarded. And even when parents do have access to a vehicle, some have no option but to reduce working hours or leave employment completely because employers were unwilling to change their working hours. The increase in learners being driven to school also increases traffic around our schools as well as emissions.

Many of our parents have also cited that they would be willing to pay for a seat on a bus, but in many authorities, that is no longer an option. We believe this is a real concern as the payment option gave parents the comfort of knowing that their child had a direct and safe way of getting to and from school. This also reduced stress for pupils, especially those with ALN, anxiety or who are being bullied. It also meant less children arriving to school in wet clothes, and also more arriving to school on time. After all, being late to some students can be very stressful. For example, my daughter frets about being two minutes late as she doesn't want a late mark, or to be punished with a warning or detention.

We need a school transport system that works for the whole of Wales, and takes into account the differences in urban and rural areas, as well as different geographical considerations. Every local authority area is different, and every pupils situations are different. Below are some suggestions from students and parents about possible solution:

- a bus pass for all pupils and students, like the one that's available for pensioners.
- regular bus service to and from schools.
- having a option to pay for direct school transport.
- working with students in each school to develop transport plans, including active travel, with a travel advocate to help with suggestions from students.

Students without disabilities don't want to be left behind. ALL student voices should be heard. After conducting research 90% out of 565 students wanted a direct bus to education.

I have attached some students and parent statements and concerns. Hopefully this will help guide your decision for a debate on this important issue.

Another attachment is the research collected and sent to Children and Young people Committee, Local Authorities and some elected representatives.

There are Headteachers, teachers, support staff, coach and taxi companies, Councillors, MSs and MPs who share our concerns and are having to support pupils and parents who are impacted by this policy. It's clear that something has to change.

I will look forward to the 24th November and hopefully, an agreement by the committee to progress a debate on the floor of the Senedd.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the additional information. Should anything further be required, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Tina Collins

Agenda Item 3.1

P-06-1258 Make individuals in Wales with Hidden disabilities eligible for the Blue Badge

This petition was submitted by Non Angharad Williams, having collected a total of 86 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Living with a Chronic illness on a daily basis and could be of a benefit of having a Blue badge Card due to needing a quick, easy parking spot when in need of a toilet urgently.

Additional Information:

Individuals with Hidden disabilities such as Crohn's and Colitis should be supported in having easy, quick accessible parking spots such as disabled parking as needing the toilet urgently.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Dwyfor Meirionnydd
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1258
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/01723/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

07 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 15 October regarding petitions P-06-1258 and P-06-1380.

I can confirm that my officials have already received a copy of the survey undertaken by STAND north Wales and I would like to thank them for their work and their findings have been noted.

As the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and I have previously highlighted, we are committed to ensuring that the Blue Badge scheme remains robust and fair, and that the process of obtaining a badge is as efficient as possible.

I have provided the committee with a copy of my [written statement](#) on the Review of the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales. The review provided 5 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Welsh Government. Officials are now in the process of considering and acting on those recommendations.

As part of this work, a Blue Badge workgroup was held by officials with 22 local authorities and stakeholders in June this year. Following this workgroup, two further training sessions were held in July for local authority staff, specifically on streamlining applications 'Not for Reassessment'. STAND north Wales shared their personal experiences of applying and reapplying for a blue badge at these sessions.

To reinforce this work, additional guidance has been provided to local authorities and they have been encouraged to use the 'Not for Reassessment' route, where only proof of identity and address are required, when they are satisfied that applicants will permanently meet the eligibility criteria.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.

This work continues to be progressed with involvement from the WLGA, who are also leading a focused group with local authorities to consider good practice on information available to Blue Badge applicants and to support those that cannot apply digitally or need further assistance from local authorities.

Our goal remains to make the process of obtaining a badge efficient, effective and stress-free as possible. I am grateful to both petitioners for highlighting their concerns and their experiences and feedback will continue to be shared as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', followed by a large, stylized flourish consisting of several overlapping loops.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Agenda Item 3.2

P-06-1380 Make Blue badge Applications Lifelong for individuals who have a lifelong diagnosis

This petition was submitted by STAND NW CIC, having collected a total of 1,618 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Not all disabilities are the same, some are life long, meaning they do not change over time.

Unfortunately, current guidelines require individuals with lifelong diagnoses, which include learning disabilities or profound and complex needs, to reapply for a blue badge every three years. This process can be very frustrating and time consuming for both individuals and their caregivers and focus heavily on the negative aspects of an individual's abilities.

Additional Information:

The Equality Act 2010, states, a disability is a physical or mental condition that has a substantial and long-term impact on a person's ability to do normal day-to-day activities, it states it allows for the better or more favourable treatment of people with impairments based on the evidence given, to provide equality of opportunity.

We believe that the process should be updated to better support those with disabilities by making life easier for those with lifelong conditions.

We are therefore proposing a change, we are calling for the Welsh Government to change their current process when applying for blue badges, to give what's right and to support disabled people.

The change would be, that if a person applies for a blue badge due to a lifelong medical condition that is not expected to change, and their supporting health notes confirm this, then a blue badge should be granted for their lifetime.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Vale of Clwyd
- North Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1380
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/01727/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

07 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October regarding petitions P-06-1258 and P-06-1380.

I can confirm that my officials have already received a copy of the survey undertaken by STAND north Wales and I would like to thank them for their work and their findings have been noted.

As the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and I have previously highlighted, we are committed to ensuring that the Blue Badge scheme remains robust and fair, and that the process of obtaining a badge is as efficient as possible.

I have provided the committee with a copy of my [written statement](#) on the Review of the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales. The review provided 5 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Welsh Government. Officials are now in the process of considering and acting on those recommendations.

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To reinforce this work, additional guidance has been provided to local authorities and they have been encouraged to use the 'Not for Reassessment' route, where only proof of identity and address are required, when they are satisfied that applicants will permanently meet the eligibility criteria.

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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.

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Our goal remains to make the process of obtaining a badge efficient, effective and stress-free as possible. I am grateful to both petitioners for highlighting their concerns and their experiences and feedback will continue to be shared as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

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Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales



Dr Chris Llewelyn

Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive

**Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru
Welsh Local Government Association**

Un Rhodfa'r Gamlas

Heol Dumballs

Caerdydd

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Ffôn: 029 2046 8600

One Canal Parade

Dumballs Road

Cardiff

CF10 5BF

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Ein Cyf / Our Ref: Blue badge

Dyddiad / Date: 14/11/2025

Gofynnwch am / Please ask for: Kaarina Ruta

Llinell uniongyrchol / Direct line: 07990 280868

Ebost / Email: kaarina.ruta@wlga.gov.uk

Chair – Petitions Committee

Senedd Cymru

Cardiff Bay

Cardiff CF99 1SN

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter from the 15th of October and for sharing STAND North Wales' survey findings. I am saddened to hear that the feedback gathered through their survey highlights widespread dissatisfaction with the current Blue Badge application and reapplication process.

As you will be aware, WLGA officers attended the additional training sessions organised by the Welsh Government and delivered by the Independent Advisory Service specifically focusing on the more streamlined application process for those people with significant degenerative conditions.

Further additional training sessions for local authority officers are being offered now in November.

The training will cover the following aims and objectives:

- The overview of the Welsh blue badge criteria including physical and or cognitive criteria
- To understand common physical conditions symptoms including pain scale, dyspnoea scale and medications
- To understand common cognitive conditions and symptoms and to be able to identify the types of evidence required from general physical and cognitive cases.
- Case studies

I am also pleased to inform you that the WLGA and WG have set up a working group initially consisting of officers from local authorities, to consider how to drive consistency on various matters relating to The Blue Badge Scheme and the application process.

This group will be opened to stakeholders at a later stage to get further insights from people with lived experience or those representing people with blue badges.

This is a non-exhaustive list of matters to be considered by the group:

- Website content to ensure consistency and information provided by each local authority to establish good practice (providing standard text that can be tailored to local use)
- How to contact the local authority about blue badge and what assistance is available (especially for those individuals who are unable to use the online Blue Badge Digital System)
- The use of Not for Reassessment (NfR) option
- Process to follow when badge holders move from one local authority to another in Wales (especially if marked as NfR)
- Clear signposting to WG blue badge webpage and the Welsh Public Service Ombudsman

I will continue to be updated on the progress being made by my officers and will keep you informed of any significant changes or progress.

Kind regards,



Councillor Andrew Morgan OBE
WLGA Leader and Transport Spokesperson



STAND North Wales CIC
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Yvonne Brookes – Tel: 07826108273
Email: yvonne@standnw.org

14th November 2025

Dear Petitions Committee

Thank you for informing us of the new date for the petition to be discussed and for the attached response, letter from KS to CT.

Can we enquire if there have been any further discussions following the last Petitions Committee meeting, and if there are any updates you're able to share?

Following the plenary session on 22nd October 25, we had thought there would be a meeting between Jane Hutt and Ken Skates following Jane Hutt's response to Mark Isherwood's question.

MI - Earlier this month, in his latest response to my correspondence on behalf of a constituent regarding the blue badge scheme, the transport Secretary explained, once again, that local authorities administer the scheme using guidance and a toolkit issued by the Welsh Government. However, it is inconsistent top-down local authority interpretation of this guidance that leads repeatedly to disabled applicants being denied a new or renewed blue badge. The Welsh Government's continued refusal to deliver a life award for those with lifelong non-improving conditions defies logic and challenges the Welsh Government's claim to champion the social model of disability. What action will you therefore take to ensure that proper attention is given to the findings from the stakeholder survey conducted this summer by STAND North Wales CIC, which received 636 responses from 20 counties in Wales in just 25 days, and which found, and I quote:121

'The current Blue Badge system in Wales creates barriers rather than removing them, contradicting the goals of disability rights legislation'?122

It recommended changes, including a life award, to better serve disabled individuals and carers across Wales and fulfil the Welsh Government's legal and moral responsibilities. I'd be grateful to hear whether you will give that attention. And would like to respond to KS Letter

JH - Thank you very much, Mark Isherwood. I certainly will be giving this attention alongside the Cabinet Secretary for transport

The current Blue Badge Scheme in Wales fails to uphold the Welsh Government's stated commitment to the Social Model of Disability, social justice, and its equality and human rights duties under the Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), Human Rights Act 1998, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Currently

No lifetime awards for lifelong conditions

Individuals with lifelong diagnoses or permanent disabilities are not eligible for lifetime Blue Badges.

- This undermines dignity and autonomy, forcing disabled people into repeated cycles of reassessment that waste time, money, and emotional energy. From the perspective of the Social Model of Disability, these unnecessary barriers are created by the system, not by impairment. A socially just system would recognise permanence, remove avoidable hurdles, and reduce repeated burdens on individuals and families.

Renewals are treated as first-time applications

Each renewal is processed as if it were a new application, as quoted by blue badge team administrator

- This ignores the permanence of certain disabilities and forces applicants to repeatedly 'prove' their condition, creating unnecessary stress, expense, and delay. This is a clear example of disabling bureaucracy, inconsistent with the Social Model of Disability

No renewal reminders – leading to fines

- There is no system to notify badge holders when their badge is due to expire.

Those with cognitive impairments, learning disabilities may be unaware their badge has lapsed. The absence of reminders is directly resulting in avoidable fines, vehicle penalties, and unnecessary financial hardship, outcomes that punish disabled people for administrative oversight. From the Social Model of Disability perspective, these negative outcomes are caused by systemic barriers, not by the individual's impairment.

Delays and Limited Reassessment Exemptions

Many applicants experience long delays in processing and decision-making

- These delays and repeated assessments cause unnecessary stress, uncertainty, and loss of independence for disabled people and their families.

- From the Social Model of Disability perspective, these delays and procedural barriers are created by the system, not by an individual's impairment.

No appeal process

There is no appeal process for applicants who are refused a new or renewed Blue Badge Applicants

- This lack of clarity and accountability denies fairness and contradicts the principles of equality and social justice, leaving applicants without any way to challenge inconsistent or unfair decisions.
- From the perspective of the Social Model of Disability, these barriers are created by the system rather than the individual's impairment.

Inconsistent interpretation by local authorities

Local Authorities interpret Welsh Government guidance differently, producing unequal outcomes across Wales which results in a postcode lottery

- There are many inconsistencies across Local authorities in how they interpret Welsh Government guidance, creating unequal outcomes across Wales and resulting in a postcode lottery. This inconsistency leads to unfair treatment and undermines the goal of equal access to public services.
- From the Social Model of Disability perspective, these inequalities are not caused by individual's impairments but by systemic and administrative barriers.

Prioritising Mobility over Severe Cognitive and Hidden Disabilities

The Blue Badge application process places a heavy focus on physical mobility, often excluding individuals with cognitive or hidden disabilities.

- Although Welsh Government guidance recognises eligibility for people with severe cognitive impairments, many applicants are still denied badges due to inconsistent interpretation, insufficient assessor training, and some not being properly included within the assessment criteria.
- From the view of the Social Model of Disability, this approach fails to recognise that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairments. A fair and inclusive system would ensure that hidden and cognitive disabilities are equally understood, respected, and accommodated within the eligibility criteria and assessment process.

Legislative and Policy Duties

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

Public bodies have a duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations for people with protected characteristics, including disability.

- Failing to provide reminders, reasonable adjustments, or consistent decision-making in the Blue Badge process breaches these duties.
- It also undermines the requirement to eliminate **discrimination** and to advance equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

Requires local authorities to promote independence and well-being.

- The current Blue Badge process undermines these principles by placing unnecessary dependency on others and stress forcing disabled people to rely more on others

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Requires public bodies to promote a more equal Wales and adopt long-term, preventative approaches.

- The current Blue Badge process, which requires repeated reassessments and does not prevent unnecessary fines, is not sustainable or equitable, undermining the Act's goals of equality and long-term well-being.

Human Rights Act 1998

Public bodies must respect and protect people's human rights.

- The Blue Badge process, with repeated reassessments and stress, can limit rights to family life (A8) and freedom from discrimination (A14).
- Failing to provide fair, consistent, and accessible procedures undermines the dignity and equality of disabled people.

Although the Welsh Government says it follows the Social Model of Disability, the way the Blue Badge process works does not reflect this in practice. The process still places responsibility on disabled people to prove their needs, instead of removing the barriers created by the system itself.

Repeated reassessments, lack of reminders, no appeal process, and inconsistent decisions between local authorities all show that the system is still based on a medical view of disability rather than a social one.

To truly apply the Social Model, the Blue Badge process needs to recognise lifelong conditions, reduce unnecessary paperwork, and make the system fair, consistent, and respectful for all disabled people across Wales.

Responding to KS letter to CT dated 7th November

Petitioners feel that the most recent response is very similar to previous ones, appearing generic and repetitive, as though copied and pasted. There is a strong view that Ken Skates, has not fully engaged with or considered the detailed information and evidence submitted by petitioners.

Additionally, Ken Skates continues to focus primarily on the 'mobility' criteria for Blue Badges. There is significant concern about the ongoing lack of reference to individuals with severe cognitive impairments and hidden disabilities, whose needs are equally relevant and must be properly recognised

"I can confirm that my officials have already received a copy of the survey undertaken by STAND north Wales and I would like to thank them for their work, and their findings have been noted.

We are pleased that Ken Skates has received the survey, however, we are disappointed that we have not yet received any response or feedback on our findings, leaving us wondering which points have been noted.

Also, despite several invitations to meet, particularly given that his constituency is close to STAND North Wales CIC, Ken Skates has so far declined, which raises the question of why?

As the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and I have previously highlighted, we are committed to ensuring that the Blue Badge scheme remains robust and fair, and that the process of obtaining a badge is as efficient as possible.

Despite stating commitment to ensuring the Blue Badge scheme remains robust, fair, and efficient, the current renewal process undermines these aims and fails to uphold Wales's obligations under the Social Model of Disability, Social Justice principles, and the Equality and Human Rights legislative framework.

The current process, results in bureaucratic repetition, creates unnecessary administrative and emotional burden on disabled people, inflicts a process based barrier that conflicts with the Social Model of Disability, which identifies disabling barriers in systems, contradicts the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, which requires public bodies to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, is inconsistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which both prioritise dignity, independence, and reducing inequality.

I have provided the committee with a copy of my written statement on the Review of the Blue Badge Scheme in Wales. The review provided 5 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Welsh Government. Officials are now in the process of considering and acting on those recommendations. As part of this work, a Blue Badge workgroup was held by officials with 22 local authorities and stakeholders in June this year. Following this workgroup, two further training sessions were held in July for local authority staff, specifically on streamlining applications 'Not for Reassessment'. STAND north Wales shared their personal experiences of applying and reapplying for a blue badge at these sessions.

Representatives from STAND North Wales and petitioners were invited to the Blue Badge workshop on 17 July 2025. And were very grateful for the opportunity, they felt that their stories had some impact on local authority members. However, it was felt that it was largely a tick box exercise.

Participants were asked to share their lived experiences and were then asked to leave the meeting, with no opportunity to listen or participate in the following discussions. Furthermore, the Teams chat which was still visible to us, showed confusion among local authority officers about and how to apply the 'Not for Reassessment' process, a key part of the reforms meant to reduce unnecessary reapplications for those with permanent disabilities.

This experience shows that while consultation took place, it lacked substantial participation or co-production, excluding the very people most affected by the policy and failed to reflect the Welsh Government's commitment to the Social Model of Disability.

- **Social Model of Disability:** Genuine inclusion means involving people with lived experience as equal partner, excluding them from meaningful discussion reproduces systemic barriers.
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):** 'Requires public bodies to advance equality of opportunity and involve people with protected characteristics in shaping services that affect them'. Tick box consultation does not meet this standard.
- **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:** 'Embeds voice, choice, and control' for people in designing and receiving support.
- **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:** Demands 'involvement' as one of its five ways of working, ensuring that people have a real say in decisions that affect their lives.
- **Human Rights Act 1998:** Genuine participation and respect for dignity are core to rights-based policymaking.

Our goal remains to make the process of obtaining a badge efficient, effective and stress-free as possible. I am grateful to both petitioners for highlighting their concerns and their experiences and feedback will continue to be shared as this work progresses.

Ken Skates, states that WG goal is to make the Blue Badge process as '*efficient, effective, and stress-free as possible*', the lived experience of applicants tells a very different story, see below and blue badge survey report

STAND North Wales CIC survey conducted over 25 days, with 636 participants, found that the renewal process caused:

- **Stress** for 77.6% (492 respondents)
- **Loss of independence** for 34.5% (219 respondents)
- **Extra costs** for 22.1% (140 respondents)
- **Isolation** for 19.1% (121 respondents)

These findings clearly show that, for the majority of applicants, the current Blue Badge renewal process is far from stress free. Instead, it is causing significant emotional, financial, and social strain directly contradicting the Welsh Government's stated aims.

Recommendations from the STAND North Wales Blue Badge Survey Report

- A) Introduce a Lifetime Award for individuals with lifelong, non-improving conditions, eliminating the need for reassessment and repeated applications.
- B) Improve Communication and Reminders
- C) Implement an automatic reminder system to inform individuals before their badge expires.
- D) Address Hidden Disabilities
- E) Ensure assessors are appropriately trained to consider a wide range of disabilities, including hidden and non-mobility related disabilities
- F) Reduce Bureaucracy
- G) Streamline the application process and reduce the need for repeated evidence, particularly where a lifelong condition is medically confirmed
- H) Uphold Rights and Dignity
- I) Design policies in line with equality, human rights, and social justice obligations.

Implementing these recommendations would make the Blue Badge process fairer, more efficient, and sustainable, reflecting the Social Model of Disability, which recognises that systemic barriers, not impairments, disable people. A Lifetime Award for individuals with lifelong, non-improving conditions would reduce repeated assessments, saving time and resources for applicants and local authorities. Improved communication, reminders, and assessor training would ensure hidden and cognitive disabilities are properly recognised, enhancing service quality. While

some initial investment would be required, the long-term benefits - reduced costs, fewer complaints, and greater trust, would outweigh these. The changes would remove systemic barriers, uphold dignity, promote equality and inclusion, and ensure disabled people and their carers have equal access to participate in everyday life, aligning the scheme with social justice principles and legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, PSED, Human Rights Act 1998, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Please find attached:

- Blue Badge Survey Report
- Additional comments and experiences from survey participants (previously submitted)
- Correspondence sent to Ken Skates and Jane Hutt with concerns
- Correspondence from petitioners responding to recommendations and raising questions - many of which remain unanswered

Agenda Item 3.3

P-06-1476 1000 meter mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries

This petition was submitted by Monika Golebiewska, having collected 1,585 signatures online and 9,888 signatures on paper, making for a total of 11,473 signatures.

Text of Petition:

Ensure mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries in Wales. We propose at least 1,000.00 meters buffer zone from all residential areas, schools, hospitals, and care facilities. Currently the law allows for quarries to be located as close as 200 meters away from residential areas and schools. This is affecting people's health and causing damage to property. The bigger buffer zone we can have the better.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1476
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/00849/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

16 October 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition P-06-1476: *1000 metre mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries.*

As I have previously outlined, the principles contained in MTAN1 are still valid. MTAN1 provides comprehensive planning policy which is robust in controlling the impacts of quarrying. It should be read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales which is kept under regular review, and which sets out the general policies for all mineral development.

It is not appropriate for the Welsh Government to determine a list of things that may or may not be considered evidence. Members and stakeholders need to determine themselves what matters they feel are relevant to demonstrate and support any specific amendments to policy and submit that information for consideration.

In the Senedd debate in June, I set out that if colleagues consider that the content of MTAN1 is out of date then the Welsh Government would need them to provide the evidence.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

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.

Agenda Item 3.4

P-06-1499 Stop the use of term 'Universal Provision' as a reason to deny ALN

This petition was submitted by Victoria Lightbown, having collected 1,454 signatures.

Text of petition:

Over recent months there has been much discussion around the term Universal Provision. ALNET and Welsh Government have given clear guidance as to what this term means. Yet, despite this clarification, Local Authorities and members of Welsh Government continue to allow this term to be used to refuse a learner ALN status and provide ALP. There can only be one solution and that is that this term is banned from use.

Additional information:

While members of Welsh Government still use this term when discussing ALN, including during media interviews, it gives LA's opportunity to follow suit, and continue to deny ALN to learners.

There is ongoing work through the Education reform inquiry and CYPE committee however, there are still ongoing issues with families that arise that show inconsistencies amongst authorities and Welsh Government in Wales.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

14 July 2025

Re. Petition P-06-1499 Stop the use of term 'Universal Provision' as a reason to deny ALN

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for **your letter dated 24 June** bringing the above petition to our attention.

As you note in your letter, we are currently undertaking **a Senedd-long inquiry** into the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 ("the ALN Act"). The petition raises a concern that we have heard frequently throughout our inquiry: that some schools and local authorities are not recognising that children have ALN because they believe that their learning needs can be met via so-called 'universal provision'. These concerns have been raised in the context of the significant reduction (44%) in the numbers of children who are formally identified as having Special Educational Needs/ALN since the introduction of the ALN Act.¹

We currently have no plans to consider the petitioner's specific request to prevent the use of the term 'universal provision'. However, in our July 2024 interim report we recommended that the Welsh Government define what 'universal provision' means in practice to better understand the point at which routine differentiation tips into Additional Learning Provision.² The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation, and has confirmed that this issue would be considered as part of a review due to report during summer 2025.³ We will therefore be considering this issue, and the implementation of the ALN Act more broadly, as part of our work on this inquiry in the autumn 2025/spring 2026. This petition will form part of the evidence feeding into that work.

¹ Welsh Parliament, '**Implementation of education reforms: In Brief**', 14 October 2024

² Welsh Parliament, '**Implementation of education reforms: Interim report**', July 2024, paragraphs 64-66

³ Welsh Government, '**The Implementation of education reforms: Response to the CYPE Committee interim report (July 2024)**', 11 September 2024, page 4

More details about the inquiry can be found on our [inquiry web page](#), which contains a link to our open consultation, to which the petitioner can respond. We also issue periodic email updates to individuals and stakeholders who have expressed an interest in our work. If the petitioner would like to receive these updates please ask them to contact us to request to be added to our mailing list.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS

Chair

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Agenda Item 3.5

P-06-1502 Scrap Proposals for a Tourism Tax

Text of petition:

The recent proposals for a tourism tax in Wales are an ill thought out means of generating revenue for the Welsh Government, especially during a cost of living crisis.

This is fundamentally anti-business and counterproductive to the intent of the proposals as any tourism levy will lead to fewer tourists holidaying to Wales and less tax generated for the government.

Please sign this petition to indicate to the Finance Secretary the dissent of the public at these crudely drawn up plans.

Additional information:

As the current proposal stands, a £1.25 charge to each person (inc. children) staying overnight at a hotel in a council that applies this charge would amount to £25 for a family of 4 staying for 5 nights.

When adding this on top of cost of accommodation, parking fees, cost of eating out and travel costs, this would make Wales an even less appealing holiday destination than equivalent destinations across the border with England which doesn't operate such a policy.

This will inevitably result in reduced visitors, reduced money for businesses reliant on tourism and an overall negative reputation that Wales will earn from anyone previously wishing to visit.

The fact that the Finance Secretary Mr. Drakeford is wilfully ignoring the concerns of the report drawn up by the Commons Welsh Affairs Committee

that introducing such a tax may deter visitors speaks volumes about his abject blindness at how such a policy may affect actual working people.

Senedd Constituency and Region:

- Aberavon
- South Wales West

Agenda Item 3.6

P-06-1519 Implement safety measures at the A477 Red Roses junction to reduce accidents and stop any fatalities

This petition was submitted by Victoria Mitchell, having collected 554 signatures online and 140 signatures on paper, making for a total of 694 signatures.

Text of petition:

The A477 from St Clears west into Pembrokeshire is a busy route used by local residents, holiday traffic, ferry traffic and deliveries throughout West Wales

The Red Roses junction is a 90 degree turn at the bottom of a hill with no slip road. You can take it at no more than 20mph, with trunk road traffic behind you travelling downhill at often 70mph, and no way to move off the main A477. It is frightening.

We ask the Welsh Government to make this a safe junction before lives are lost.

Additional information:

Ever since the junction was opened in 2014 local residents have been campaigning to have this junction improved. The signpost has been hit many times. Vehicles have gone through crash barriers and ended up in the nearby ditch. There have been multiple collisions reported to the police and many many more near misses we know about. Welsh Government's own December 2021 monitoring stated 57% of vehicles were exceeding the speed limit.

Past and present local politicians supported our cause, but the Welsh Government responds with such as 'accidents rates are below 60% of the typical rate for comparable roads' [quote from Minister's letter July 2019]. We consider that the junction needs good lighting - it has no lighting at all currently - and proper speed reduction measures at the junction approach. Really it also needs a slip road so that vehicles can reduce speed safely off the main carriageway.

Please support our petition to improve the safety of this stretch of road.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1519
Ein cyf/Our ref KSNWT/01624/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

20 October 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 2 October regarding Petition P-06-1519 Implement safety measures at the A477 Red Roses junction to reduce accidents and stop any fatalities.

Monitoring of road safety at this location is carried out through regular annual collision cluster analysis, using validated police-provided data. This is the standard approach across the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in Wales.

The police record information about incidents they attend and periodically provide data related to personal injury collisions to Welsh Government to enable us to determine whether further mitigation measures are required at specific areas, such as a change in speed limit or engineering measures to improve road safety. We do not receive information related to incidents where there have been no personal injuries. In addition, any incidents that aren't reported to the police will not be recorded.

Incidents involving property damage only (e.g. sign strikes), near misses, or minor shunts, unless reported and involving injury, are not captured in the dataset used for safety assessments. Data from external sources, such as Carmarthenshire County Council or insurance companies is not routinely included.

We do not routinely monitor all sections of the network via CCTV. At this location, a high-mast CCTV survey was undertaken over a 7-day period (24 hours per day) from 15 December 2021 to 21 December 2021. This survey included a turning movement analysis and speed survey.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales

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.

Future monitoring will continue to be based on recorded accident statistics. A new CCTV survey will be undertaken at this location to assess the effectiveness of recently implemented short-term measures at the site following a short bedding-in period for drivers to become familiar with the changes.

In terms of alternative methods of monitoring, the use of elevated vantage points, such as nearby bridges, requires appropriate permissions. Equipment placement on a bridge must comply with safety and access regulations, making installations more complex. At present, the number of recorded collisions at this location does not justify prioritising it over other SRN sites in Wales for enhanced monitoring. Future speed monitoring will be considered and guided by updated incident data.

Street lighting assessments are typically undertaken where there is evidence of multiple night-time incidents. At Red Roses junction, only one such incident has been recorded. The current data does not suggest a need for carrying out the assessment and does not suggest a need to prioritise a street lighting assessment or installation at this location over other sites. Any future assessment should be carried out in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), subject to the availability of funding and the appointment of specialist consultants.

However, in view of the concerns raised, I have asked my officials to commission a street lighting assessment at Red Roses junction when funding becomes available, to determine whether street lighting is justified at this location based on safety considerations.

With regards to a full road-width pressure strip (speed tubes), this would be logistically challenging and potentially unreliable. A laser-based 'box' system would be a more practical alternative as they are simpler to install, less susceptible to damage, and provide reliable speed data.

A speed survey would normally be commissioned if speeding concerns persist once the new traffic management measures have been installed and an appropriate settling-in period has passed. However, due to the concerns raised, my officials will arrange the installation of appropriate speed monitoring equipment to assess driver behaviour and the effectiveness of the measures following a bedding in period.

I understand the concerns raised regarding the sharp 90-degree left turn off the main A-road at the bottom of a hill, and the suggestion to introduce a slip road or modify the verge to ease the turning angle.

As discussed during the petitioner's meeting with my officials, the junction was designed in accordance with the DMRB applicable at the time. Any proposal to alter the geometry, such as "cutting off the corner" to reduce the severity of the turn, would constitute a Departure from Standard, requiring formal submission to and approval by the Departures Panel. Such approval is unlikely, as introducing a non-standard design element could increase both liability and safety risks.

To meet current standards, a full diverge lane would likely be required. This would involve:

- Acquisition of additional land;
- Extension of the existing large culvert; and
- Diversion of services, including the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN)

These requirements make modification of the junction significantly complex at this location. Given the lack of injury recorded collisions at present, the junction does not meet the criteria for prioritisation for this level of intervention over other locations on the SRN in Wales.

I hope this clarifies the current position and goes some way to addressing the concerns raised.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Eglwyscummin Community Council,
Estia,
Pendine,
Carmarthenshire.
SA33 4PS
18th November 2025

Katherine Wheeler,
Committee Support Officer,
Petitions Committee,
Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament

By email.

Dear Katherine Wheeler,

Thank you for your email reminding me our petition will be considered again by the Petitions Committee on 24th November and also enclosing the letter from Ken Skates MS.

The information about the monitoring that is carried out and the rationale behind it is appreciated, although we still consider that where concerns have been repeatedly raised by the community and politicians over many years more frequent monitoring should be taking place. 24/7 monitoring would also capture evidence beyond the police data on personal injury collisions, which could be informative. The letter from the Minister mentions one 7 day high mast CCTV monitoring period in December 2021 – the community and others have been expressing their concerns about the junction since it was opened in 2014.

We do welcome the statement that there will be a new CCTV survey – if it could be undertaken perhaps in the summer months when there is the additional tourist traffic that would be beneficial. Ideally multiple surveys over a two year period would enable a good data set and enable assessment on the dangerous nature of this junction, but we reluctantly understand that funds are limited.

The previous letter from the Minister stated that a topographical survey had been carried out for a potential police speed monitoring layby. Are we allowed to know the outcome of this please? – will one be provided when funds permit?

We also welcome the street lighting assessment, and urge the Welsh Government to find the funding for this, and to not just determine whether it is justified on safety grounds from the police personal injury collision information, but also for example from the repeated destruction of the signage at the junction. Indeed, if it could be not just a desktop exercise, but there could be actual visits by Welsh Government officials at various times and in different weather conditions to themselves see the junction operation and its issues, that would be very beneficial.

We would appreciate it if the data results and analysis conclusions from any CCTV or other surveys, and the outcome and decisions on installing lighting at that junction, could be provided to us for information as soon as possible. The local community has, as previously

mentioned, been raising their concerns for over a decade, and they have had little response and feedback from the Welsh Government. The lack of communication does not help when there is the impression that we have been forgotten, and our concerns have dismissed, when it is our families using that junction on a daily basis.

We appreciate the extra measures that have been installed, and assure you that we too hope they will highlight the junction better and assist drivers. Any measures to prevent accidents and possible fatalities at this junction are worthwhile.

We note that within the body of the letter it is stated 'that to meet current standards a full diverge lane would likely be required'. That the complex requirements, and the cost, would be significant is accepted – it is a real shame that the junction was built purely in accordance with the DMRB at the time, without any consideration for the reality on the local community of what was being built, which included enabling traffic to flow more swiftly with less hindrance between St Clears and West Wales.

Thank you to the Committee for considering this petition on a matter that has concerned this community since the bypass was opened in 2014. We welcome your input and that of the Minister, and remain with the hope that things can be improved.

Yours sincerely,

V. Mitchell

Mrs. Vicky Mitchell
Clerk - Eglwyscwmmin Community Council.

Agenda Item 3.7

P-06-1521 Give park home residents in Wales the right to a water meter

This petition was submitted by Sam Swash, having collected 447 signatures online and 173 signatures on paper, making for a total of 620 signatures.

Text of petition:

Residents of some park home sites in Wales are paying in excess of £60 a month in water bills, despite living in small single and double units. Currently, many site owners divide their total bill by the number of homes on the park, before passing the bill on to residents. This means there is no incentive for site owners to fix leaks, as they know residents will foot the bill regardless.

The Welsh Government could stop this injustice by giving park home residents the right to a water meter.

Additional information:

Providing park home residents with the right to have a water meter fitted so that they are only charged for their individual usage would mirror the situation for the majority of homeowners across the country.

Doing so would ensure that park home residents only pay for what they use, ending the current injustice whereby many are being charged for leaks which are not their responsibility.

It would also genuinely make maintaining pipes and repairing leaks the responsibility of the site owner (as it should be), encouraging them to carry out repairs and upgrades.

In turn, this would reduce the environmental damage which is being caused by huge amounts of water being leaked under private park home sites in Wales.

Park home residents at one site in Flintshire, North Wales, have been getting charged more than £65 a month for water by their site owner, when evidence suggests they should be paying around £16 a month. This injustice must be stopped.

Senedd Constituency and Region

- Alyn and Deeside
- North Wales

Carolyn Thomas MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Date: 04/11/2025

Ref: Petition P-06-1521

Dear Chair,

Petition P-06-1521: Give park home residents in Wales the right to a water meter

I write in response to your letter dated 22 October 2025, regarding Petition P-06-1521: Give park home residents in Wales the right to a water meter.

I am aware of the ongoing concerns relating to leakage at the site in Flintshire. The site is served by a single water supply (connection to the public water main). Welsh Water's statutory responsibility for the maintenance of the water network ends at the point where its infrastructure communicates with the privately owned pipework (the private network typically being referred to as a supply pipe), in this case at the location of the water meter measuring consumption at the site. All infrastructure beyond this point is privately owned and managed by the site operator.

We were alerted to increased consumption at the site and satisfied ourselves that it was occurring on the private part of the supply network. Welsh Water has power to require a supply's consumer(s) to resolve leakage. In this case, due to the scale and suspected location of the leakage, we engaged directly with the site operator as the bill payer, rather than individual residents, and made it clear that it must be resolved. There has subsequently been substantial engagement with the operator, seeking a resolution and progress updates, and we have supported with advice and guidance. I understand that the site operator has undertaken significant remedial work and an update provided on 3rd November 2025 by the site operator advises that in their view all leakage repair work is completed, we are currently in the process of undertaking internal checks to verify this, we have reviewed consumption, and we can see that this has dropped.

We have been contacted by residents of the site requesting that we install individual water meters at their respective park homes. Whilst I am sympathetic to the residents' situation, we have not installed individual meters. Generally, water meters are fitted on individual connections to the public water main and this makes responsibility for maintenance (e.g., the resolution of leakage) and consumption (payment of charges) clear. As this site is served by a single supply pipe, supplying multiple premises, retrofitting individual meters would require

extensive and costly infrastructure upgrades and consent to work on private land. The installation of sub-meters on the existing private supply network may not resolve the residents' concerns because all connected homeowners/occupiers would share responsibility for its maintenance and repair and may be required to resolve it as the consumer(s). These works would also involve private pipework, not owned by Welsh Water.

I appreciate the concerns raised in the petition. However, there is a limit to the extent to which we can intervene where residents have concerns arising from their relationship with a landlord or landowner and in circumstances where current statutory responsibility for the payment of charges and resolution of leakage is generally clear.

Yours sincerely,



Kit Wilson
Director for Customer and Developer Services



We take compliance with Data Protection seriously at Welsh Water. For more information on how we use your Personal Information please visit our website at <https://corporate.dwrcymru.com/en/legal-privacy/privacy-policy> to view our Privacy Notice or call us on [REDACTED] to ask us to send you a copy in the post.

Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA
11 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HD
www.ofwat.gov.uk

Tuesday 11 November 2025

By email c/o petitions@senedd.wales

Dear Carolyn Thomas MS,

Thank you for your letter dated 23 October 2025.

We appreciate the concerns raised by park home residents and fully understand the frustration this situation has caused.

Section 150 of the Water Industry Act 1991 gives Ofwat the power to make an Order limiting charges for water resale (i.e., where a person (reseller) obtains a piped supply from a water/sewerage undertaker and then on-sells to others). The Water Resale Order 2006 sets out the rules that apply when someone is reselling water/sewerage services in England & Wales.

However, whilst Ofwat sets the maximum prices, we do not have powers to resolve disputes regarding the resale of water, as these are considered to be a private matter. Unfortunately therefore, we are unable to assist in this matter other than to advise on the water resale guidelines, which can be found on our website: <https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/your-water-bill/waterresale>

The site owner is not required to install meters (it would be for them not the water company to do so). However, they do need to be apportioning charges by one of the prescribed methods and they must not make a profit on the recovery of charges. We understand the residents have used their right to ask their water company to investigate and following this, Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water have asked the site owner to repair the leaks. A water company can use its powers under section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to get involved if there is any water likely to be wasted, misused or unduly consumed (e.g. a leak) but this is not a legal requirement.

The UK and Welsh Governments will shortly publish a white paper ahead of plans to legislate for water reform across Wales and England. This presents an opportunity to amend existing legislation to better protect customers and ensure fairer outcomes. We will continue to engage with Welsh government and stakeholders to highlight these issues and support

improvements that benefit all customers. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this further or to share additional insights from customers.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Evans

Head of Wales

Response from petition, Cllr Sam Swash, to Welsh Water and Ofwat correspondence (P-06-1521)

Introduction

The responses to the Committee from Welsh Water and Ofwat serve to underline the central argument of this petition: park home residents are uniquely exposed to unfair charging, environmental waste, and regulatory indifference because the current legal framework does not protect them. The correspondence, taken together, confirms that neither Welsh Water nor Ofwat has the power or duty to ensure this situation does not occur again for residents living on single-supply park home sites, even in cases as extreme as Willow Park, where residents have been charged more than £350,000 for water they haven't used. According to information obtained via Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests, Welsh Water monitored consumption levels equivalent to around 5 million gallons of wasted water every year – yet still took no decisive enforcement action.

Welsh Water's Correspondence

Welsh Water have confirmed that residents of park home sites, unlike almost every other household in Wales, have no right to ask for, or receive, a water meter, no matter how unfair or environmentally damaging their current situation is. They also confirm that they monitored excessive consumption on the site for years and limited their actions to providing "guidance and advice," despite knowing (as confirmed via EIR requests to the Residents' Association) that the usage recorded did not reflect genuine consumption.

Welsh Water also appear to suggest that they have limited powers to intervene in major leakage situations, despite being aware for years of enormous and environmentally damaging water loss. The Committee may wish to consider asking Welsh Water the following questions:

1. Was any legal notice served on the site owner under section 75 of the Water Industry Act to require repair of the leaks? If not, why not?
2. Was any enforcement or prosecution action taken for the waste of water? If not, why not?

In summary, Welsh Water accept that it took little meaningful action to intervene to protect consumers from excessive charges, despite being aware that the increased consumption was not legitimate usage.

This raises a further question for the Committee to consider: what is the purpose of a regulated water undertaker if it knowingly bills for water it knows is not being used?

Ofwat's Correspondence

Ofwat's response to the Committee contains several important concessions that strongly support the need for legislative reform.

Firstly, they confirm that they have no power to resolve disputes: "we do not have powers to resolve disputes regarding the resale of water, as these are considered to be a private matter."

This means that when residents are overcharged, there is no regulator able to intervene.

Secondly, Ofwat confirms the Water Resale Order protects against profit-making, not unfair costs. The Water Resale Order limits the profit a site owner may make, but it does not limit the total costs they may pass on.

So, as has happened at Willow Park, if a site owner's pipes leak millions of litres of water, the site owner can legally pass the full cost on to residents – even though residents have no control over the infrastructure, repair decisions, or leak detection.

This is an inherent and serious flaw in the existing legislation.

Thirdly, Ofwat confirms that "a water company *can* use its section 75 powers where water is wasted... but this is not a legal requirement." Given the scale of the leakage at Willow Park (leaks spanning years), the absence of a mandatory duty to act should seriously concern both the Committee and the Welsh Government.

Finally, Ofwat confirms that the UK and Welsh Governments will shortly publish a white paper creating "an opportunity to amend existing legislation to better protect consumer and ensure fairer outcomes."

This directly reinforces the need and timeliness of this petition. Any upcoming water reform legislation in Wales must include protections for park home residents – because they currently have none.

Both Welsh Water and Ofwat have again relied on the “it’s a private matter” trope – this amounts to a regulatory shrug of the shoulders and an acceptance that neither have the power to stop either the obscene waste of water or the scandalous charges being imposed on park home residents.

Further Evidence of Inequity

The weaknesses of the current system are further highlighted by events between 14–17 August, when a major burst pipe left households across Flintshire without running water. Welsh Water compensated affected householders between £200 and £250.

But because Willow Park has only one water account, Welsh Water issued one payment of £210 to the site owner, who was instructed to divide this among more than 150 homes. This means each home received just £1.32 for being without water for three days.

This starkly illustrates how the current charging and compensation systems penalise park home residents.

Conclusion

It is important for the Committee to understand that the issues experienced at Willow Park are not unique. Any park home resident in Wales living on a single-supply site could face the same situation. This is a structural failing created by:

- A single-supply system that denies residents individual rights
- A regulatory system that classifies disputes as “private matters”
- Resale rules that allow residents to bear 100% of costs without owning 1% of the infrastructure
- A water undertaker with no duty to intervene
- A regulator with no power to intervene
- Site owners who are not required to install meters

Without legislative reform, it is clear that this situation could be repeated across Wales. A statutory right to a water meter for park home residents would:

- Give park home residents the same rights every other household in Wales enjoys
- Practically eliminate the risk of overcharging
- Incentivise proper maintenance of private water networks and therefore prevent large-scale water waste
- Reduce the environmental harm caused by vast amounts of wasted water

The correspondence from both Welsh Water and Ofwat makes one thing absolutely clear: the current system cannot and will not protect park home residents from unfair costs and environmental waste.

Park home residents are trapped in a system in which the water undertaker has no duty to intervene, the regulator has no power to help, and the only party with the ability to install water meters – the site owner – has no obligation to do so. In the absence of reform, what happened at Willow Park is not a one-off scandal but an inevitability waiting to be repeated elsewhere in Wales.

Laura Cotton
Glamorgan Archivist
Glamorgan Archives
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Agenda Item 4.1

Laura Cotton
Archifydd Morgannwg
Archifau Morgannwg
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Lecwydd
Caerdydd, CF11 8AW

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair, Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Our Ref.: LC

Your Ref.:

Date: 14th August 2025

Dear Carolyn Thomas,

Thank you for your letter of 11th July and I apologise for the delay in replying.

As far as we can ascertain, we do not hold copies of the original plans of the Cardiff Observatory, either for the building constructed in 1906 or the one developed later in 1925. Our investigations have highlighted the following documents at Glamorgan Archives that might be of some assistance to Amgueddfa Cymru in their reconstruction of the Observatory:

- Booklet entitled 'The Cardiff City Telescope' by Arthur Mee, 1906 [photocopy available in the Library at Glamorgan Archives, ref: C/512]
- Glass plate negatives of new observatory in Heol Yr Ynys, Penylan [ref: DCC/PL/11/58/3-4]. Images of these glass plates are available on our catalogue: <https://canfod.glamarchives.gov.uk/en/records/DCC/PL/11/58>
- Booklet 'Cardiff City Observatory Handbook' by Dan Jones, 1931 [ref: D2022/4/2]. This explains how the 1906 building became inadequate in terms of space and heating and how the Council agreed to erect this new building; it was opened by the Lord Mayor, Alderman WB Francis, on 15 December 1925.
- Plan of the Observatory when it was next to a Civil Defence Establishment in 1953, but this just records the outline of the Observatory (as a square) [ref: BC/S/1/42211]

We are happy to assist should anyone from Amgueddfa Cymru wish to come in and view the documents that we hold. Appointments for the searchroom can be booked by calling our office on 029 2087 2200.

I hope that this helps, even though we do not hold the exact records that you were enquiring about.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Cotton
Glamorgan Archivist

Mae Archifau Morgannwg yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn sicrhau ein bod yn cyfathrebu â chi yn eich dewis iaith boed yn Gymraeg, yn Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.

Glamorgan Archives welcomes correspondence in English and Welsh and we will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, whether that's English, Welsh or bilingual as long as you let us know which you prefer. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to any delay.

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Agenda Item 4.2

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-06-1526
Ein cyf/Our ref JS/00766/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

6 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your further correspondence regarding Petition P-06-1526: "Save Grassroots Sports – Welsh Government Must Step In!", informing me that the petition has now closed, and highlighting again the issues it raised regarding funding for grassroots sport.

As I outlined in my initial response, the Welsh Government has provided significant sums of money via Sport Wales this year to provide support for grassroots sport. This includes many of the areas the petitioner outlines in his update such as energy costs and maintenance of facilities. As part of 2025-26 Final Budget Settlement, we are also providing Local authorities with £6.1 billion in core revenue funding and non-domestic rates to spend on delivering key services. I am pleased that the petitioner's local authority has reversed its decision regarding pitch fees, which is a strong sign of the local accountability and decision-making processes I drew attention to in my initial response.

Thank you again for providing me with an update to this petition.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

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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.

Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00605/25

Lisa Owen
lisa@chuckles.wales

18 November 2025

Dear Lisa,

I have received correspondence from the Petitions Committee informing me that your petition (P-06-1530) has now been closed. As part of their consideration, the Committee has asked that I engage directly with you to respond to the further comments you raised during the process.

I understand that delivering the Childcare Offer may present financial and operational challenges for some settings, particularly in light of rising costs across the sector. To help address this, the Welsh Government has made 100% business rates relief permanent for childcare settings across Wales, supporting their sustainability and growth.

I recognise the pressures faced by the sector throughout the former three-year review cycle, which is why I committed to an annual review of the funding rate. This will help ensure the flat rate remains fair, sustainable, and reflective of costs. Our review process considers sector feedback, economic conditions, the need to maintain high-quality provision for families across Wales and the need for childcare to remain affordable for families.

The annual survey that informs the rate review, has been completed for 2025 and my officials have gathered feedback from a representative sample of parents. The survey that was issued to parents sought to capture their views and experiences and will be used to help inform ongoing policy development and service delivery.

Parents using the Offer and settings who deliver childcare funded through the Offer have been surveyed in each year since the pilot year of the programme. Since 2022, the Welsh Government has administered these surveys annually in July and August of each year. This ensures that the surveys capture the largest possible cohort of eligible families. A link to the online questionnaire and an invitation to complete it are sent to all parents who have used the Offer and to all settings who have delivered hours of care in the relevant year.

In 2023–24, to inform the 2024 rate review, we received responses from 1,606 parents. The survey was anonymous and did not collect detailed demographic information, as this could potentially be used to identify respondents when combined with other data. While my officials compared the local authority of respondents with monitoring records and are confident that the sample is broadly representative of parents using the programme across

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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.

Wales. For 2024/25, 811 responses have been received from parents, and they are currently being analysed.

In October 2025, the Welsh Government [published a report](#) evaluating the delivery of the the Childcare Offer for the period of September 2023 to August 2024. If you haven't already accessed it, chapter 6 provides an analysis of parent and setting responses (including the questions asked about additional fees).

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding sector engagement and the role of CWLWM.

I know you are aware that CWLWM was established by the Welsh Government to bring together the five leading childcare organisations in Wales including Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs, Early Years Wales, Mudiad Meithrin, NDNA Cymru, and Coram PACEY Cymru, to work more collaboratively and reduce duplication. While CWLWM is funded by Welsh Government and does deliver work aligned to specific policy priorities, it is not intended to replace direct engagement with providers or act as the sole voice of the sector. For this reason, as part of the 2024 Rate Review, direct engagement sessions were held to discuss the review, and the formation of the survey, with the childcare sector. These sessions were promoted by CWLWM partners and Local Authorities and were open to all providers to attend.

CWLWM's remit includes supporting the development of high-quality, accessible, and sustainable childcare and play work services, and contributing to workforce development. Their strategic role is to share information and best practice across the sector, not to act as a substitute for direct provider representation.

My officials are aware of ongoing activity within the Vale of Glamorgan regarding the implementation of the Childcare Offer, particularly in relation to charging practices. However, our position remains clear and consistent: childcare settings delivering the Offer are not permitted to charge top-up fees to parents for funded hours. This is explicitly stated in the guidance.

They will continue to work with Vale of Glamorgan to ensure consistency of policy application across Wales.

I would like to thank you for bringing this petition forward and creating opportunity to discuss these important issues. I do appreciate that you may be disappointed that the Petitions Committee have chosen not to continue to pursue further action on this however I would encourage continued dialogue with sector representatives. We keep all of our policies under review for consideration in the next electoral cycle.

Yours sincerely,



Dawn Bowden AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Plant a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Minister for Children and Social Care