

Agenda – Petitions Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 19 November 2019

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Graeme Francis – Committee Clerk

Ross Davies – Deputy Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales

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5 Review of the National Assembly for Wales Petitions System

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.1

P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools

This petition was submitted by Isabella Evans having collected 4,914 signatures online and 110 on paper, a total of 5,024 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to consider the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools.

I am the 13 year old sister of a little boy with Downs Syndrome who's primary use of communication is Makaton sign language. I have taught myself Makaton sign language for the purpose of communicating with my brother and as a result have set up social media platforms to help other people in similar situations learn. I was surprised how much demand there is for people who want to be taught Makaton in order to communicate with friends and family who have learning difficulties.

I believe it should be included in all schools in Wales alongside the everyday teaching to give every child the ability to learn to communicate via this method.

I am passionate to achieve this and believe it is the fundamental right for all children in Wales to be taught Makaton in order to break down barriers, misconceptions and achieve true inclusion within Wales.

Additional Information

A vast amount of research has been conducted to test the effectiveness of using symbols and signs to help people develop language and literacy skills.

Current research findings support the use of sign language with adults and children who have intellectual and communication handicaps.

There is also a study exploring the extent of learning sign language alongside a foreign language in modern foreign languages lessons support oral vocabulary retention in foreign languages.

Many research papers have been published supporting the use of Makaton including:-

- Birket, E.M. (1984)
- Colema, A. (2014)
- Cornforth, A.R.T., Johnson, K. Walker, M. (1974)
- Ford, J. (2006)
- Francis. (2000)
- Grove, N. (1980)
- Powell, G. (1999)
- Reed, A. (2014)
- Sheehy, K. Duffy, H. (2009)
- Volpato, D. ,Orton, D. and Blackburn, D. (1986)
- Walker, M. Armfield, A. (1981)

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Bridgend
- South Wales West

Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 19 November 2019

Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-05-909

Petition title: Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools

Text of petition: We call on the Welsh Government to consider the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools. I am the 13-year-old sister of a little boy with Downs Syndrome whose primary use of communication is Makaton sign language. I have taught myself Makaton sign language for the purpose of communicating with my brother and as a result have set up social media platforms to help other people in similar situations learn. I was surprised how much demand there is for people who want to be taught Makaton in order to communicate with friends and family who have learning difficulties. I believe it should be included in all schools in Wales alongside the everyday teaching to give every child the ability to learn to communicate via this method.

I am passionate to achieve this and believe it is the fundamental right for all children in Wales to be taught Makaton in order to break down barriers, misconceptions and achieve true inclusion within Wales. A vast amount of research has been conducted to test the effectiveness of using symbols and signs to help people develop language and literacy skills. Current research findings support the use of sign language with adults and children who have intellectual and communication handicaps. There is also a study exploring the extent of learning sign language alongside a foreign language in modern foreign languages lessons support oral vocabulary retention in foreign languages. Many research papers have been published supporting the use of Makaton.

Background

Makaton is a language development programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate. The [Makaton Charity](#) state that Makaton supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall

and organisation of language and expression. In using Makaton, signs are used, alongside speech, in spoken word order. The Makaton Charity state that over 100,000 children and adults in the UK use Makaton symbols and signs, either as their main method of communication or as a way to support speech. Unlike British Sign Language, it is not a recognised language.

Welsh Government policy

In her letter to the Committee, the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams AM states:

- The new curriculum for Wales will allow for schools to include the teaching of Makaton. As it is not a recognised language, this would have to be alongside Welsh, English and an international language by the end of primary school. In the current curriculum, it can be ‘explored’ through Personal and Social Education;
- Welsh Government funding is provided to the four regional education consortia who decide how best to support schools in their areas. This can include support for Makaton where needed;
- A school or local authority would be responsible for arranging communication support if a learner required this as part of their special educational needs provision;
- A ‘significant proportion’ of the £20m investment for the Additional Learning Needs transformation programme will be used to develop the skills of the education workforce.

New curriculum

[Languages, Literacy and Communication](#) is one of the six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) that make up the new curriculum which will be introduced from September 2022 on a phased basis. The Welsh Government published draft curriculum materials in April 2019. The feedback period ended in July 2019. The Welsh Government is due to publish the **final curriculum and assessment arrangements in January 2020**.

The Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE statutory guidance states that the AoLE ‘will enable all learners to gain knowledge and skills in Welsh, English and international languages as well as in literature.’

The statutory guidance also states that

Languages, Literacy and Communication skills are key to enabling learners to express themselves effectively, and learners who are able to articulate their feelings and interpret those of others are better equipped to develop positive relationships and thus to become healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society, able to keep themselves and others safe, both offline and online.

There are four areas that are identified as ‘what matters’ in the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE:

- Learning about identity and culture through languages prepares us to be citizens of Wales and the world.

- Learners who listen and read effectively are prepared to learn throughout their lives.
- Learners who speak and write effectively are prepared to play a full part in life and work.
- Literature fires imagination and inspires creativity.

Although Makaton is not specifically mentioned in the statutory guidance, the Minister for Education states that due to the ethos of the new curriculum, schools would be free to teach it, in addition to Welsh, English and an international language.

House of Commons petition

On 1 March 2019, the UK Government responded to a petition that asked to '[Make it compulsory for schools to teach basic signing, such as Makaton](#)'. The Petitioner suggested that this could be achieved by each school having an online/paper resource pack of compulsory words and if needed a lead person from each school could attend training and roll out to rest of the staff. The Government responded that while Makaton is a valuable communication tool for some pupils and schools, the UK Government have no plans to change the national curriculum. They also said that schools already have flexibility to choose to teach it should they wish.

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-05-909
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/07214/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
Assembly Member for Aberconwy
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

8 October 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 27 September, on behalf of the Petitions Committee, regarding Petition P-05-909 - Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools - which has been instigated by Isabella Evans.

Thank you for the opportunity to consider the points that Isabella has raised on a matter which she feels very passionately about. I want to be clear that I want every pupil to be able to enjoy their education, to be ambitious and to succeed in whatever they choose to do.

We are developing a new curriculum for Wales and this will include Welsh, English and International languages from primary school. The term 'international languages' is being used to enable schools to include not only the modern languages traditionally taught in our schools but also British Sign Language (BSL), community languages or classical Languages.

The practitioners developing the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience include teachers from special schools. The group has also engaged with the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS). We recognise that Makaton is a great way to develop communication it is not, however, recognised as a language in its own right by Welsh Government, unlike BSL which has been recognised since January 2004.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@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.

It is, however, neither the intention nor the aim of the Languages Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience to limit the choice of languages offered to a single language. Such a limitation would run contrary to the ethos of the new curriculum, which seeks to support and broaden, rather than narrow, language learning and language diversity in the curriculum. There would be nothing stopping schools from teaching/using Makaton but that would be in addition to Welsh, English and at least one international language by the end of primary.

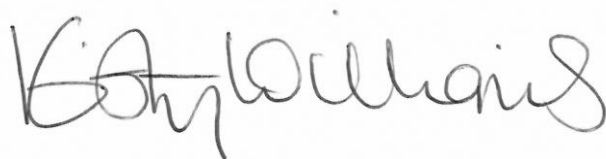
Within the current school curriculum, schools can explore additional subject areas, such as sign language, through Personal and Social Education (PSE) lessons and through teaching of the Welsh Baccalaureate. We have materials on our learning platform Hwb, which specifically support the teaching of Makaton which all schools in Wales can access. We also provide direct funding to the four Regional Education Consortia, on an annual basis, and they determine how they can best support the schools in their region with this funding. They will be aware if there is any use or demand of Makaton in their areas and will provide support accordingly.

Individual schools decide the procedures they adopt for meeting the needs of all learners, for observing and assessing their progress, and for deciding the nature of any Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision they put in place. For example, if a child or young person was identified as requiring support with communication to enable them to access a suitable education, the school and local authority would be responsible for arranging this.

The Welsh Government is introducing a new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system to replace the existing SEN system in Wales. To support the successful implementation and delivery of the new ALN system, we have committed a £20 million package of investment for the ALN transformation programme. A significant proportion of this funding will be used to support activity to develop the skills of the education workforce to ensure that practitioners will be able to effectively operate the new system and improve outcomes for learners with ALN.

I hope that the content of this reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

**P-05-909 Promoting the use of Makaton sign language in all Welsh schools,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 13.11.19**

Dear Sir/Madam,

In response to the email which asked for thoughts regarding the document, letter to the Committee Chair Janet Finch-Saunders AM from Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education.

Isabella feels the thoughts of the Kirsty Williams are very encouraging in supporting Isabella's endeavours in achieving Sign taught in all schools in Wales.

Isabella just wanted this opportunity to state that she is passionate about Sign in general being taught in schools in Wales, whether it be BSL, Makaton, Sign Along. The Sign taught wouldn't necessarily have to be every day but even once a week would have a significant positive impact on pupils. Isabella believes that in order to get the best possible start in education and in developing social skills Sign plays a very important role. Kirsty Williams made a very important point in her letter to the Petitions Committee stating that Makaton isn't recognised as a language by the Welsh Assembly but BSL is recognised as a language. This is because Makaton is a communication tool not a Sign language derived from BSL used because it is a simplified form of BSL and used in many instances as a spring board to eventually move to the more intricate language of BSL.

Another point Isabella is quite keen to raise is the importance of Sign in pre speech children and their development in speech. Isabella having a brother with Down Syndrome who is non verbal has see firsthand the importance of Sign in the development of his speech which is slowly developing as she believe much from the use of Sign. In many cases slow speech development could be attributed to poor social development from the home in some children.

In the age we currently live in inclusion has come a long way in a positive way and including Sign in all schools in Wales would only reinforce this.

The last point Isabella wanted to make is support for other languages being taught. There are studies which support the view that if Sign is taught alongside another language, for instance Welsh it actually promotes the learning of the two being taught side by side. A study which supports this principle is :- Read, A. (2014) Makaton and MFL case study. Manchester Communication Academy.

Another study which maybe useful when discussions take place, these is :-

- Sheehy, K. Duffy, H. (2009)

Attitudes to Makaton in the ages of integration and inclusion. International Journal of Special Education.

Thank you for the opportunity for allowing Isabella to have a voice during this stage of the Petition procedure and we will be very much looking forward to follow the petition on the rest of its journey.

Kindest regards,

Dominic, Kellie and Isabella Evans.

Agenda Item 2.2

P-05-911 Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees

This petition was submitted by Janis Fry having collected a total of 77 paper signatures.

Text of Petition

Please sign my petition call for ancient Yew trees to be protected by law.

Currently there is no legal protection for these beautiful trees. It's urgent that we protect this vital part of our heritage with specific legal protection before we lose any more. These Yew trees have been a part of Britain for thousands of years. They are our ancient living monuments, our ancient living witnesses to the history of our ancestors and our civilisation. We must protect them as a matter of urgency before any more are lost.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales

Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 20 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 11 November 2019

Reference: RS19/10865-1

Petition Number P-05-911

Petition title: Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees

Text of petition: Please sign my petition call for ancient Yew trees to be protected by law. Currently there is no legal protection for these beautiful trees. It's urgent that we protect this vital part of our heritage with specific legal protection before we lose any more. These Yew trees have been a part of Britain for thousands of years. They are our ancient living monuments, our ancient living witnesses to the history of our ancestors and our civilisation. We must protect them as a matter of urgency before any more are lost

1. Background

The common yew tree (*Taxus baccata*) is the longest living native tree species in Europe. Yew trees can be found throughout the UK but are commonly located in churchyards. They may survive for as long as 3,000 years and are described as ancient at around 900 years, and veteran at 500 years old.



The majority of the remaining ancient yew trees in Europe are located in the UK. [The Ancient Yew Group](#) has identified 407 ancient or veteran yews in Wales and 978 in England, compared with [77 in France, and four in both Germany and Spain](#).

The Woodland Trust has created an [Ancient Tree Inventory](#) to 'map the oldest and most important trees in the UK'. Ancient trees are considered [irreplaceable](#) as they provide important ecosystem services including unique [habitat for wildlife](#) and they are [significant carbon stores](#). Ancient and veteran trees, and trees with particular historic or cultural significance, are often referred to as [Trees of Special Interest \(TSI\)](#). Some of the most ancient TSI's, often yews, are also associated with [ancient religious practices](#).

The two oldest trees in the UK are both yew trees. [Fortingall Yew](#) is located in a [graveyard in Perth, Scotland](#), and [Defynnog Yew](#) in a [churchyard at Defynnog, near Sennybridge in Powys, Wales](#). Both trees are estimated between 2,000 and 3,000 years old, but some assessments age the trees as old as 5,000 years.

Legislation

There is currently no legal protection *specifically* for ancient yew trees in the UK. Under the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#), local planning authorities can make a [Tree Preservation Order \(TPO\)](#) to protect a specific tree, group of trees or woodland, that brings significant amenity benefit to the local area. A TPO protects trees from deliberate damage or destruction, making it a criminal offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy, or to cause or permit these actions, to a tree protected by an order, without the local planning authority's permission.

Additional [legislation and regulations that can protect trees](#) include; designated [conservation areas](#), [felling licences](#) and [restrictive covenants](#).

Efforts to protect ancient yew trees

In 2014, the [Church in Wales](#) launched a campaign to help protect yews, offering information and advice to parishes and communities on ancient yew tree management.

More recently in 2019, petitions calling for the legal protection for ancient yews have launched in the UK and Wales. More than 230,000 people and counting have signed a petition to '[Save Britain's ancient yew trees before we lose any more](#)'.

2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government's policy for protecting woodland is set out in the [Woodland for Wales strategy](#), published in June 2018. The strategy states that the Welsh Government wants to see that 'individual trees, ancient and veteran trees, wood pasture and woodlands in our urban areas and countryside, are better understood, protected and managed for

their cultural significance, aesthetic quality and heritage value'. The strategy acknowledges that 'ancient and veteran trees are a cultural resource linking people to place, environment and culture (past and present), and also provide continuity of habitat for some increasingly rare lichens, mosses and fungi in both the rural and urban landscape'.

The Welsh Government's [Natural Resources Policy](#), published in September 2017, sets out a commitment to:

[...] carefully manage trees and woodland that have high environmental values, including ancient woodland sites, ancient, veteran and heritage trees, which are an irreplaceable resource that provide a wide range of ecosystem services.

[Planning Policy Wales](#) (PPW) Edition 10, published in December 2018, outlines Welsh Government guidance for making planning decisions, which includes a framework for the protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Paragraph 6.4.26 of PPW states:

Ancient woodland and semi-natural woodlands and individual ancient, veteran and heritage trees are irreplaceable natural resources, and have significant landscape, biodiversity and cultural value. Such trees and woodlands should be afforded protection from development which would result in their loss or deterioration unless there are significant and clearly defined public benefits; this protection should prevent potentially damaging operations and their unnecessary loss.

Paragraph 6.4.25 states:

[...] permanent removal of woodland should only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits. Where woodland or trees are removed as part of a proposed scheme, developers will be expected to provide compensatory planting.

3. National Assembly for Wales action

In 2017 the Petitions Committee last considered the petition: [P-04-439: Ancient veteran and heritage trees of Wales to be given greater protection](#). The Committee agreed to close the petition given the petitioners were members of a [Task and Finish group on ancient, veteran and heritage trees in Wales that made recommendations to the Welsh Government](#) (PDF 218KB), and the fact that the then Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths AM, had made a commitment to consider which actions to take forward.

In March 2019, Lesley Griffiths responded to two written questions regarding woodland and native tree protection. On 8 March 2019, Janet Finch-Saunders AM submitted a [written question](#) (emphasis added):

Will the Minister explain what steps the Welsh Government is taking to help **protect native trees in Wales**, and state how much money has been allocated to help fund tree planting in 2019/20?

On 12 March 2019, Nick Ramsey AM submitted a written question:

What steps is the Minister taking to protect woodland areas in Wales?

In response to these written questions, the Minister wrote (emphasis added):

The Welsh Government's 'Woodland for Wales' forestry strategy outlines the importance of native trees to our landscape. [...] Planning Policy Wales 10 provides greater protection for **ancient and semi-natural woodlands and individual ancient, veteran and heritage trees**. It stipulates that such trees and woodlands should be afforded **additional levels of protection** and every effort should be made to prevent potentially damaging operations and their unnecessary loss. In the case of a site recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory, authorities should consult with NRW. Planning authorities should also have regard to the Ancient Tree Inventory.

On 18 October 2019, Julie James AM responded to this petition in a letter to Janet Finch-Saunders AM, the Petitions Committee Chair, stating:

Ancient and veteran trees (including Yew trees) are a cultural resource linking people to place, environment and culture, they also provide continuity of habitat in both the rural and urban landscape. [...] Welsh Government recognises ancient woodlands and trees have a vital role in providing a range of ecosystem services.

In the letter, she did not commit to specific actions to protect ancient yew trees.

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.

Julie James AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-911
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/06697/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

18 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding Petition P-05-911 Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees and for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Ancient and veteran trees (including Yew trees) are a cultural resource linking people to place, environment and culture, they also provide continuity of habitat in both the rural and urban landscape. Our Woodlands for Wales strategy: <https://gov.wales/woodlands-wales-strategy> sets out the policy approach for the protection of Woodland. Welsh Government recognises ancient woodlands and trees have a vital role in providing a range of ecosystem services.

The strategy makes it clear that the Welsh Government want to see current and historic wooded landscapes protected and individual trees, ancient and veteran trees in our urban areas and countryside are better understood, protected and managed for their cultural significance, aesthetic quality and heritage.

With regard to the protection of ancient Yew trees more generally, Planning Policy Wales 10 (PPW): <https://beta.gov.wales/planning-policy-wales> sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. PPW is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. PPW sets out a strong framework for the protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows; this would apply to the protection of ancient Yew trees.

Paragraph 6.4.26 of PPW states that, *“Ancient woodland and semi-natural woodlands and individual ancient, veteran and heritage trees are irreplaceable natural resources, and have significant landscape, biodiversity and cultural value. Such trees and woodlands should be afforded protection from development which would result in their loss or deterioration unless there are significant and clearly defined public benefits; this protection should prevent potentially damaging operations and their unnecessary loss.”*

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.James@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.

Paragraph 6.4.25 states that, “*permanent removal of woodland should only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits. Where woodland or trees are removed as part of a proposed scheme, developers will be expected to provide compensatory planting.*”

Furthermore, supporting the above policy framework in PPW, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 assign Local Planning Authorities (LPA) powers to protect trees, where it is expedient in the interests of amenity by making a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The principal effect of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of a tree or trees without the consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Trees covered by a TPO may be important to the wider community, although many are located in individual gardens. Members of the public or the tree owner can request the LPA to protect a tree or trees by making a TPO. The decision to make a TPO in relation to a specific tree or trees is entirely a matter for the LPA. Unauthorised works on trees which have a TPO is a criminal offence which can carry substantial fines.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government

P-05-911 Protect Wales' Ancient Yew Trees, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 11.11.19

I would like to add a few things to the document I sent you about my campaign and petition for **Legal Protection for Ancient Yew Trees** which you are due to discuss shortly.

I have had a couple of comments from members of the Senedd to the effect that Tree Protection Orders are already there to do the job of protecting trees. I have also had it pointed out that the National Planning Policy Framework is set to protect ancient woodland. This is irrelevant when it comes to protecting individual yews that stand alone. There are a finite number of these trees and at ages of over 2,000 years, they can never be replaced. I understand you do not have the facilities to receive the online petition which is currently running at over 245,000 signatures which is a great shame because there is a great deal of detailed information on there about this campaign which I cannot give you here as it will run into dozens of pages. Some of the writing on the online petition explains why TPO's are simply inadequate and considered to be so by our Barrister Paul Powlesland, for protecting some of the most important and most ancient trees to be found anywhere in the world.

<https://www.change.org/p/save-britain-s-ancient-yew-trees-before-we-lose-any-more>

While Britain has the largest collection of ancient yews on earth (the oldest living trees), Wales has the largest part of this. There are many coffee table books of our ancient yew trees currently in print and more are being added all the time. This petition represents a golden opportunity to make the most of Wales' true importance in the world and for this country to take its place on the international stage as holding the most important trees in existence, trees of 2-5,000 years old!

The 5th and 6th century saints yews, known as Taxus Sanctus, recieved special protection under the old laws, including those of 10th century Hywel Dda. This kind of protection has gone into abeyance and while it is perhaps unlikely that the Church will ever concede to our request for legal protection of ancient yews on their land, about a third of the ancient yews (trees over 2,000 years) are not under the control of the Church. This petition represents the chance to make a real difference in preserving our heritage for the future if the Senedd would agree to pursue the possibility of passing new legislation. Wales is the Land of the Yews and as such should be celebrated to attract more people here. The fact that Wales is home to such ancient trees is something of real value which we should be extremely proud of.

Since I put the 5,000 year old yew tree at Defynnog on the map as the oldest tree in Britain, possibly in the whole of Europe, the number of visitors here has increased dramatically with visitor books witnessing the number of pilgrimages to see the tree,

visitors from all over the world, but in particular from Japan, Australia and America, visitors who have heard of this famous and extraordinary tree. Our heritage trees must be protected and preserved for future generations. This is also an opportunity for Wales to lead the way in protecting ancient trees at a time when concern for the environment is becoming the most important and urgent issue of our times.

Other countries like France have the yew as their national symbol and an article in the magazine 'Archaeology Ireland' in 2016 suggested Ireland should do too. It is ironic that neither of these countries has anything like the numbers of ancient yews to be found in Wales.

Janis Fry

Agenda Item 2.3

P-05-912 Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults

This petition was submitted by Rhian Mannings having collected a total of 5,682 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide support for a service here in Wales to ensure families who unexpectedly lose their child or young adult aged 25 years and under get the support they require.

In February 2012 my son George died suddenly in an Emergency Unit in Wales. We walked out into the night with nothing, alone and frightened. Nobody came, nobody reached out to support us and it was left to devastated friends and family to support my husband Paul and I. Five days after we lost our son my surviving two young children and I faced more heartache when Paul took his own life. Once again nobody came.

Families require support immediately after such loss. They need to have a point of contact if they have questions and a friendly ear to listen. You never get over the loss of your child and families need to know there is long term support in place for to help them through the grieving process.

There is no planning or preparation prior to a sudden death and the effect of traumatic loss can have a huge impact on the mental health of parents, siblings and other family members. We believe this support is essential and will prevent families walking out into the night with no hope, no support and most importantly without their child.

Additional Information

Since 2012 I have been determined to ensure families get the same support when they say goodbye to their child as they do when they welcome it into the world at birth. 2 Wish Upon A Star was established to support families and staff through the unexpected loss of a child or young adult aged 25 years and under. This support includes memory boxes, counselling and an immediate support pathway working with health boards and police forces here in Wales. We have had more than 465 referrals since we started

supporting families in 2015. The causes of death include SIDS, accidents, illness and more recently many young suicides. The feedback we get from both families and staff has been extremely positive, but we know many families are not being referred to us and many still need our support.

2 Wish Upon A Star already works with every health board in Wales and are supported by every police force. We have immediate support pathways in place in every Emergency Unit and Critical Care Unit and our pathway is clearly outlined in the Public Health Wales PRUDiC document. We also work with every Coroner, Mortuary, Organ Donation Team and Wales Air Ambulance to make sure no family is missed. However, many families still go without support. Staff have been known to 'forget' to give memory boxes, decided that the family of a 18 year old does not require support as 'he had stubble' and that the offer of support at time of death is 'not appropriate'. It is not for the professional involved to decide if a family require support.

We know by speaking to staff and families that our service is changing lives for everyone involved in the sudden death of a child or young adult and we want the Welsh Government to ensure all families get the offer of support when needed most.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

P-05-912 Supporting sudden and unexpected death in children and young adults

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 19 November 2019

Reference: RS19/10865-2

Introduction

Petition number: [P-05-912](#)

Petition title: Supporting sudden and unexpected death in children and young adults

Text of petition: We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide support for a service here in Wales to ensure families who unexpectedly lose their child or young adult aged 25 years and under get the support they require.

In February 2012 my son George died suddenly in an Emergency Unit in Wales. We walked out into the night with nothing, alone and frightened. Nobody came, nobody reached out to support us and it was left to devastated friends and family to support my husband Paul and I. Five days after we lost our son my surviving two young children and I faced more heartache when Paul took his own life. Once again nobody came.



Families require support immediately after such loss. They need to have a point of contact if they have questions and a friendly ear to listen. You never get over the loss of your child and families need to know there is long term support in place for to help them through the grieving process.

There is no planning or preparation prior to a sudden death and the effect of traumatic loss can have a huge impact on the mental health of parents, siblings and other family members. We believe this support is essential and will prevent families walking out into the night with no hope, no support and most importantly without their child.

Additional information

Since 2012 I have been determined to ensure families get the same support when they say goodbye to their child as they do when they welcome it into the world at birth. 2 Wish Upon A Star was established to support families and staff through the unexpected loss of a child or young adult aged 25 years and under. This support includes memory boxes, counselling and an immediate support pathway working with health boards and police forces here in Wales. We have had more than 465 referrals since we started supporting families in 2015. The causes of death include SIDS, accidents, illness and more recently many young suicides. The feedback we get from both families and staff has been extremely positive, but we know many families are not being referred to us and many still need our support.

2 Wish Upon A Star already works with every health board in Wales and are supported by every police force. We have immediate support pathways in place in every Emergency Unit and Critical Care Unit and our pathway is clearly outlined in the Public Health Wales PRUDiC document. We also work with every Coroner, Mortuary, Organ Donation Team and Wales Air Ambulance to make sure no family is missed. However, many families still go without support. Staff have been known to 'forget' to give memory boxes, decided that the family of a 18 year old does not require support as 'he had stubble' and that the offer of support at time of death is 'not appropriate'. It is not for the professional involved to decide if a family require support.

We know by speaking to staff and families that our service is changing lives for everyone involved in the sudden death of a child or young adult and we want the Welsh Government to ensure all families get the offer of support when needed most.

Background

The petitioner established the charity [2 Wish Upon a Star](#) to provide bereavement support for families who have suddenly and traumatically lost a child or young adult aged 25 years and under.

The Minister for Health and Social Services published a [statement on NHS children and young people bereavement services](#) in July 2019, setting out the latest developments in this area.

The Minister states that the Welsh Government expects health boards to provide appropriate bereavement support, working with charities where needed.

The Welsh Government has set up the Bereavement Support Working Group to help develop and deliver improved bereavement arrangements, and ensure health boards have suitable arrangements in place to help and support families who suffer the loss of a baby, child or young person.

The group comprises of policy leads in Welsh Government, representation from charitable organisations involved in supporting families who have suffered baby loss (including 2 Wish Upon a Star), service user representatives, members of the End of Life Care Board and clinicians.

The Welsh Government commissioned Cardiff University (through the End of Life Care Board) to undertake a scoping study to identify and gather information on structured bereavement services available in Wales. An [interim report](#) has been produced, and the final report was due to be published in October (but this does not appear to have happened yet). The [Minister's July statement](#) said that a meeting of the Bereavement Support Working Group was planned to discuss the findings from the report.

According to the interim report, one of the priorities of the End of Life Board in Wales 2017-2020 is for health boards to review the settings and capacities of their bereavement services with an aim that the needs of the bereaved are met. Further information can be found in the Welsh [Government's Palliative care and end of life delivery plan](#) (2017).

Welsh Government response

The Minister for Health and Social Services states that 'ensuring appropriate support is in place for families that lose a child is a high priority' for him, and refers

to the written statement referenced above as an update on the work the Welsh Government is doing in this area. He goes on to say:

Health Boards are responsible for providing bereavement care and support for their population. The Welsh Government enhances Health Board bereavement provision by supporting a range of projects and initiatives.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-912
Ein cyf/Our ref VG/08064/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Assembly Member
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

29 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 8 October on behalf of the Petitions Committee regarding Petition No. P-05-912 about Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults.

Losing a child or a young adult is devastating and ensuring appropriate support is in place for families that lose a child is high priority for me, and my Written Statement of 22 July provides an update on the work we are doing. <https://gov.wales/written-statement>.

Health Boards are responsible for providing bereavement care and support for their population. The Welsh Government enhances Health Board bereavement provision by supporting a range of projects and initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@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.

P-05-812 Supporting Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 07.11.19



“ When it rains look for rainbows,
When it’s dark look for the stars!”

7th November, 2019

Dear Petitions Committee

“We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide a pathway here in Wales to ensure families who unexpectedly lose their child or young adult aged 25 years and under get the support they require.”

Thank you very much for your email regarding our petition, dated the 6th November, and for including Vaughan Gething’s response to our petition.

I understand the petition will be considered at your next meeting on **Tuesday 19 November 2019** along with the document provided by The Minister.

For 2 Wish Upon A Star to comment in full we would appreciate it if our full response could be delayed until after the Bereavement Review has been completed and shared. We feel to write a detailed response by next Wednesday, without the completed review to reflect on, would be very difficult.

As you can see from the letter received in September, assurances have been given by Vaughan Gething about the importance of this review. I believe it is therefore, difficult for us to respond to the Minister’s letter while the review remains unpublished.

We hope the Petition Committee understand this decision and we look forward to receiving the review and its findings. We can then take time to respond accordingly to the Committee.

Best wishes

R L Mannings

Rhian Mannings
Founder and CEO 2 Wish Upon A Star

Agenda Item 2.4

P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

This petition was submitted by Gethyn Mon Hughes having collected a total of 2,216 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to withdraw its objection, and offer support, to the proposal for Network Rail to permit the Anglesey Central Railway to be re-purposed into an 18 mile traffic-free multi-user path from Amlwch through to Gaerwen. Having been out of service for the past 26 years, it is our belief that the line could no longer serve any useful purpose for passenger services or freight between Gaerwen and Amlwch. Instead, the Lôn Las Môn multi-user path would be open for use by families, walkers, runners, equestrian users and leisure cyclists, including those with disabled access requirements.

Additional Information

Unlike the neighbouring counties of Gwynedd and Conwy, Anglesey has very few sections of traffic free paths. Although two national cycle routes are in existence on the island, they are primarily B-roads which are signposted principally for use by experienced road cyclists. Sixty percent of people who do not cycle state fear of traffic as a reason for not using a bicycle as a means of transportation. A traffic free route such as Lôn Las Môn is crucial to encourage more people to cycle for leisure and transport purposes. In addition, with an average of one rider involved in a road traffic incident every day across the UK, equestrian users on Anglesey would also benefit from a traffic free route, away from fast moving vehicles which pose a major hazard for both horse and rider. Once completed, the multi-user green-way would be a traffic free long-distance corridor from the South West to the North East of the island, allowing users to link with the Anglesey coastal path as well as other footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways. The project would also have knock-on economic benefits for the tourism sector on Anglesey. This is demonstrated by the Camel Trail in Cornwall, a disused railway trail of a similar length to the proposed Lôn Las Môn trail at 17.3 miles. In 2015 users of the Camel Trail spent around £6.7m and generated approximately £13m of business turnover. With obesity, mental health issues, as well as levels of type 2 diabetes increasing at an alarming rate, Lôn Las Môn would allow the public to exercise in a traffic free environment, away from vehicle emissions

and pollutants, and over terrain which is readily accessible to those with disabilities and access needs. The benefits to residents, businesses and visitors that would result from this project are substantial and would undoubtedly improve the quality of life for everyone on Anglesey.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ynys Mon
- North Wales

P-05-913 Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 19 November 2019

Reference: RS19/10865 - 1

Petition Number: P-05-913

Petition title: Creation of Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path

Text of petition: We call on the Welsh Government to withdraw its objection, and offer support, to the proposal for Network Rail to permit the Anglesey Central Railway to be re-purposed into an 18 mile traffic-free multi-user path from Amlwch through to Gaerwen. Having been out of service for the past 26 years, it is our belief that the line could no longer serve any useful purpose for passenger services or freight between Gaerwen and Amlwch. Instead, the Lôn Las Môn multi-user path would be open for use by families, walkers, runners, equestrian users and leisure cyclists, including those with disabled access requirements.

1. Background

Anglesey Central Railway is a 17 mile railway line connecting Amlwch to Gaerwyn and the North Wales Mainline. Passenger services stopped on the line in 1964 following the implementation of the Beeching Report. Industrial freight services continued until 1993. The line itself remains in place, but has been mothballed.



The line is owned by Network Rail – the body responsible for most rail infrastructure in Britain. While the Welsh Government has powers to invest in rail infrastructure to meet its own priorities, rail infrastructure investment and planning in Wales is not devolved and is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport.

Media reports indicate that in 2012 Network Rail granted a licence to Anglesey Central Railway Limited to begin clearing undergrowth from the lines with a view to reopening them to heritage rail services. Network Rail is currently negotiating a lease with the organisation.

Network Rail's Network Licence requires it to carry out an industry consultation when disposing of land – including entering into lease agreements. This requires the organisation to consult with a range of rail industry and other organisations, including the Welsh Government and local authorities. A consultation on the lease was held in 2016, however the details do not appear to have been published.

The Welsh Government has been developing business cases for new railway stations across Wales through a three stage process. A proposal for a station at Llangefni on the Anglesey District Line had been included at stage one and two – presumably requiring the line south from Llangefni to the existing network to be reopened.

The Welsh Government's National Transport Finance Plan 2018 update (published in May 2019) refers to the station being considered at stage two of the process. However, the outcome of this process does not appear to have been published yet.

This station proposal is not mentioned in the letter from the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport to the Chair on this petition.

More recently, Lôn Las Môn is campaigning to repurpose the line as a multi-use path. The development of walking and cycling routes, as well management of most public rights of way, is largely the responsibility of local authorities. The Welsh Government is increasingly linking funding for active travel routes to priorities identified by local authorities in delivering the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

2. Welsh Government action

The letter to the Chair from the Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport, Lee Waters AM, highlights the Welsh Government's decarbonisation objectives set out in its low carbon delivery plan, Prosperity for All: A low carbon Wales. In particular, this outlines the need to encourage active travel. However, in discussing the implications of the Active Travel Act the Deputy Minister notes:

Our Active Travel Act places a duty on local authorities to plan and create walking and cycling networks in all larger villages, towns and cities. It would be

for Anglesey County Council to decide whether there is potential to develop this route as an active travel route through consultation ahead of the submission of its next Integrated Network Map. The current position is that Amlwch and Llangefni are designated localities to which our Active Travel Act duty applies to, though Gaerwen is not.

We fully recognise the potential of developing the disused railway between Gaerwen to Amlwch as a multi-use path for leisure and tourism. However, whilst we value leisure cycling and walking, these are not priorities for transport policy.

It would be for Anglesey County Council to decide if it wishes to pursue other sources of funding for developing the disused railway line as a multi-use path.

The Deputy Minister also refers to the Welsh Government's September 2019 publication, *A Railway for Wales: the case for devolution*. This document sets out the Welsh Government's aspiration for 'full rail devolution', including rail infrastructure. The Deputy Minister notes that this 'will allow us to consider reopening some currently disused lines such as Gaerwen to Amlwch'.

The Deputy Minister does not set out the Welsh Government's position in responding to Network Rail's industry consultation on the potential lease. However, in noting the implications of *A Railway for Wales* in terms of reopening the line, he concludes:

We would therefore wish any alternative use [of the line] in the meantime to accommodate potential future use for rail passengers and freight.

3. National Assembly for Wales action

The issue has had limited consideration in the National Assembly for Wales. However, on 17 July 2018, during the Business Statement and Announcement, Rhun ap Iorwerth AM said:

I received a letter from the Minister for economy and transport on 25 June, and in that, he referred to a meeting that had to be cancelled between both of us a while ago because of reasons that the Minister couldn't avoid. But it says a couple of positive things about plans that I'm very supportive of: to reopen the railway across Anglesey between Gaerwen and Amlwch, and also to reopen Llangefni station. I would like a statement, if possible—written, I take it now, because of the parliamentary timetable—to provide an explanation on this sentence, which I hope is a positive one:

'In terms of the Llangefni to Amlwch line, we don't intend to reopen it, but we are happy to support the proposal that is being developed by the Anglesey Central Railway company'.

I welcome that. I want to know what sort of support the Government intends to provide, because this is a project that could be of great benefit to Anglesey and especially to the town of Amlwch.

The then Leader of the House, Julie James AM, responded to say that while important she did not think the issue suitable for a statement. However, she offered to ensure the Member received a response if he asked a specific question to the then Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport.

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-05-913
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/05863/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

4 November 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding the Lôn Las Môn Multi-Use Path petition. It has been passed to me to respond in view of my portfolio responsibilities.

As part of our commitment to achieve a modal shift away from cars in *Prosperity for all: A low carbon Wales* the Welsh Government's priority is encouraging active travel, walking and cycling for everyday journeys - especially for journeys that would otherwise be made by motorised transport.

Our Active Travel Act places a duty on local authorities to plan and create walking and cycling networks in all larger villages, towns and cities. It would be for Anglesey County Council to decide whether there is potential to develop this route as an active travel route through consultation ahead of the submission of its next Integrated Network Map. The current position is that Amlwch and Llangefni are designated localities to which our Active Travel Act duty applies to, though Gaerwen is not.

We fully recognise the potential of developing the disused railway between Gaerwen to Amlwch as a multi-use path for leisure and tourism. However, whilst we value leisure cycling and walking, these are not priorities for transport policy.

It would be for Anglesey County Council to decide if it wishes to pursue other sources of funding for developing the disused railway line as a multi-use path. The line is currently owned by Network Rail, and the Welsh Government has no devolved responsibility for such matters.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lee.Waters@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.

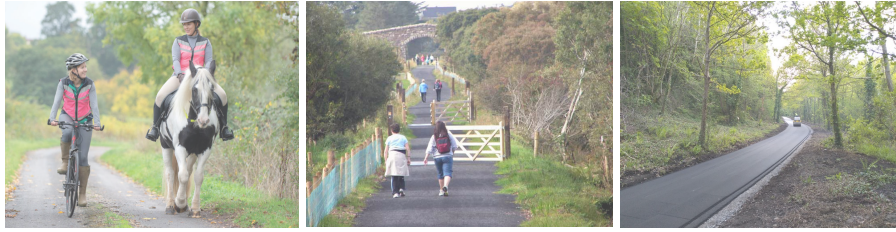
We recently published our Rail Vision which, in the long term, will allow us to consider reopening some currently disused lines such as the Gaerwen to Amlwch line. This also includes Strategic Corridor Developments including enhanced connectivity from Ynys Mon to Bangor, Caernarfon, Aberystwyth and to Swansea, Carmarthen and South West Wales. A link to our Rail Vision can be found at <https://gov.wales/railway-wales-case-devolution>. We would therefore wish any alternative use in the meantime to accommodate potential future use for rail passengers and freight.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered on the page.

Lee Waters AC/AM

Dirprwy Weinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport



Lôn Las Môn

Ref. P-05-913- Pwyllgor Deisebau 19.11.19 / Petitions Committee 19.11.19

Date 8th November 2019

Dear Sirs, Madam

Further to receipt of a copy of the letter addressed to Janet Finch-Saunders AM dated 4th November 2019 from Lee Waters AM Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport. We would respond to the points raised as follows:

1. Para 1. Prosperity for all: A Low Carbon Wales published June 2019, specifically Transport Sector Emission Pathway places great weight on encouraging active travel, walking and cycling for everyday journeys, especially for journeys that would otherwise be made by motorised transport. P5 of this paper refers to Well-being “Active travel, such as walking and cycling, also provide other significant co-benefits. The Well-being Matrix Tool highlighted how the active travel maps against strong direct and wider benefits in relation to the wellbeing goals, in particularly against a healthier, more prosperous and cohesive communities Wales” With the current shift towards social prescribing having more than just active-travel in towns and larger villages would bring great benefits to the community, active travel needs to expand its remit to include a wide swathe of the population who are not actively travelling to work but are young, retired or those wishing to improve their health and need more than just a circular route in a town or larger village. <https://www.bma.org.uk/collective-voice/policy-and-research/public-and-population-health/steps-to-increase-physical-activity-levels-in-the-uk?fbclid=IwAR116HvbsEQkxv2B02MsryktXlg9ac10fbNCdLzcxfcwOgXCImjPzolixeE>
2. Para 2. Active Travel: The Act does indeed place a duty on the Local Authorities to plan and create walking and cycling networks in towns and larger villages. Anglesey County Council visited developing this disused railway route in 2007/08 with the assistance of Sustrans however the scheme never went ahead due to political changes and direction in the Council. Lôn Las Môn is a Community Interest Company (CIC) formed specifically to drive this project forward separate to any Council direct involvement as they have stated that they do not have the “finances or resources to dedicate to the project”. LLM has the expertise and drive to push this project forward and has the support of a number of partner and supporting organisations (refer to appendix 1) Amlwch and Llangefni are designated localities for ATA however as noted above they are principally circular routes and do not offer any connectivity between these towns and outlying villages. Gaerwen is a major employment hub but is as has been stated does not benefit from any ATA infrastructure. As can be seen from the attached maps (appendix 2) Lôn Las Môn would provide a traffic-free active transport conduit from the North of the island to the very South and would provide both benefits in active travel, social prescribing, leisure and tourism. The route bisects a number of National Cycle Routes and would bolster this network but would also provide a quite unique 18-mile bridleway along its route.
3. Para 3. Transport Policy: It is good that the fact that the potential for developing the disused railway as a multi-use path is recognised, however its potential as traffic-free active travel conduit is not recognised, this project is not just for the benefit of leisure and tourism, an example of this is the number of schools within 1 mile or less of the route totals 11 all (see appendix 3) of which could

actively use the route for active journeys to work. Sustrans' Big Shift Cymru a challenge designed to motivate the school community in Wales to travel more actively <http://cym.bigshiftcymru.sustrans.org.uk> In saying that that leisure cycling are not priorities for transport, this should be re-considered as ANY efforts to de-carbonise introduce methods to lower emissions from leisure and tourism activities should be explored wherever possible. Transport after all is not just about going to work?

4. Para. 4a: Funding, we are not quite sure why Mr Waters has referred to Anglesey County Council seeking funding to developing this disused railway line. This project is not one that the Local Authority is driving forward, Lôn Las Môn CIC has been specifically set up to drive this project, we have been in close discussion with Sustrans on re-visiting the 2007/08 feasibility, the plans have been costed by our engineers including all the various intact and missing engineering structures e.g. Llangefni bridge and various cattle creeps (under passes). Menter Môn have offered funding towards the costs of re-visiting the Sustrans feasibility however funding towards this from the Welsh Assembly Government would be welcomed. The cost of the capital works itself over 5 years is estimated at £5.5m funding is available from (but not limited to): WAG Active Travel Fund, EU Structural and Development Funds, Lottery Tourism and Community Grants, The Landfill Disposal Tax Communities Scheme.
5. Para 4b: Ownership; The line is in the ownership of Network Rail and its current status is "mothballed" although the true state / condition of the line is other than 2-3 miles in a very poor state, 95% of the line where permissible has been drone surveyed these are freely available to view on YouTube (refer to Appendix 4) although the Welsh Government do not have any devolved responsibilities for such matters they are however a key stakeholder and have the power to influence Network Rails thinking and direction. We have had a number of meetings with Network Rail who are "agnostic" towards either a heritage rail or multi-use path clearly we favour the latter and see that as bringing far more benefits to the island than heritage rail can ever do let alone the capital costs involved.
6. Para. 5: Rail Vision; we understand the need in the long term to provide different forms of public transport and perhaps commuter or tram-based services in Wales. We have seen the plans for Strategic Corridor Developments which put forward enhanced connectivity from Ynys Môn to Bangor, Caernarfon, Aberystwyth and heading South. But can we have a good dose of reality here; Wylfa B even if the DCO goes ahead its favoured route for construction traffic is road / sea. There are no major industrial or large employers on the North of the island (Rehau closure) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-48035132>) there are no stations or signalling infrastructure as all of the stations are in private ownership, Llangefni Station has not been selected in North Wales for re-opening under a recent transport review. Therefore, unless there was suddenly a major employer on the island or a very large Centre Parcs type development came to a similar location the need for rail or tram type services would be rather a pointless exercise, let alone the vast capital cost to re-open and service the line. As for freight the same logic applies what is there to be served by freight services, Associated Octel which was the last user of the line circa. 1996 has been closed for over 20 years and is being currently demolished.

The Lôn Las Môn project is a unique opportunity to re-purpose a disused railway line as has been done in many other areas of the UK and Ireland and create an 18 mile traffic free (no road or level crossings) travel conduit for ActiveTravel+, walking, running, leisure cycling, equestrian use, adaptive and disabled cycling use. This would be used widely by the resident population and provide a number of opportunities for micro-business to provide services to users of the path: This is demonstrated by the Camal Trail in Cornwall, a disused / abandoned railway of a similar length to LLM at 17.3 miles. In 2015 there were 425k visitors to the trail 185k from outside of the areas (Cornwall Tourism Service) Trail users spent around £6.7m and generated around £13m of business turnover. There are many other Trails and Greenways that Lôn Las Môn could aspire to: Ystwyth Trail in Ceredigion, Waterford, Connemara and Wild Atlantic Ways in Ireland. "Greenways are traffic-free routes connecting communities to all kinds of destinations for commuting, everyday journeys or leisure and recreation".

Continued...



Lôn Las Môn

Yours Sincerely

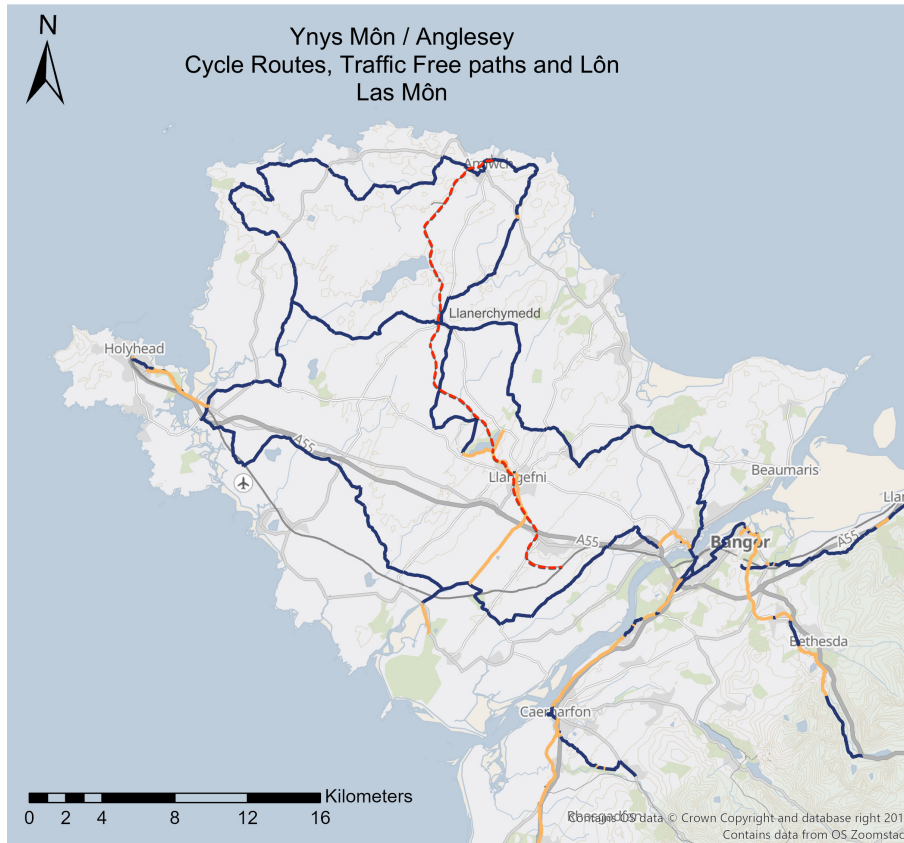
Adrian Williamson
For and on behalf of Lôn Las Môn

List of Appendices;

Appendix 1 – Supporting Organisations and Partners

Sustrans, The Outdoor Partnership, Anglesey GP Cluster, Scouts Môn, Holyhead Cycling Club, Clwb Marchogaeth Môn Riding Club, Anglesey Cycling Group, Anglesey Walking Group / Ramblers, Always Aim High Events, Cybi Striders, Welsh Cycling, Cycling UK, Chris Boardman MBE, HSBC Breeze Rides, Menter Môn, Wales Cooperative Centre, The British Horse Society, Park Leisure (Plas Coch), Y Ring, Rhosgoch, Bulkerley Hotel, Beaumaris, Siop Paget, Rhosybol, Steision Llan, Llanerchymedd, Cyngor Cymuned Penmynydd a Star, Rib Ride, Menai Bridge, Tacla Taid, Newborough, Pedal Power (Wrexham), British Blind Sport, Blas Lôn Lasm Lodge Dinorwig, Anglesey Tourism Association / Discovery Anglesey, Pete’s Eats, Caban Cyf, Anglesey Sea Zoo, Halen Môn, Evolution Bikes, CycleWales, Blue Sky Café.....

Appendix 2 – Map



National Cycle Network
 — OnRoad - - - Lôn Las Môn
 — TrafficFree

Appendix 3 – Schools near Lôn Las Môn

Ysgol Gynradd Amlwch
Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones
Ysgol Gynradd Rhosybol
Ysgol Gymuned Llanerchymedd
Ysgol Bodffordd
Ysgol Corn Hir
Ysgol Gufyn Llangefni
Ysgol Esceifiog Gaerwen
Ysgol Parc y Bont
Ysgol Gynradd Llanfairpwll
Ysgol Santes Dwynwen, Newborough

Appendix 4 – YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCz9SJCzCi0vFOAaombLzSgg?view_as=subscriber

Appendix 5 – UK & Ireland Multiuse Paths and Greenways

Camal Trail, Cornwall

https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/cameltrail?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=visitcornwall.com&utm_campaign=listing

Wirral Way

<https://www.visitcheshire.com/things-to-do/wirral-way-p267151>

Ystwyth Trail

<http://www.discoverceredigion.co.uk/English/what/cycling/Pages/Ystwyth-Trail.aspx>

Waterford Greenway

<http://visitwaterfordgreenway.com/>

Dublin Galway Greenway

<http://www.dublingalwaygreenway.com/2018/07/dublin-galway-greenway-is-centrepiece.html?m=1>

Great Western Greenway

<http://www.greenway.ie/index.html>

Wild Atlantic Way

<https://www.wildatlanticway.com/holidays-breaks/breaks-in-mayo/freewheeling-mayo>

Swiss Valley Trail, South Wales

<http://www.railwaypaths.org.uk/our-achievements/swiss-valley-trail/>

Fallowfield Loop Line, Manchester

<http://www.railwaypaths.org.uk/our-achievements/fallowfield-loop/>

Spennithorne Valley Greenway, West Yorkshire

<http://www.railwaypaths.org.uk/our-achievements/spennithorne-valley-greenway/>

Northern Ireland Greenways

<http://nigreenways.com/>

Trans Pennine Trail

<https://www.transpenninetrail.org.uk>

Agenda Item 2.5

P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled

This petition was submitted by Tracy Locke having collected a total of 121 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to ensure that it is a legal requirement for all GP surgeries to have wide, adjustable treatment beds and hoists available for the use of disabled patients, so that they can be examined whenever there is need.

I was born with Spinabifida in 1970 and as a survivor of this condition I am paralysed from above the waist down and use a wheelchair full time. In 2017 I was diagnosed with stage 4 bladder cancer. It cannot be legally proven but it is my sincere belief that had I been examined earlier in the years before in my GP surgery on an a wide, adjustable treatment bed, perhaps with the aid of a hoist, then my cancer would not have been diagnosed at such an advanced stage. Since I've been looking into this issue, many disabled women have spoken to me about how they do not have equal access to smear tests because of this issue too. Often people think that disabled access is just about lifts and ramps but in health care, it is so much more complex. Let's join together to make access to health care equal for all people.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Preseli Pembrokeshire
- Mid and West Wales

P-05-914 Equal access to health care for the disabled

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 19 November 2019

Reference: RS19/10865-4

Introduction

Petition number: [P-05-914](#)

Petition title: Equal access to health care for the disabled

Text of petition: We call on the Welsh Government to ensure that it is a legal requirement for all GP surgeries to have wide, adjustable treatment beds and hoists available for the use of disabled patients, so that they can be examined whenever there is need.

I was born with Spinabifida in 1970 and as a survivor of this condition I am paralysed from above the waist down and use a wheelchair full time. In 2017 I was diagnosed with stage 4 bladder cancer. It cannot be legally proven but it is my sincere belief that had I been examined earlier in the years before in my GP surgery on an a wide, adjustable treatment bed, perhaps with the aid of a hoist, then my cancer would not have been diagnosed at such an advanced stage. Since I've been looking into this issue, many disabled women have spoken to me about how they do not have equal access to



smear tests because of this issue too. Often people think that disabled access is just about lifts and ramps but in health care, it is so much more complex. Let's join together to make access to health care equal for all people.

Background

The relevant guidance in Wales (*General medical practice premises, 2017*) notes that consideration must be given to the requirements of the Equality Act in terms of both design and future operation of primary healthcare premises, but also says:

It should be noted, however, that whilst the Act gives legal protection to disabled people against discrimination, it does not make explicit what constitutes discrimination in terms of standards in the built environment.

The guidance states that careful consideration should be given to the external areas and approaches to the building, with particular attention to disabled, elderly and infirm patients and visitors, and includes reference to disabled parking spaces. However it does not mention accessible consultation/treatment rooms (with hoists etc) for disabled patients.

The guidance does specifically set out considerations that should be given for bariatric patients and adults with learning disabilities:

GPs and health boards should consider provision for bariatric patients and adults with learning disabilities. This will depend upon local circumstances. These patients will require additional facilities over and above normal provision. The client should consider the use of one treatment room with specialist lifting equipment, either built into the building structure or provided as a mobile hoist, for these patient groups. The room should be flexible to allow for both groups of patients and for any specialist equipment. The treatment room should also include an en-suite toilet to allow for privacy and dignity.

Welsh Government response

The Welsh Government refers to the *General medical practice premises in Wales 2017* design guidance, and quotes the above section which states that GPs and Health Boards should consider provision for bariatric patients and adults with learning disabilities.

The Welsh Government goes on to say:

All patients should have equitable access to healthcare services and health boards should work to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate patients if they have specific needs due to disability. It remains the responsibility of Health Boards to plan how services will be delivered 'on the ground.' This includes the commissioning and regular review of GP services to ensure the needs of the resident population are met.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/08069/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

1 November 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding petition P-05-914 Equal Access to Health Care for the Disabled.

General medical practice premises in Wales 2017, which is the design guidance for new premises, states that GPs and Health Boards should consider provision for bariatric patients and adults with learning disabilities. This will depend upon local circumstances. These patients will require additional facilities over and above normal provision. The client should consider the use of one treatment room with specialist lifting equipment, either built into the building structure or provided as a mobile hoist, for these patient groups. The room should be flexible to allow for both groups of patients and for any specialist equipment. The treatment room should also include an en-suite toilet to allow for privacy and dignity.

All patients should have equitable access to healthcare services and health boards should work to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate patients if they have specific needs due to disability. It remains the responsibility of Health Boards to plan how services will be delivered 'on the ground.' This includes the commissioning and regular review of GP services to ensure the needs of the resident population are met.

Yours sincerely,

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@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.

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 2.6

P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

This petition was submitted by Laura Clays having collected a total of 112 signatures.

Text of Petition

Following on from the disturbing footage of puppy farms in Wales we need to see greater enforcement of the licensing of puppy farms carried out by local councils in Wales.

Recommendations:

Closing puppy farms that do not meet the required criteria

Prosecuting puppy farms that put animal welfare in danger

Greater transparency on regulated visits – there should be public records like those published by the Food Standards Agency on the hygiene ratings of restaurants. The public should be able to review the inspection records.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Alyn and Deeside
- North Wales

Petition P-05-915: Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 19 Tachwedd 2019
Petitions Committee | 19 November 2019

Petition Number: [P-05-915](#)

Petition title: Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales

Text of petition: Following on from the disturbing footage of puppy farms in Wales we need to see greater enforcement of the licensing of puppy farms carried out by local councils in Wales.

Recommendations:

- Closing puppy farms that do not meet the required criteria
- Prosecuting puppy farms that put animal welfare in danger
- Greater transparency on regulated visits - there should be public records like those published by the Food Standards Agency on the hygiene ratings of restaurants. The public should be able to review the inspection records.

1. Background

Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014

The Welsh Government introduced *Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014* ('2014 Regulations') in an aim to improve the standards of dog breeding. The Regulations came into force on 30 April 2015. The 2014 Regulations replaced the *Breeding of Dogs Act 1973* in Wales and introduced stricter welfare criteria for dog breeding. The 2014 Regulations:



- require the licensing of breeders who keep three or more breeding bitches and either breed, sell, supply or advertise breeding or puppies for sale from their premises;
- introduce stricter welfare standards for breeding establishments;
- require breeders to adopt socialisation, enhancement and enrichment programmes for their animals; and
- create a minimum staff to adult dog ratio.

There have been examples of [prosecutions](#) where breeders have continued to breed and sell puppies without a licence.

Enforcement of the regulations is undertaken by local authorities. In April 2018, the Welsh Government published [Dog breeding establishments: guidance for local authorities](#). The guidance is for local authorities to ensure that the needs of a dog, as set out under Section 9 of the *Animal Welfare Act 2006*, are met, i.e. to include:

- (a) its need for a suitable environment;
- (b) its need for a suitable diet;
- (c) its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- (d) any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals; and
- (e) its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

There are specific Model Licensing Conditions (MLCs) that have been developed by local authorities for use in Wales with regards to the 2014 Regulations. The MLCs define the physical care required for breeding bitches and puppies and introduce new requirements around [socialisation](#) and [environmental enrichment](#), designed to help ensure that puppies are better prepared for life in a family setting.

Several animal welfare charities are concerned that the current regulations do not go far enough to protect the health and welfare of the dogs and advocate a ban on the third party sale of puppies (detailed below). Some examples are the [RSPCA Cymru](#), [Kennel Club](#), [Dogs Trust](#), [Battersea Dogs and Cats Home](#), and [Mayhew rehoming centre](#).

RSPCA Cymru's [Delivering for a decade: 10 years of the Animal Welfare Act in Wales: 2007-2017 \(PDF 1.37MB\)](#) (page 16) outlines RSPCA's continued concerns around dog breeding, particularly around staff to dog ratios. It sets out a recommendation:

While a positive step forward, the minimum one staff member to 20 breeding bitches ratio threatens to undermine the purpose of the regulations. Sadly, this

ratio excludes puppies. Given that one breeding bitch could have a litter of up to 10 puppies, RSPCA Cymru fears this ratio will provide a legal safeguard to a situation whereby one attendant faces the prospect of caring for more than 200 dogs and puppies at once – allowing little over 120 seconds to provide for each animal in a working day. RSPCA Cymru has long argued that any minimum staffing ratio should take into account puppies, studs and bitches.

Respondents to the Welsh Government's consultation [Third Party Sales of Puppies and Kittens](#) (February 2019) referred to the 'inability' of local authorities to 'properly inspect' licenced breeding establishments because of a 'lack of resources and limited training'.

There have been renewed calls for regulation of puppy farms following a [BBC documentary](#) which highlighted welfare issues in some breeding establishments.

Banning third party sales of puppies and kittens

Currently, puppies and kittens can either be purchased directly from a breeder, via a third party seller, or from a rescue/rehoming centre.

[There have been calls](#) (e.g. the 'Lucy's law campaign) for a third party sales ban which would mean that pet shops, pet dealers and other outlets and licensed sellers of puppies and kittens would be unable to sell these pets unless they had bred them themselves. The rationale is that this would prevent the removal of puppies and kittens for sale from their mother and the rest of the litter at a young age.

The issue is complex and the [UK Government has previously opposed the ban](#) (2016), stating that it has the potential to increase unlicensed breeding and could result in a rise in the sale and irresponsible distribution of puppies. However, in December 2018 the [UK Government confirmed](#) it will be banning third party sales of puppies and kittens in England.

A [Research Service blog post](#) provides further information.

2. Welsh Government action

The Welsh Government published a consultation in February 2019; [Third Party Sales of Puppies and Kittens](#). Whilst many supported the ban in Wales, some called for a more robust licensing system to make breeders and sellers 'more visible and traceable'.

On 18 July 2019, [the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs](#) ('The Minister') committed to introducing a ban on the third party sale of puppies and kittens. She also put forward her intention to revisit the 2014 Regulations to improve welfare conditions at breeding establishments ahead of the ban.

Following the aforementioned BBC documentary, the Minister made a statement on 9 October 2019 setting out further urgent action to regulate the industry ahead of the ban:

I have written to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group to accept their offer of help and request an urgent and immediate review of our dog breeding regulations. The review will include full consideration of any current barriers to enforcement and how impartial veterinary advice is provided during the licensing and inspection process.

I have written to all Local Authority CEOs to raise concerns and invite relevant representatives to a meeting with the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales to discuss the licensing process, enforcement and barriers to it.

The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales immediately referred the BBC programme to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Officials are developing a campaign aimed at members of the public who may be considering purchasing a puppy highlighting the importance of sourcing responsibly.

The Minister's letter to the Committee states that:

The Welsh Government will continue to work with key stakeholders, including Local Authorities and the other Administrations to ensure we introduce changes which will have a lasting impact on the welfare standards of dogs and cats bred in Wales.

3. National Assembly for Wales action

The Petitions Committee has recently considered the petition P-05-856 Ban the sale of puppies by pet shops and all commercial 3rd party dealers in Wales.

The issue of dog breeding has been the subject of discussion in Plenary several times in recent years. This has included calls for the Welsh Government to ban the third party sales of puppies and kittens and to review the 2014 Regulations.

These issues were discussed in Plenary most recently on 9 October 2019 when the Minister set out her strategy which included more urgent action (detailed above). She was asked for the expected timelines around the safeguards. The Minister said (emphasis added):

In relation to the actions I've taken following the [BBC] documentary, obviously that is urgent, and we will do that over the next month or so. Certainly, **the**

group will look at the breeding regulations for me very quickly—I would hope by the end of the year.

In relation to the Lucy's law consultation, I didn't want to get any unintended consequences from that, but, again, I've asked the CVO [Chief Veterinary Officer] to look at when we can bring that in much quicker than we'd anticipated due to all the other ongoing work we've got, particularly in relation to Brexit. I am aware that the CVO's office is particularly stretched. **So, in relation to a timeline for Lucy's law, I think I will have to write to the Member, but I would hope certainly by the spring.**

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-05-915
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07098/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

15 October 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding petition P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales.

I am deeply disturbed by the accounts of non-compliance raised following BBC Wales' investigation into the licensing of breeding premises in Wales. I have already committed to reviewing the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs)(Wales) Regulations 2014 and also made my intentions clear on the value I see in banning third party sales of puppies and kittens. However, I appreciate urgent action is needed in this area. With this in mind:

- I have written to the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group to accept their offer of help and request an urgent and immediate review of the dog breeding regulations.
- I have written to all Local Authority CEOs to raise concerns and invite relevant representatives to a meeting with the Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales to discuss the enforcement of regulations.
- The Chief Veterinary Officer immediately referred the BBC programme to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
- Officials are developing a campaign aimed at prospective puppy purchasers highlighting the importance of sourcing responsibly.

I have recently published a Written Statement on wider dog breeding issues which can be found at: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-dog-breeding-wales>

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@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.

The Welsh Government will continue to work with key stakeholders, including Local Authorities and the other Administrations to ensure we introduce changes which will have a lasting impact on the welfare standards of dogs and cats bred in Wales.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'L' and 'G'.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

**LEAVE BLANK TO ALLOW FOR PRINTING
FAILURE TO DO SO WILL COUNT AS A
REDRAFT.**

To: Lesley Griffiths – Minister for Environment, Energy & Rural Affairs LG/07098/19

From: Leigh McCarthy - OCVO

Ext: 25 5652

Date:

P-05-915 Call for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales.

1. The Petitions Committee have written to you regarding a petition for better enforcement of puppy farms in Wales.
2. The attached response details the work being carried out on dog breeding and revisiting the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014 to further improve welfare conditions at breeding establishments once a ban on third party sales has been introduced.
3. Draft response for your approval.

Agenda Item 2.7

P-05-916 Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

This petition was submitted by David Grimsell having collected 110 signatures online and 1,039 on paper, a total of 1,149 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the Welsh Government to provide adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals at the time of their slaughter in Wales.

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 are meant to provide protection to animals at the time of their slaughter. To do so, they must be properly applied and enforced by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), and there must be sufficient funding for it to be able to carry out its duties under the Regulations.

At the moment the Welsh Government provides the FSA with only £20,000 per annum to protect animal welfare at slaughter across at least 23 Welsh slaughterhouses jointly slaughtering tens of millions of animals each year. This is a pitiful amount and entirely inadequate to cover all that is required including effective monitoring of welfare practice, investigation, enforcement, legal advice, and the staffing to do so. The amounts provided are far below what the FSA has itself indicated (in Board papers) that it needs to carry out its duties regarding welfare of animals at slaughter.

There is much evidence from undercover investigations in slaughterhouses elsewhere in the UK that welfare regulations are frequently breached and that many animals suffer abuse. There is no reason to suppose that these risks do not also arise in Welsh slaughterhouses.

The public has a right to expect that welfare regulations are thoroughly and consistently applied. The Welsh Government must urgently review its funding of the FSA for this purpose, and significantly increase funding to protect animal welfare at slaughter without delay.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ceredigion
- Mid and West Wales

Petition P-05-916: Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

Reference: RS19/10865-6

Petition Number: P-05-916

Petition title: Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses

Text of petition: We call on the Welsh Government to provide adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals at the time of their slaughter in Wales.

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 are meant to provide protection to animals at the time of their slaughter. To do so, they must be properly applied and enforced by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), and there must be sufficient funding for it to be able to carry out its duties under the Regulations.

At the moment the Welsh Government provides the FSA with only £20,000 per annum to protect animal welfare at slaughter across at least 23 Welsh slaughterhouses jointly slaughtering tens of millions of animals each year. This is a pitiful amount and entirely inadequate to cover all that is required including effective monitoring of welfare practice, investigation, enforcement, legal advice, and the staffing to do so. The amounts provided are far below what the FSA has itself indicated (in Board papers) that it needs to carry out its duties regarding welfare of animals at slaughter.

There is much evidence from undercover investigations in slaughterhouses elsewhere in the UK that welfare regulations are frequently breached and that many animals suffer abuse. There is no reason to suppose that these risks do not also arise in Welsh slaughterhouses.

The public has a right to expect that welfare regulations are thoroughly and consistently applied. The Welsh Government must urgently review its funding of the FSA for this purpose, and significantly increase funding to protect animal welfare at slaughter without delay.

1. Background



The ***Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014*** (the 2014 regulations) make provision for the administration and enforcement of EU ***Regulation 1099/2009*** in Wales. These regulations require persons to obtain a certificate of competence or temporary certificate of competence before killing animals or carrying out related operations in a slaughterhouse. They also set out national rules to ensure more extensive protection of animals at the time of killing.

The **Food Standards Agency (FSA)** is an independent Government department working across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in food. Under the 2014 regulations, the FSA is a competent authority and has responsibilities which include taking action in the event of any non-compliance.

The FSA delivers animal welfare policies in approved meat establishments as part of **official controls** on behalf of the UK Government and the Welsh Government. A **manual for official controls** (Volume 1, Chapter 2.3) further describes the tasks, responsibilities and duties of the FSA's staff in relation to animal welfare in slaughterhouses. The UK Government and the Welsh Government hold the overall policy responsibility for animal welfare in England and Wales, respectively. The FSA's delivery activity is covered by a Service Level Agreement (SLA), as described in the **concordat** between the FSA and the Welsh Government. Under the SLA, the FSA carries out activities including animal welfare inspections, audits, enforcement, licencing and education.

2. Non-compliance with animal welfare regulations

The FSA publishes **reports** on non-compliance with animal welfare regulations in slaughterhouses, for Wales and England jointly. The **annual report on animal welfare to the FSA board** (PDF 558KB) also provides details of non-compliance. Data presented in the 2019 annual report shows that there were 386 animal welfare breaches in slaughterhouses, in England and Wales, for the 2018-2019 reporting period. This figure represents only those breaches classed as a level 3 or level 4 breach (where a level 3 breach is a major non-compliance - potential risk to welfare, and level 4 is a critical non-compliance - serious and imminent risk to animal welfare).

In September 2019, the Farmers Fresh abattoir in Wrexham was the subject of **media coverage** following an investigation by the animal rights group **Animal Aid** into animal welfare. **The BBC** has reported that a criminal investigation is under way.

3. Funding of the FSA

Annual animal welfare updates to the FSA's Board ([September 2017](#) and [September 2018](#)) refer to a "considerable increase in enforcement activity on animal welfare" attributed to the implementation of the 2014 regulations and the introduction of the FSA's "Deter, Prevent, Detect, Enforce" animal welfare programme in 2016.

The September 2017 board paper on annual welfare stated that (emphasis added):

...under the provisions of the Service Level Agreement with Defra and Welsh Government, FSA received a contribution of **c.£40k for animal welfare activities in 2016/17**. In 2017/18, this contribution is expected to rise to c.£50k. Although this is an increase on 2016/17, it **represents only a small proportion of the overall cost of delivering the Government's animal welfare policy in slaughterhouses**.

The September 2018 paper reiterated these concerns (emphasis added):

...in 2017/18 FSA received a contribution of c£50k which **does not meet the true costs of welfare official controls which we conservatively estimate to be in excess of £1m**, only a small proportion of which is recovered from industry. During the period we have continued our negotiations with Defra and WG for increased contributions and we are pleased to report that **for 2018/19 Defra and WG will contribute c£170k**. The increased amounts will go towards CCTV implementation and enforcement costs (**Defra contribution only**), annual welfare themed audit and OVs time for recording non-compliances, referrals for investigation and general welfare enforcement in slaughterhouses. The uplift does not cover any FSA legal team costs for appeals and investigations nor the welfare portion of inspection costs and these are areas we will be discussing with Defra and WG for the financial period 2019/20.

Whilst the figures cited in the FSA board papers represent a joint contribution from the Welsh Government and Defra, a [FOI response](#) (257 KB), previously shared with this Committee, provides information on the contributions of the Welsh Government alone. It stated that the funding provided by the Welsh Government directly to the FSA for welfare controls totalled £33,627.77 for the three year period of 2015-2017. It also stated that the Welsh Government would be providing the FSA with £20,187.00 in funding for 2018/19.

The [September 2019 annual animal welfare paper](#) does not provide an indication of the contribution for 2019/20. Furthermore, whilst the Welsh Government's [draft budget 2019-2020 expenditure lines](#) include separate references to animal welfare and the FSA, the total fund budgeted for the Welsh Government's contribution to the FSA's delivery of animal welfare services in slaughterhouses is not explicit.

4. Welsh Government action

On 22 March 2018, the Welsh Government **announced** a new £1.1 million Food Business Investment scheme package of grant aid for small and medium sized slaughterhouses in Wales.

The Welsh Government's **website** states that this funding:

...will include both capital investment and provide advice on animal welfare, business improvement and technical matters. Welfare friendly infrastructure and facilities will be supported and also the installation and upgrading of CCTV monitoring systems.

Lesley Griffiths, the then Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, **said**:

The grant aid will also help these businesses install and upgrade CCTV monitoring systems. I want to assist businesses to put systems in place while legislating for CCTV in slaughterhouses is taking place in England. I want Wales' slaughterhouses to be fully prepared as I continue to explore opportunities to legislate in the longer term.

Lesley Griffiths provided an update on the scheme in a letter to this Committee on 22 October 2019. The letter highlighted that expressions of interest "are now being progressed to full applications with a January 2020 deadline". The Minister also emphasised that all applicants will be required to receive expert welfare advice on the movement and management of animals in their premises.

5. National Assembly for Wales action

On 3 July 2018, this Committee received **evidence** from Lesley Griffiths, the then Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, on a previous petition (**P-04-433: CCTV in Slaughterhouses**). The petition text was:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to introduce mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses to help vets with better regulation and monitoring, to provide footage for training and retraining, to deter some of the animal welfare abuses filmed by Animal Aid, and to provide evidence for prosecutions should they be necessary.

Lesley Griffiths **told the Committee** she was "still considering whether to bring in legislation" but that her "priority at the moment" is to bring forward the grant scheme". She also said:

We've got incredibly high animal welfare standards. I have not received any complaints about any of the abattoirs. I've had a bit of speculation, but what I've always said is, 'Come back to me with evidence and we'll look into this', and I

haven't had that. So, I think it's better to work in partnership with the sector. A couple of people had raised with me that funding, as is often the case, was a barrier, so take that barrier away and, as I say, we'll see how many take up the scheme when we open the window before the end of this term.

At the time of writing, CCTV is not mandatory in Welsh slaughterhouses, although, [according to the FSA \(68KB\)](#) "around 99% of animals slaughtered in Wales are killed in premises with some form of CCTV". Regulations on [mandatory use of CCTV in slaughterhouses in England](#) came into force in May 2018. Earlier this year, the Scottish Government [announced](#) that it would also make CCTV mandatory for slaughterhouses in Scotland.

Welfare in Welsh Abattoirs [was the focus of a debate](#) in Plenary on 14 November 2018. Gareth Bennett AM said:

14 slaughterhouses in Wales do not have CCTV surveillance in operation, although most of the larger ones do... according to freedom of information requests submitted to the Welsh Government, data is not held on the positioning or range of cameras that are operating in slaughterhouses or the number of animals slaughtered without the presence of CCTV. However, the British Veterinary Association estimates that 2 million birds and almost 400,000 sheep, pigs, and cattle are slaughtered without CCTV surveillance each year in Wales. The BVA stated that the potential risk of welfare harm to these animals is increased by the lack of CCTV.

In response, Lesley Griffiths, the then Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, [said](#)

As I've stated many times... I would consider legislating to ensure CCTV is in place in all Welsh slaughterhouses. However, I will initially work with food business operators in a supportive relationship to achieve the same objective.

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.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-916
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07119/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

October 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding Petition 05-916 adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses received from Mr David Grimsell.

I am committed to ensuring high standards of welfare for all animals kept in Wales, at all stages of their life, including at the point of slaughter. All public sector organisations face difficult decisions regarding the identification and funding of priorities. This is particularly true with ever decreasing budgets. To ensure maximum impact officials meet FSA colleagues to agree priorities within the funding available. The Welsh Government also works with industry and other stakeholders to ensure the high standards of animal welfare at the time of killing are met.

I have previously stated I would consider introducing legislation to ensure CCTV is in place in all Welsh slaughterhouses. However, I am committed to working with slaughterhouse operators, in a supportive relationship, to achieve the same objective. A Food Business Investment Scheme for slaughterhouses opened to expressions of interest (EOI) on 30 September 2018. There has been a positive response from slaughterhouses with projects that include investments to safeguard animal welfare, such as installation, upgrade or improvement of CCTV, being given priority. EOIs are now being progressed to full applications with a January 2020 deadline.

Successful applicants of the scheme are being provided with guidance on installation and management of CCTV and are expected to adhere to a protocol jointly developed and agreed by the Food Standards Agency and industry bodies to enable Official Veterinarians access to CCTV footage. Grant supported investments will be inspected when the projects are completed and if there is evidence that protocols are not being adhered to across the industry I will be prepared to legislate.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400
Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

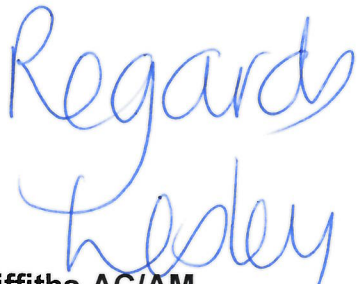
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

Whilst CCTV can contribute to safeguarding animal welfare in slaughterhouses it should not be considered in isolation and there is more that can be done. To support this, I will require all applicants to receive expert welfare advice on the movement and management of animals in their premises. The Safeguarding of animal welfare requires both knowledge and a culture that respects animals, the grant scheme will go some way to address these twin challenges.

In addition to the Food Business Investment Scheme, the Food Skills Cymru (FSC) programme delivered by Lantra supports businesses within the Welsh food and drink processing and manufacturing industry to ensure employees have the right skills and training. FSC is working with Shropshire Training to deliver 'Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing' to businesses across Wales. FSC is also looking to develop additional animal welfare related courses for slaughterhouses to ensure animals are properly handled and cared for prior to slaughter.

I place a high priority on animal welfare in Wales and am working with industry to achieve the best outcomes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Regards Lesley". The word "Regards" is written in a cursive style, and "Lesley" is written below it in a similar cursive style.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs

P-05-916: Adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 12.11.19

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the reply sent by the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs to the Chair of the Petitions Committee regarding the above petition. I should like to make the following points:

1 The Minister refers to the difficulties public sector organisations face regarding the identification and funding of priorities, particularly in the context of decreasing budgets. This is understood. However, it would surely be expected that the welfare of animals at the time of their slaughter would be considered a high priority and, even in the context of budget limitations, would be afforded a reasonable level of funding. This appears not to be the case.

2 There are 23 operational slaughterhouses in Wales (ie those currently audited by the Food Standards Agency (FSA))¹. Approximately 18.5 million farm animals a year are reared in Wales². These comprise 1.1 million cattle, 10 million sheep, 7.5 million poultry and 24,000 pigs. Details of total throughput of animals in Welsh slaughterhouses is not readily available (data is most often aggregated with England). However, while not all animals reared each year are slaughtered, a high proportion will be and it is likely the majority reared in Wales will be slaughtered in Welsh slaughterhouses. Funding for Wales necessarily requires to ensure the proper protection under slaughter regulations of many millions of animals each year.

3 The FSA responsibilities which require such funding include oversight of official veterinarians in slaughterhouses (OVs), time for OV welfare checks, conduct of inspections, undertaking of regular audits, conducting follow up inspection visits where failures are identified, pursuing investigations, pursuing enforcement action including potential prosecution, provision of advice, and others.

4 For 2018/2019 the Welsh Government provided just £20,187 to enable the FSA to ensure animal welfare controls are implemented across all these 23 slaughterhouses³. For the three years prior to this (ie 2015 to 2018) it provided in total only £33,627 (ie approximately £11,200 per annum)³.

Note - The FSA funding contribution made by the Welsh Government is often represented jointly with that made by DEFRA to enable animal welfare controls across the 278 slaughterhouses operational in both England and Wales. Prior to 2018/2019 this joint amount was just £50,000 per annum. The joint DEFRA/Welsh Government contribution to the FSA was increased in 2018/2019 to £170,000 per annum, the increase provided by DEFRA being in large part to address costs associated with oversight of the new requirement for all English slaughterhouses to introduce CCTV during 2018/2019, rather than representing increased funding to address animal welfare controls.

5 The Minister states that *'to ensure maximum impact officials meet FSA colleagues to agree priorities within the funding available'*. There was a meeting of the FSA Board in September 2018 which was specifically dedicated to the consideration of animal welfare at slaughter. The FSA Board papers for the meeting state clearly that funding contributions under the Service Level Agreement by DEFRA and the Welsh Government *'does not meet the true costs of official welfare controls which we conservatively estimate to be in excess of £1m, only a small proportion of which is recovered from industry'* (FSA Animal Welfare Update, 19th September 2018, paragraph 24).

6 The funding provided by the Welsh Government (and DEFRA too) to enable animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses to be fully implemented and ensured are clearly massively inadequate. Even considering the enhanced joint funding provided in 2018/2019, it still represents less than

20% of the amount the FSA itself states that it needs. The amounts provided by the Welsh Government do not represent the commitment *'to ensuring high standards of welfare for all animals kept in Wales, at all stages of their life, including at the point of slaughter'* that the Minister implies.

7 The Minister states, *'The Welsh Government also works with industry and other stakeholders to ensure the high standards of animal welfare at the time of killing are met'*. This presupposes high standards are being met but evidence contradicts this. The FSA undertakes regular pre-announced audits of slaughterhouses and publishes the results of these on its web-site¹. These represent the primary formal published data on slaughterhouse performance. Against both animal welfare and food hygiene criteria each slaughterhouse is rated on a four-point scale comprising: Good, Generally Satisfactory, Improvement Needed, and Urgent Improvement Needed. For audits published up to March 2019, only 30% of Welsh slaughterhouses received a 'Good' rating. While most received a 'Generally Satisfactory' rating this is a far lower standard than citizens have a right to expect. That only 30% achieved a 'Good' rating with full notice of an audit is very concerning.

8 Concerns about welfare standards in Welsh slaughterhouses have been further brought to a head by the recent widespread publication of the outcomes of an undercover investigation at the Farmers Fresh slaughterhouse in Wrexham⁵. This showed multiple instances of welfare abuse and outright cruelty with a criminal investigation now underway. A follow-up undercover investigation a few weeks later found further appalling instances of cruelty even though the premises was now supposed to be being closely monitored⁶. Equivalent investigations in England have found that such breaches occurred in almost all slaughterhouses investigated. It is reasonable to assume that the Farmers Fresh failures in welfare standards may be occurring in other Welsh slaughterhouses too.

9 It seems highly likely that the failure over many years to properly fund welfare controls in Welsh slaughterhouses will have contributed to the widespread mediocre standards reported on audit, and the clear risk of significant welfare breaches and cruelty now evidenced in a Welsh slaughterhouse and potentially occurring in others.

10 In her letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee, the Minister has devoted much space to the discussion of the introduction of CCTV, and the Welsh Government strategy in relation to this. This misses the point and is not directly relevant to the petition. The issue of inadequate funding of animal welfare controls and of the installation and use of CCTV are separate, albeit related, issues. At all times it is essential that the regulations to protect animal welfare at slaughter are thoroughly monitored and properly enforced. Adequate funding is needed to ensure this on an ongoing basis. Such monitoring and enforcement is an ongoing requirement whether CCTV is used or not. Where it is used of course, unless there is the basic funding to make use of the data it provides (eg by OV's, FSA staff etc), then it is unlikely to be effective.

The levels of funding provided by the Welsh Government to enable animal welfare controls in slaughterhouses are entirely inadequate to do so in relation to the range of controls needed, the number of slaughterhouses to be covered and the many millions of animals 'processed' by them each year. Citizens have a right to expect that the welfare of farm animals is protected as far as possible at the time of their killing and that regulations are properly enforced. Significantly increased funding to do this is urgently required.

Yours

David Grimsell
Welsh citizen

References

1 FSA audits of approved meat establishments

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/43038f2d-6d94-4e6d-bbf9-04bf58726ad3/fsa-audits-of-approved-meat-establishments>

2 StatsWales

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Agriculture/Agricultural-Survey/Annual-Survey-Results/total-livestock-in-wales-by-year>

3 Freedom of Information request AT1SN 12673 to Welsh Government

4 Food Standards Agency (2018) Animal Welfare Update 2018

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa-18-09-05-animal-welfare-update-amends.pdf>

5 <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7416503/Hidden-camera-footage-shows-abattoir-workers-throwing-sheep-backs-slaughterhouse.html>

6 <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-7610173/Hidden-camera-reveals-sheep-getting-stuck-conveyor-belt-dead-ones-placed-live-ones.html>

Agenda Item 3.1

P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

This petition was submitted by Sheila Jones and was first considered by the Committee in May 2018, having collected 1,425 signatures (997 online and 428 on paper).

Text of Petition

We, the undersigned, request that all supply teachers be paid fairly and have full access to training opportunities and other terms and conditions. There should be a qualified teacher in every classroom and taxpayers' money should be going directly into education and not into the pockets of private agencies.

Supply teachers are being exploited and teachers are leaving the profession as they cannot afford to be supply teachers.

Agencies reduce teachers' pay by forty to sixty percent and teachers lose their pensions, this is public money going into the private sector for profit. Lessons are being covered by unqualified staff.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Caerphilly
- South Wales East

P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers, Correspondence – E-Equal to Chair, 08.08.19

Bore da,

Thank you very much for your email and letter dated Wednesday, 7th August.

Please note the following points which summarise our views (upon which I am happy to elaborate in a further meeting with Ms Finch-Saunders, AM, if that's possible):

1. We provide free professional development/training opportunities to all of our teaching and support staff at least every half term. We also provide support and mentorship in particular to Newly Qualified Teachers and those returning to teaching;
2. We are in full agreement that supply teachers in Wales need a better deal than they have been provided to date - Equal was established in 2011 in order to achieve this;
3. We are fully supportive of the new minimum pay rate for supply teachers of £121.64 per day and we are encouraged by the steps taken by the Minister for Education to bring this minimum pay rate into effect;
4. We see the new minimum pay rate for supply teachers as crucial to the recruitment and retention of supply teachers, and also to the retention of all teachers throughout their careers - making supply teaching a financially viable option is crucial to keeping teachers in the profession and available for long-term and permanent roles also.
5. We are presently extremely concerned about the number of other education recruitment companies who have been awarded a place on the NPS (National Procurement Service) framework and yet have refused to their teachers to pay the new minimum pay rate for supply teachers from September 2019 as required by the NPS and Welsh Government. These agencies include New Directions (the sole preferred supplier until April 2019 who has approx. 50% market share in our sector and is essentially using the monopoly power it has amassed as a result of their previous contract in order to keep supply teachers' pay down);
6. We are deeply concerned that the new minimum pay rate has not been made mandatory by the Minister for Education and the Welsh Government. Instead, the onus is being left on education recruitment companies like ourselves to promote it to schools (who have very little money left), while being undercut by other commercial agencies who do not have the welfare of their staff in mind;
7. We believe that the new framework agreement will fail unless the minimum pay rate is mandated with effective measures in place to reprimand agencies and schools who are failing to ensure that supply teachers working in their organisations are paid at least the minimum pay rate (£121.64/day via PAYE or the equivalent rate via any other payment method - please note that Equal does not use any other payment methods such as umbrella companies);
8. If the new minimum pay rate is not mandated, an unfair advantage will be given to non-framework agencies (who are not audited and do not have obligations to report to the NPS or Welsh Government, thus putting child safety at risk in many cases) and other agencies on the framework who want to profit further by pushing teachers' pay back down. This will have the impact of severely hindering the work of education recruitment companies like Equal who are ethical employers and

want to do the best for their teaching staff (and see sustainability as the way forward in terms of recruitment, retention and therefore our commercial objectives); and

9. Equal is one of only a handful of education recruitment companies on the new NPS & Welsh Government framework to have signed up to the Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Ethical Employment. We have also recently pioneered the Welsh Government's Ethical Ratings Cymru accreditation pilot with ESC International and gained accreditation by the Living Wage Foundation, in recognition of the fact that all employees working with Equal, including all office based staff, teaching assistants, admin staff, exam invigilators are paid at least in line with the Living Wage Foundation's living wage (substantially above the statutory national minimum wage).

I would like to request a meeting with Janet Finch-Saunders, AM, Chair of the Petitions Committee. Would this be possible please? I'm based in Swansea and travel often to Cardiff, Newtown, Wrexham and Llandudno so could meet Ms Finch-Saunders AM in a location that's convenient for her to discuss how we can work together to ensure that supply teachers do benefit from the new minimum pay rate for supply teachers requested by the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams AM.

Thank you very much for your attention. Diolch yn fawr.

Please also note the following:

While we agree with the overall request of the petition and its sentiment (that supply teachers should be paid better), we do not agree with all statements made in the petition. We do not agree that there is no role to play by education recruitment companies in the recruitment and administration of supply teaching in Wales, as is suggested by the petition. We certainly do not reduce teachers' pay by 40-60% (a substantially over-stated figure if referring to agency margins in our case). We deliver an important and valuable service to teachers to be able to find work in a wide range of schools (without having to apply directly to, be vetted by and maintain availability information with every single school) and to schools to be able to access a wide range of staff at short notice as their needs require it (without having to market to, vet and check and maintain availability information for every single teacher/staff member).

We would encourage all supply teachers to critically evaluate the various education recruitment companies / agencies available to them and to opt only to work with those who are committed to ethical employment, fair pay (at least in line with the new minimum pay rates for supply teachers), who invest in their training/development to enable their career progression and who encourage them to access long-term and permanent roles where they want these roles for more consistency/stability/further career progression.

To expand upon this, Equal plays a crucial role in meeting staff shortages in schools, especially given that local authority supply pools have been reduced due to inefficiencies and poor effectiveness in many cases:

1. We invest heavily in marketing to recruit people into supply teaching roles, as well as learning support assistant roles.

2. We contribute to employees' pensions through pension contributions of 3% above gross pay (this is a statutory requirement but many companies avoid this and employers' NI by paying staff through umbrella companies, which Equal does not).
3. We pay all of our employees via PAYE thus generating thousands every month for the taxpayer in PAYE tax and both employers' & employees' national insurance (again these are statutory requirements but many companies avoid employers' NI and pension contributions by paying staff through umbrella companies, which Equal does not).
4. We ensure continuity of high standards of teaching & learning in cases where schools otherwise can not do so.
5. We keep people in the teaching profession when they would otherwise leave entirely by enabling them to work flexibly as their life circumstances change, keeping them available for long-term & permanent positions.
6. We recruit for long-term and permanent roles for hard-to-fill vacancies e.g. science & maths and welsh-medium education.
7. We support people in getting in to teaching - many of our graduate teaching assistants gain valuable experience with Equal and subsequently go on to qualify as teachers following a PGCE course where they would not have otherwise done so. We encourage and support this.
8. We support newly-qualified teacher who have not yet completed their induction process to do so. This is critical to retention of teachers in the years immediately following qualification (where EWC data shows the highest number of teachers leave the profession).
9. We work extensively in rural communities and over 65% of our partner schools are Welsh-medium schools who often find it hardest to recruit.
10. We work extensively with additional learning needs (ALN) schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) for which more expertise is required of us as recruiters and of our teaching and learning support staff - these are specialist roles.
11. We deliver free training to our staff, which they as supply teachers are currently not offered by schools, Local Education Authorities or the school improvement consortia despite calls for those bodies to include supply teachers in training opportunities.
12. We deliver additional support to our schools through community benefits initiatives, advice & guidance talks and mentoring for pupils.
13. We are fully audited by the Recruitment & Employment Confederation, having three times been awarded and always maintained their gold standard accreditation, recognising that our vetting and compliance procedures are always in line with best practice. This is critical to ensuring child safeguarding is a priority in our recruitment process.
14. We employ over 100 people in local communities across Wales as a Wales-based company.

Thank you very much for your attention.

P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers, Correspondence – Hoop Education to Chair, 23.08.19

Dear Janet,

We thank you for your invitation to provide our views on matters relating to the petition on fair pay and conditions for supply teachers. Here at Hoop Education, we take great pride in our personalised approach to the supply teaching sector. We are operated by teachers, for teachers, and as educational professionals that are fully committed to the terms of the new framework, we share a mutual desire to significantly raise the standard of education across Wales.

Despite the preconceptions of supply teaching agency motives, to us at Hoop, the role of a supply teaching agency is to ensure that in the absence of a permanently employed schoolteacher, an arrangement for a fully qualified and compliant supply teacher to attend the school is to be made, ensuring that the learners' education is not negatively hindered in any way. The agency is to be fully accountable for the administrative processes and compliance checks to determine the supply teacher's eligibility and suitability to teach, as well as to provide their supply teachers with sufficient opportunities for Continued Professional Development (CPD), in order to facilitate the quality of their teaching. We are an audited education provider here at Hoop, holding REC Accreditation to Gold Standard.

As a teacher-led agency, we are particularly committed to the provision of CPD opportunities for our supply teachers. In addition to our partnership with the accredited educational training facility, Educare, we provide several internal training courses for our teachers, free of charge, offering practical advice and guidance drawn from our own knowledge and experiences as practitioners. The main areas within which we offer training packages for our candidates are Child Protection, Use of Reasonable Force, Moving and Handling, First Aid and Behaviour Management. We maintain regular contact with the Education Workforce Council and respective consortia, tailoring our training provisions in line with curriculum developments and educational priorities. We have also heavily invested in developing our support package for Newly Qualified Teachers completing their Induction on a short-term supply basis, with a particular focus on sourcing and collating suitable, high-quality evidence towards the teaching standards, managing their Induction portfolios and conducting regular progress reviews in preparation for observations with external verifiers.

With regards to the changes that we foresee as a result of the new framework, its implementation is something that we feel very confident will increase the standard of education in Wales. With our commitment to pay our teachers in accordance with the M1 spine point as a minimum daily rate, and the provision of CPD opportunities, we anticipate an increase in job satisfaction for our teachers, thus an increase in the quality of teaching delivered to learners.

Due to the transparency of the relationships we have with the schools we work with, we have discussed the implementation of the new framework, addressing any concerns that they feel might arise due to the changes predicted. The consensus

based on the conversations we have had, is that there may be an initial decrease in the amount of supply teachers requested due to the restrictions of school budgets. We are confident however, that the quality of the teaching being delivered will instil a great deal of confidence within schools, with such a positive impact being made on pupil progress. It is our prediction that the supply teaching agencies maintaining an ethical approach to the provision of supply teachers in Wales will thrive, sharing a common desire to improve the significance and recognition of the role of a supply teacher and therefore the standard of education provided as a result of this.

As previously stated, Hoop Education are **fully** committed to paying our qualified teachers a minimum daily rate of £121.64, in line with the M1 pay scale point. There are no payroll or agency fees involved whilst working with Hoop, with the above daily rate being paid to the assigned teacher in full. This rate is inclusive of holiday pay, which is accrued weekly and can be claimed by the teacher at any point. Reminders are sent to teachers on a regular basis so that all holiday pay is fully claimed.

In accordance with the proposed national pay increase for teachers, awaiting final confirmation of this, we will align our daily rate of pay to reflect this increase. A comprehensive breakdown of the charges is provided to the schools that we work with prior to the booking of any supply cover. We do not actively seek to charge schools any fees for sourcing candidates that may lead to an eventual permanent position within the school.

As a team comprised of experienced teachers, we recognise that there may be instances whereby additional responsibilities and higher-level teacher leadership roles may be requested, therefore candidates taking on such assignments will be compensated in monetary terms to reflect this. This is dependent on the financial circumstances of each individual school. Our intentions are to ensure that any teachers working for Hoop are paid fairly for their contribution to education.

Hoop Education thank you again for allowing us to provide our views on the petition for a fair deal for supply teachers. We are very happy to answer any further queries that the committee might have for us regarding the matters in question, however we hope that the information provided will be satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

Hoop Education

Vetro Recruitment Response to Petition P-05-805

“We, the undersigned, request that all supply teachers be paid fairly and have full access to training opportunities and other terms and conditions. There should be a qualified teacher in every classroom and taxpayers' money should be going directly into education and not into the pockets of private agencies.

Supply teachers are being exploited and teachers are leaving the profession as they cannot afford to be supply teachers. Agencies reduce teachers' pay by forty to sixty percent and teachers lose their pensions, this is public money going into the private sector for profit. Lessons are being covered by unqualified staff.”

In relation to the above petition text, Vetro Recruitment would like to issue the following response:

Vetro recruitment was built on the foundations of providing a clear and transparent recruitment service to the schools and teaching professionals we work with. We have always maintained that an agency can provide immense value if the schools are supported well and teachers are paid fairly.

It has been well publicised that certain agencies do not share our values which has had a negative impact on the teachers, schools, children they teach and the education recruitment industry as a whole. The above statement is probably driven by the poor practices of some of the agencies that supply staff to the schools across Wales.

However, we believe that there is a fundamental role for agencies who operate well, pay teachers fairly and provide value to the schools that they support. We at Vetro Recruitment agree wholeheartedly, that all supply Teachers and School Support Staff should be paid fairly and have access to relevant training opportunities.

Prior to the new framework being implemented, Vetro Recruitment ensured that all Teachers and School Support Staff were paid fairly from day 1 and paid inline with the agency worker regulations 2010 (AWR) rate of pay after 12 week of service. We understand that, in the past, there have been instances where agencies have paid a reduced rate of pay to qualified teachers. We have supported teaching professionals that have registered with Vetro where we have identified that their previous agency had been paying them under the National living wage or AWR rate. In these situations we have supported them by helping recoup the money owed to them by flagging this practice with the department for Business, Energy and industrial strategy (BEIS.gov) and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC).

Vetro's minimum rate of pay (pre-AWR) for a qualified teacher prior to the new framework was £100 per day and where possible, Vetro would often pay above the proposed daily rate of £100.

In relation to the above comment regarding the covering of lessons with unqualified staff we would like to agree that a classroom should be covered by a fully qualified teacher at all times. The only time that Vetro would provide a non-qualified teacher to cover a class would be at the specific request of the school in question.

In relation to the proposed points below, Vetro would also like to provide the following:

"1. The role of agencies in the provision of supply teaching for schools in Wales;

The role of an agency is to supply quality, qualified and vetted education professionals into schools and education setting across wales. We provide vital cover for lessons that the schools could not otherwise cover themselves. The agency model allows schools to continue to function by filling gaps in their timetable that would otherwise go unfilled. These gaps typically consist of last minute sickness, maternity cover, long term sickness cover or gaps created when schools want to train their own staff.

Part of our role is also to allow teachers who have left the profession or retired a route back into teaching by enabling them to work on a flexible basis. This means that many years of teaching experience is not lost as many teachers do not want or cannot commit to a permanent role. The teachers that work via an agency are usually experienced within a variety of settings and have worked in many different environments giving the schools an experienced, flexible and adaptable member of staff.

In order to provide this service to schools the agency performs a multitude of time consuming and expensive tasks to attract the teachers and get them compliant ready to work.

Before a member of staff is offered to a school we will have performed the following.

- Had one of our consultants go to the school to understand the type of staff they will require, we will take a detailed bespoke job description of the ideal person to fill the vacancy within the school.
- Place adverts for requirements that schools have across all the leading job boards, social media platforms and market them to our internal database.
- Screen all the applications we receive, picking out the best and most relevant staff to

interview for the schools.

- Perform a full interview face to face with those people who we believe to be the most suitable candidates for the role.
- We will then begin vetting, reference gathering, ensuring all staff have enhanced and up-to-date DBS certificates, ensuring all staff are registered with EWC (education workforce council) and ensuring all candidates have the right to work in the UK with verified identification.
- All teachers are made compliant to the REC Gold accreditation standards - this is the highest education specific accreditation and we are regularly externally audited to make sure we are adhering to all legal and contractual processes.

You will see from the above comprehensive list and strict compliance that one of the key roles for an agency is ensuring the safeguarding of children through the provision of vetted and qualified staff.

Once a pool of workers have been made ready for work it is the role of the agency to.

- Keep the staff employed in the most suitable contracts
- Offer schools to trial staff members prior to providing full term contracts.
- Keep staff up to date with training and legislation. This includes Safeguarding and we ensure all candidates are up-to-date with safeguarding L1 and L2.
- Monitor their performance and provide regular feedback.
- Payroll staff members and take care of all WTR,NI and pension contributions.

Finally, we believe the role of an agency is to give back to the sector that they work within. Even though we are a relatively small agency we see CSR as a vital part of longevity to the recruitment sector. We work closely with Bullies out who are a local agency and support local schools with a grassroots approach to eradicating bullying in schools. So far we have raised nearly £4000 for the charity which has benefited many schools on the South Wales area.

2. The support and professional training available to supply teachers who are registered with your agency;

At Vetro, continued career development and progression of our candidates is of paramount importance, therefore we offer the following FREE training courses to all education candidates.

- Handling Violence and Aggression
- Safeguarding 1 & 2
- Quality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Preventing Radicalisation
- Autism and Aspergers Awareness
- Health and Safety including Risk Reporting
- Mental health and Learning Difficulties
- First Aid Awareness
- Manual Handling

We also offer support to our candidates through the advice and knowledge from our experienced consultants, two of whom are fully qualified teachers with almost 30 years of combined experience between them. Not only are we able to aid in answering day to day queries that arise, we can also offer expert advice to newly qualified teachers on the completion of their NQT year.

3. Any changes that you believe may arise as a result of the new framework contract for supply teaching.

- Schools will be subject to higher charge rates in line with the newly increased rate of pay for fully qualified teachers in Wales.
- Teachers will be paid better and more fairly.
- We have had discussions with schools where they have stated that education budgets are already stretched and may be unable to pay the increased rate.
- It has also been in the public domain and relayed to us by some candidates that certain agencies who are on the framework intend to not follow the M1 pay rate.
- Enhanced pay within some areas of Wales could encourage more teachers to travel across the bridge from England and work in Wales. This coupled with the toll on the M4 bridge being removed may see the jobs in Wales being very attractive to travel too.
- Where schools struggle to pay the higher daily rate, we anticipate an increase in the usage of cover supervisors, higher level teaching assistants and unqualified teachers covering classes in place of fully qualified teachers.
- With teachers being paid a substantially higher daily rate, we anticipate an increase in staff remaining within the education sector as opposed to leaving for alternative roles outside of education.
- With teachers in a position to earn a higher daily rate - working as a supply teacher will be more financially viable and appealing to candidates going forward.
- We anticipate the increased salary could lead to a growth in the number of people undertaking training to become a teacher and NQT's completing their induction year.

4. Your intentions in relation to wages paid to supply teachers under the framework contract, including whether you anticipate circumstances in which supply teachers will be paid above the stipulated minimum wage.”

Vetro’s position is that fully qualified teachers will be paid in accordance with the newly proposed framework rates of pay when working as a teacher in Wales. In certain circumstances, supply teachers may be paid above the minimum stated rate of pay, this would be evaluated on a case by case basis with a clear understanding of this from all relevant parties.

P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers, Correspondence – Recruit 2 Schools to Committee, 10.09.19

Please find our response to the Fair Deal for Supply Teachers petition, as requested:

1. It is widely accepted now that schools need to use supply agencies to cover their staff absences including sickness, training courses and maternity cover. LEAs no longer offer this service directly to schools and therefore rely on agencies to 'vet' staff and carry out full compliance checks including Safeguarding, DBS, EWC, identification, right to work, qualifications and references. The reliance is also on the agency to deal with any performance, behaviour management and safeguarding issues that may arise, taking away the responsibility from the school. Agencies have a responsibility to provide appropriately trained, high quality staff to schools to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to have as much continuity as possible and a good standard of education during permanent staff absence.
2. It is important for supply teachers to be offered CPD training as they do not have the same opportunities as their colleagues who have secured permanent roles in schools. As well as mandatory training such as safeguarding, first aid, manual handling and behaviour management, we strive to offer other training sessions that staff request. We have plans to provide mindfulness/mental health sessions for staff shortly, which we feel is important. If our staff request specific training, then we will strive to meet their needs. We have recently recruited a retired deputy head, who was also an external NQT verifier. We have a programme in place to provide NQTS with support and training whilst carrying out supply work for us, which is already proving to be invaluable. We also try to support staff welfare also, as working as a supply teacher can leave you feeling very lonely and isolated.
3. The Framework is a move in the right direction for all stakeholders. It provides transparency in terms of pay, charges and margins and also ensures that successful agencies are meeting the required standards and also obtain the necessary accreditations. However, as it is not mandated there is the opportunity for agencies not on the Framework to undercut those that are, and supply to schools. Whilst supply teachers deserve and want to work for a minimum of MPS1, if there are offered regular work at a lower rate then, then may take it in order to guarantee an income. If LEAs are fully supportive of the Framework and discourage schools from working off it then it will allow agencies to continue to provide fair pay and transparency to all stakeholders.
4. As an agency, we are fully supportive of paying supply teachers at MPS 1. We pride ourselves on providing teachers that go above and beyond during placements and it's good to be able to provide some recognition of this in their pay. In an ideal world, teachers should always be paid to scale but unfortunately, most school budgets cannot accommodate this. Prior to the introduction of the new Framework pay rates, we visited all Headteachers at using schools and all were supportive of the

rates, including the increased charge rates. It would certainly be a different matter for schools though if they were required to pay all teachers, according to MPS, for all day to day bookings. We have, however, always implemented the AWR and ensured that teachers are paid to scale after 12 weeks. This will still apply. It is a very transparent process and increased pay and charge rates are discussed with both parties around week 3 /4 of the assignment and amended terms provided to both the school and teacher. We never use unqualified teachers for any teacher assignment. We attempt to work as ethically as possible and as we are a small family agency, we have much lower margins than most of the larger agencies.



Excell Supply Ltd, Unit 17 Mold Business Park, Mold, CH7 1XP

Fair Deal For Supply Teachers

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our views on the above petition, I have answered the questions below, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further clarification.

1. Excell Supply provides a valuable service to schools in Wales in situations where absence occurs. Schools cannot always plan for absence but they require specialists who can step in at short notice in order to support the learning of pupils.

In order to be able to do this, there needs to be a pool of well trained and motivated professionals, who have undergone safeguarding and other compliance checks, available. This pool of professionals would include teachers, teaching assistants and a range of other staff who would be able to work in a range of educational settings, thus minimising disruption to learning if a regular member of staff is absent.

Furthermore, there are many examples where Excell Supply has helped supply teachers (through mentoring and assistance with interview practice) to get contracts in school and fill vacancies which would have remained unfilled.

Excell Supply teaching staff are provided with professional learning opportunities so that they are able to meet the requirements of the new professional teaching standards in Wales and the new curriculum, including the use of the Welsh language in the classroom.

We also believe we a part of the greater community and as such give back to schools as and where we can in the form of donations of sports kits, items for classrooms such as furniture, computers and play areas and also supporting various initiatives that schools run from attendance awards to delivering advice to school leavers on how to be prepared for live outside school. We have also sponsored the Daily Post School Awards which take place annually for schools in North Wales.

Wirral 0151 329 2123 | Warrington 01925 321 221 | Mold 01978 280 123 | excell-supply.com | info@excell-supply.com





Excell Supply Ltd, Unit 17 Mold Business Park, Mold, CH7 1XP

2. Excell Supply employs a number of professional learning managers who are experienced teachers themselves and are able to support teachers who work in different types of school setting including primary, secondary and SEND. Training is free of charge and offered through the medium of Welsh or English.

Safeguarding and safe working practice training is provided face to face and on line. Other formal professional learning opportunities are provided during school holidays or as twilight sessions in term time to maximise the opportunity to access the training. Training venues are geographically dispersed to ensure that staff can attend training near to where they live.

Areas in which formal training sessions have occurred during the last twelve months include behaviour management, using Welsh in the classroom, digital competence and basic safeguarding.

For newly qualified teachers we run regular briefing sessions so that new teachers know how to approach induction-this includes familiarisation with the new professional teaching standards, collecting evidence and using the induction profile.

Behaviour management advice based on Pivotal is circulated to all staff.

All teachers, including NQTs, are offered the chance of being observed in the classroom by an experienced mentor/advisor and given constructive feedback verbally or in writing which relates to the new teaching standards. This approach is welcomed by the supply teachers and by schools and is offered in Welsh or English.

We provide certificates and lesson observation notes to teachers in order for them to use them as evidence against the standards.

3. I believe we will see an improvement to supply teachers pay and conditions because of the introduction of the framework. The fact that there is now a level playing field for all agencies on the framework gives the schools a choice of an accredited agency to work alongside. It will also drive competition between those agencies, which, in turn, will improve the standards of vetting and compliance of the supply teachers. This, I believe will also lead to the retention of the excellent teaching professionals we have across Wales.

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4. Our intentions in relation to wages paid to supply teachers have always been to pay to scale and we have a long tradition of paying to scale where the School agrees to it. Where a school does not agree to pay to scale, and there are many reasons for this, a pay rate is always discussed with the teacher and is agreed before they are placed into the school. We never pay less or expect the teacher to work for less than what has been agreed.

When I first received this question I thought I should wait until the start of the academic year to answer to it to see how the issue of pay would pan out. Two things have alarmed me. Firstly a number of our schools have contacted us and told us that one of our competitors has informed them that decision to pay the minimum pay rate to teachers is down to the school and if the school wish to save money then they don't have to pay the increased rate, and the increase would only kick in after 12 weeks due to AWR and that the NPS cannot force them to pay the minimum rate. The second was seeing a letter from the NASUWT to teachers informing them that agencies have to pay the increased rate and for teachers to let them know of any agencies that aren't paying it. So, the framework is only two weeks old and there is already some confusion on the subject of pay. After the first two weeks of the academic year 80% of our schools have told us they do not wish to pay the minimum pay rate to teachers.

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P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers, Correspondence – MPS Education to Chair, 23.10.19

Dear Ms. Finch-Saunders,

Please find below as requested, MPS Educations response to Petition P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers.

The first two points (1 and 2) are concerned directly with the content of the text of the petition as stated in the Welsh Assembly circular dated 7th August 2019.

1. MPS Education offer on an annual basis, a full programme of training including 5 *paid* sessions of support for NQTs, which is well supported by the target group. Other training opportunities, however, are not.
 2. MPS Education respectfully suggest that the Welsh Assembly check the accuracy of the percentages quoted re pay reduction.
- MPS Education applied for and gained National Procurement Service 'Approved Supplier' status - a very time and resource consuming process.
 - However, monitoring by MPS Education, confirms that agencies (within and obviously outside of the framework) are not paying the agreed minimum rate to qualified teachers.
 - For whatever reason, (e.g. proximity to a given school or reduced travel, etc.) qualified teachers are prepared to accept significant variances in relation to their working rate, when compared to the recently agreed minimum rate established by the National Procurement Service.
 - The acceptance of any rate below that of the nationally agreed minimum, by qualified teachers, completely undermines and dilutes the overarching principle of the petition.
 - It would prove an interesting exercise, through working with the professional unions, if the National Assembly establish the number of qualified teachers who are still prepared to operate in this manner – undermining their own unions, colleagues and the rationale of the petition.
 - A contextual point on this front, is that a significant number of qualified teachers are afraid of losing regular employment and are thus prepared to 'go along' with remuneration below the nationally agreed minimum benchmark. School budgets have certainly not been adjusted to reflect the increased costs.
 - The increased minimum rate clearly means that school budgets do not stretch as far – resulting in potentially less employment opportunities for qualified teachers.
 - As a direct consequence schools are requesting TA / HLTA cover where, in the first instance it would have been a qualified teacher covering the class.
 - Reduced school budgets coupled with increased pay rates has created the "Perfect Storm" viz classes being covered by non-teacher personnel and reduced employment opportunities for qualified teachers!

- The National Procurement Service appears reluctant to act when informed of such concerns – even indeed when there is clear flouting of the framework guidance and its benchmarked payment requirements.
- From its strategic financial monitoring position, the National Procurement Service will routinely possess the necessary data on budget spends and is, therefore, in a pivotal position to confirm the current reality of the on-going undermining of the minimum pay entitlement for qualified teachers – as established by them.
- Schools hold significant autonomy regarding their budget and have every right to seek supply teachers from wherever they deem as appropriate. Schools however need to understand *fully*, the impact and implications for pay and employment for supply teachers, should they choose to employ outside of the National Procurement Service framework.

P-05-805 Fair Deal For Supply Teachers, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 13.11.19

13th November 2019

Dear Mrs Finch Saunders

Once again we thank the Petitions Committee for your very careful consideration of our petition .

We would like to make the following comments on the feedback from agencies .

We are surprised that only six agencies have replied. There are 64 in operation. The one provider that has the biggest share of the business is significant in its absence from the responses.

We dispute Recruit2schools assertion that LEAs do not employ supply teachers directly and that agencies are the only way available for schools to obtain supply teachers.

Newport City Council has just reopened its payroll to supply teachers after closing it in 2010 . The senior HR /business manager has said that there is a lot of interest from schools in direct employment.

Caerphilly County Borough Council provided me a list of Caerphilly schools that employ supply teachers direct .

There are 2 authorities that still do not have the ability to employ direct despite the Cabinet Secretary for Education stating that schools are free to choose.

The lack of any legislation to mandate agencies that have signed up to the framework has been unfair to both supply teachers and to the agencies that are adhering to its terms . It has meant that now, in the 11th working week of this term, supply teachers are still being asked to work for £90 a day. The supply teachers who are getting the minimum M1 rate are now £37 a day better off than the ones who have often been forced to accept the lower rate due to their circumstances. We think it unfair to blame those supply teachers who have to do this to pay their bills when in fact it is lack of legislation that has led to this .

A huge problem is the use of unqualified staff in schools. In secondary schools teacher absence is frequently being covered by cover supervisors who are paid as little as £60 a day. This is because schools are refusing to pay for a qualified teacher. We did a Freedom of Information request and found one school in Monmouthshire used unqualified agency people to cover 4322 days of teacher absence in 2018/19. This is shocking at a time when we tell our learners about

the importance of punctuality and attendance on their learning, and then put people in their classroom who are not allowed to teach them.

After all the work that has gone into the Framework Agreement this is appalling . Supply Teachers have had years of exploitation. A legal slot has been designated for discussion of legislation. We have asked NPS for the date but as yet have not heard back .

The Framework Agreement states that M1 is a minimum pay rate but many adverts that we receive just state that £127.72 is the rate .

Regarding employer's contribution to a pension scheme agencies generally pay between 3% to 5% . The employer's contribution into Teachers' Pension Scheme is significantly higher at 23.68 % (Sept 2019 increased from 16.48%)

The Teachers ' Pension Scheme can only be accessed by those supply teachers who are paid direct . This is a recognition of the status of supply teachers as qualified teachers . The inability to be part of Teachers Pension Scheme will lead to hardship in later life.

The six agencies pointed out that they were providing CPD. This is safer recruitment and much of what they stated would be necessary, safeguarding training etc .

Provision of CPD is a requirement of the Framework Agreement. There is no mention of the New Curriculum. Supply Teachers need to be fully informed of the changes . We would like to know how this will happen .

As £114m of taxpayers money went from 19 LAs from 2015-2018 to agencies whilst we agree agencies may provide good service we consider the money could be better spent providing direct pay and conditions as this is the fairest way . No undercutting , no circumventing of agreements , a minimum is not the maximum . Pay & conditions will reflect qualifications and experience. The Taskforce worked hard on this. The unions and their lay activists, of which we are part , have worked hard on this . This is about getting the very best in a fair system for all to benefit our learners , our supply teachers and our support staff.

The evaluation of the [School Based Cluster Supply Model Project](#) was published yesterday and as expected showed the benefits of direct employment of supernumerary teachers.

We have heard support within the Committee for a public sector solution. We ask you to put one into place as soon as possible. We were told that primary legislation would be necessary and would take two years to bring in a public sector solution . This was at a our meeting with Welsh Government officials in April 2018. Had that process been able to have been started then instead of tinkering around the edges we would be well on the way to fairness for all supply teachers . The Scottish and Northern Ireland models are both excellent solutions as ultimately we believe teachers should be employed directly to schools with all the recognised benefits to learners, schools and teachers that go with it.

In conclusion it may interest you to know that just last week a highly qualified specialist teacher currently working in a Pupil Referral Unit asked her Framework Agency to put her pay up to the minimum Framework rate, she had been working there since the start of term and was very well thought of. She is a single parent. The agency refused, so the teacher asked the school. On her way to school the next day she was phoned by the agency and told that the school had told them to tell her she was no longer welcome at the school.

Kind regards

Sheila Jones

Agenda Item 3.2

P-05-860 Make Curriculum for Life Lessons Compulsory

This petition was submitted by Emily Jones having collected 121 signatures online and 165 on paper, a total of 286 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to ensure that curriculum for life lessons are compulsory for secondary schools across Wales and that the content is reviewed annually by a board of elected young people.

Additional Information

A curriculum for life would include topics such as; finance, sex and relationships, politics and basic living skills. Article 28 of the UNCRC states children have the right to an education. However, the current curriculum is failing to provide us with the life skills we need.

Assembly Constituency and Region

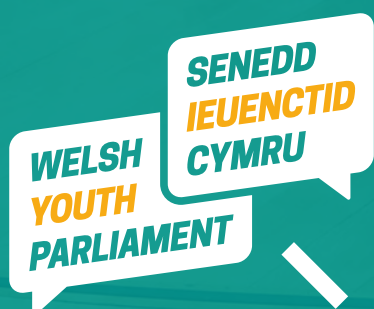
- Pontypridd
- South Wales Central

LIFE SKILLS, SKILLS FOR LIFE.

22 OCTOBER 2019

Authors:

***Welsh Youth Parliament Life Skills
in the Curriculum Committee***



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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FINLAY BERTRAM

TOMMY CHURCH

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HARRISON JAMES GARDNER

ELEANOR LEWIS

RHYS LEWIS

LLOYD MANN

ELLIE MURPHY

CAI THOMAS PHILLIPS

JONATHAN POWELL

GWION RHISIART

BETSAN ANGELL ROBERTS

RUTH SIBAYAN

WHO ARE WE?

2018 WAS A MOMENTOUS YEAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WALES AS THEY ELECTED THE FIRST EVER WELSH YOUTH PARLIAMENT.

60 of us were elected over an election period of three weeks in November 2018. 40 of us represent constituencies in Wales and 20 of us have been elected through partner organisations to the Welsh Youth Parliament, comprising of 13 charities and organisations working with a diverse range of young people in Wales.

For the first couple of months, young people across Wales were telling us which issues were important to them. These were grouped under 21 categories ranging from Welsh Language and Culture, to Supporting Vulnerable Youths in Wales. Coming together for the first time in February 2019 was an experience we'll never forget. In the Senedd Chamber we each spoke on the issues which we felt most needed to be addressed. The session came to a close with each of us voting on the top 3 issues on which we wanted to focus during our two year term. These final issues were:

- **Emotional and Mental Health Support**
- **Littering and Plastic Waste**
- **Life Skills in the Curriculum**

Following the vote, we were given the chance to choose which issue we would most like to work on, and 14 of us have since sat and worked on the Life Skills in the Curriculum Committee.

The Welsh Youth Parliament catapults young people into the forefront of influencing and decision making in Wales – the way it should be.

A NEED FOR CHANGE

LIFE SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT TO US AS IT'S OBVIOUS THERE IS A CLEAR LACK OF THEM IN OUR CURRICULUM.

From financial education informing students on the value of money and on financial concepts such as inflation, mortgages and taxes, to diversity and inclusion lessons - the skills that young people need to develop into responsible, global citizens are critical to our education - and we believe it is a crime to rob young people of this right.

We currently leave school with a handful of skills but no knowledge on how to speak in public, clean, maintain healthy relationships, buy cars, apply for mortgages, road safety, and many other skills that are needed to succeed in life.

We can't survive adulthood or any part of our life if we leave school as A* robots with no knowledge of the real world. We're going through this education system, our siblings and our kids will go through this system. We want them to feel equipped and able to function as productive adults, who don't feel as though their worth is based on their exam results. We are worth more than this.

If life skills are correctly implemented into the curriculum, the next generation of students will leave school with not only the correct qualifications to succeed in life, but also other abilities and knowledge to make life easier. It is important for us as young people to have an education that will benefit our future.





THE CONSULTATION

AS MEMBERS OF THE LIFE SKILLS IN THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE, WE HAVE STRONG OPINIONS ON WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND PART OF OUR JOB IS TO VOICE THOSE OPINIONS ON A NATIONAL LEVEL.

However, the other part of our job is to give a platform to other young people's voices in Wales, as they too felt strongly that Life Skills in the Curriculum was an issue that needed our attention.

In our regional meetings, we worked within our committees to come up with our consultation approach. We were given Assembly Research briefings into the work that had already been done, and of course, the latest on the new curriculum developments by the Welsh Government. The introduction of a brand new Curriculum for Wales which focuses on developing well rounded, healthy, informed students is exciting, and our consultation coincided with the Welsh Government's consultation on the draft Curriculum.

To avoid any duplication or confusion between our consultation on the Welsh Government's, we decided that the focus of our consultation would be on gathering a picture of the life skills that were currently being taught in Wales, the way in which they were taught, as well as young people's opinion on the situation. This snapshot of the current provision would allow us to gather any inconsistencies, as well as examples of good practice, to form recommendations which we hope will help shape the new Curriculum for Wales.

We ran two surveys – one for young people between 11-25, and another for adults, including parents, teachers, youth workers, and education professionals. We also met with young people, teachers, and youth workers in our consultation events in Wrexham and Swansea and held focus groups with young people and teachers across Wales over the summer to delve deeper into their views on the matter.

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

GIVEN THE CURRENT UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING UK AND WORLD POLITICS, THIS REPORT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AS THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN WALES WILL HOPEFULLY CUT THROUGH THE POLITICAL TENSION AND WILL PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR OUR VOICES TO BE HEARD ABOVE THE NOISE.

It represents the progress of democracy in Wales and shows young people have a voice. It proves the Welsh Youth Parliament's dedication and commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of young people. It shows that young people know what is best for young people and that we have the competency to make an impact.

This report is relevant, diverse, and represents a variety of opinions from people all across Wales and, if our recommendations are taken forward, has the potential to change the lives of young people across Wales and leave a legacy for many years to come.

Once it is published, we're hoping that politicians follow the advice found in it and take practical steps to bridge the large gaps within life skills in schools at the moment. We would like politicians to closely refer to the report to make amendments to the Curriculum for Wales and incorporate vital life skills that are so heavily demanded by young people and educational professionals.

It's a privilege to be a part of the first report as it will set the foundations for many reports to come.



15:58:06



CONSULTATION FINDINGS

The findings from our consultation split naturally under four themes;

- 1. Current experiences and teaching methods**
- 2. Frequency of Life Skills teaching**
- 3. Who should be teaching Life Skills in schools**
- 4. Striking a balance between Life Skills and exams**

All Welsh Youth Parliament members were given the opportunity to analyse and discuss the results in the last regional meetings, and made recommendations for us as a committee to consider. We as committee members compiled and voted on the final recommendations that are presented at the end of this report.

In the next section you will find the main findings under each theme, followed by our committee's final recommendations.



1.

CURRENT EXPERIENCES AND TEACHING METHODS

THE FIRST SET OF QUESTIONS IN OUR SURVEYS AIMED TO COLLECT A PICTURE OF THE LIFE SKILLS SUBJECTS CURRENTLY TAUGHT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ACROSS WALES.

Young people were asked which life skills they had been taught up to the age of 18. The results were very inconsistent, with some subjects having been taught to the vast majority of young people (85% of young people had received lessons on Internet Safety, and 84% of young people had been taught Dealing with Bullying 84%), but on the other hand, some subjects had only been taught to a minority; these included Dealing with Grief (12%), Sign Language (11%) and Political Education (10%).

We weren't surprised at all to learn of these results. Many of us have received lessons on Internet Safety on more than one occasion, and we agree that these results show that too much emphasis is put on certain subjects. We were very disappointed to learn that very few young people were being taught Political Education, which is alarming considering that young people in Wales might soon be eligible to vote at 16 years of age. We feel that this reflects the lack of confidence teachers and schools in general have in teaching the subject.

Following on from this question, both young people and adults were asked which life skills they believed should be taught to young people. The subjects most important to young people were Life Saving (74%) and Dealing with Stress (73%), and the subjects most important to adults were Internet Safety (84%) and Sex Education – Healthy Relationships (84%). We were thrilled to learn that Life Saving was in such high demand, as it's an issue that many of us feel very strongly about, and as Emotional and Mental Health Support is another of the Welsh Youth Parliament's issues, it was no surprise that this is an issue important to many other young people across Wales.

By comparing what young people are being taught with what they believe they should be taught, it became clear that young people aren't being taught the subjects that are important to them. To us, this highlights that schools and the Government should listen more to young people when making decisions on their education.

Finally, we asked young people and adults whether they agreed that schools were adequately preparing young people for life as an adult. These results conflicted, with 60% of young people agreeing compared to only 28% of adults. We were very surprised to learn that so many young people agreed with this statement considering the inconsistencies that became clear in previous questions. We felt that this might reflect the fact that what they did receive was of good quality, but they would like to see more. Also, we noted that young people didn't necessarily have the insight into adult life to answer this question effectively, and this may have been the reason for the gap between young people and adults' opinions.

Two recommendations were made many times in focus groups. Firstly, it was mentioned that a national Life Skills specification was needed that outlines what schools should be teaching. Secondly, it was recommended that schools should appoint Life Skills co-ordinators to ensure that every young person receives the same quality of Life Skills education during their time in education. We as a committee agree that these recommendations would help solve many inconsistencies that were highlighted within this theme.

2.

FREQUENCY OF LIFE SKILLS TEACHING

OUR SECOND SET OF QUESTIONS IN THE SURVEY LOOKED AT HOW OFTEN YOUNG PEOPLE WERE RECEIVING LIFE SKILLS LESSONS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

The results were mixed, and there was no consistent answer that showed that schools across Wales were approaching the teaching of Life Skills in the same way. However, we were saddened, but not quite shocked to learn that 48% of young people received them once a year or less, or didn't know at all.

On the other hand, the demand for regular life skills lessons was clear, with 72% of young people calling for lessons once a fortnight or more, and 88% of adults. We compared the results from this question with the results of the first, and shockingly, only a quarter of young people were receiving Life Skills as often as they believe they should be.

We also looked at evidence from focus group discussions of possible reasons why Life Skills lessons were taught so infrequently in schools. One conversation in the focus groups suggested that Life Skills are currently crammed into dedicated PSE days in schools. Many of us on the committee have had experiences of PSE days, and we feel that they just aren't taken seriously – pupils see these days as 'days off'.

As a committee, we discussed two possible solutions to meet the high demand for frequent Life Skills lessons.

Firstly, we feel that teaching Life Skills on dedicated PSE days should stop, and these should be replaced by timetabled Life Skills lessons at least once a fortnight. This would ensure consistency, and frequency and, if included into regular timetables, would make it easy for schools to arrange for external organisations to come in and teach certain subjects to year groups. We considered the challenges that this option would bring – mainly the fact that a timetabled lesson would inevitably mean less time for other subjects, however, seeing as the demand for fortnightly lessons is so high, this has to be prioritised.

Secondly, we considered a recommendation that was made regularly in focus groups, which is to incorporate the teaching of Life Skills into other subjects. This includes Financial Education within Mathematics, Sex Education within Biology etc. Given the nature of the new Curriculum for Wales, we feel that this would certainly be an option. There are, of course, many challenges with this approach. We are worried that teachers will continue to prioritise the teaching of their own subject above the Life Skills because of their own curriculum and exam demands. Our other concern is that young people may not be aware that lessons they're being taught within other subjects are, in fact, Life Skills. Out of context, these lessons may not be effective.

Our suggestion, in this case, is that schools adopt a Life Skills logo in order to clearly mark when these lessons are being taught across the curriculum. This would, again, call for a Life Skills co-ordinator to be appointed in schools to map out where these skills would be taught. Schools could also hold reflective sessions monthly to allow young people to consider the skills they've been taught in different subjects.

On the whole, we feel that both approaches are needed – a designated lesson once a fortnight, as well as Life Skills lessons within other subjects. Adopting these approaches would help ensure that the demand for frequent Life Skills education is met.

3.

WHO SHOULD BE TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS

**ANOTHER SET OF QUESTIONS WE PREPARED IN THE SURVEY AIMED
AT GATHERING INFORMATION ON WHO WAS TEACHING LIFE SKILLS
LESSONS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.**

The results showed that there was no clear majority for any option, with lessons being delivered by a mixture of form teachers, various teachers, teachers specialising in the subjects, and external staff.

These results once again show an inconsistency in the experience of young people across Wales. As a committee, we were disappointed that only 25% had received lessons by external experts. We believe that external experts can deliver engaging, fresh and insightful sessions based on their expertise which young people would benefit greatly from. Many of these external organisations offer sessions free of charge for schools, colleges and youth groups. Equally, we believe that in order to meet young people's demand for Life Skills lessons once a fortnight, teachers must play a part in the teaching. However, we heard teachers' opinions both in surveys and focus groups, and this gave us plenty to discuss.

We specifically asked teachers in the survey if they felt they had the necessary skills and experience to teach life skills, and the results were once again a mix, with 44% agreeing, 33% disagreeing and the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing. We were very concerned that less than half the teachers surveyed would feel comfortable in delivering the lessons. This may even explain the lack of Life Skills currently being taught.

Teachers expressed their opinions in focus groups, with many stating that their main concern was doing a disservice to young people, not being in touch, and getting things wrong. We discussed a few solutions to ensure that teachers would feel equipped to teach the lessons. We agree with a recommendation made by teachers in focus groups that investment should be made in teachers' training to ensure that they're confident to teach the lessons. This would ensure that all newly qualified teachers would naturally adapt to teaching Life Skills as part of their work day to day. We also believe that resources should be on hand to schools to help teachers to effectively teach these lessons. This central resource bank should be compiled by the Welsh Government and should be up-to-date, relevant, and easily accessible to schools across Wales.

On the whole, we feel that consistency is needed, and in order to once again meet the high demand for Life Skills lessons, schools should use specialist external organisations as well as incorporating Life Skills lessons regularly within the school timetable and across the curriculum. External organisations should be used to teach sensitive subjects which need insight and personal experience to be taught effectively, as well as subjects such as Politics which could be influenced by bias. We've learned from teachers we've surveyed that an investment in their development is needed to ensure they have the right tools to deliver the sessions effectively and do justice to the young people.

4.

STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN LIFE SKILLS AND EXAMS

IN BOTH OUR SURVEYS AND FOCUS GROUPS, ONE CONSTANT THEME RAN THROUGH ALL OTHERS - THE NEED TO ENSURE A BALANCE BETWEEN THE TEACHING OF LIFE SKILLS AND PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE TO PASS EXAMS.

Both teachers and young people noted that one of the main reasons for the lack of Life Skills lessons was the pressure on schools and teachers to secure exam results.

In the survey, we asked young people and adults whether they felt that the teaching of life skills was prioritised appropriately in schools. Only 43% of young people agreed, and only 11% of adults. While discussing these figures, we felt that the percentage of young people was surprisingly high based on our experiences. We feel that schools are currently very reactive when it comes to the teaching of life skills, for example, support strategies for young people would be put in place after a serious incident has occurred.

We considered many teachers' opinions from focus groups who weighed in on the lack of priority given to the teaching of Life Skills. Many of them focused on the over emphasis on exams. Here's what one teacher from Llandudno had to say:

"We still work in an old-fashioned system that teaches pupils how to pass exams rather than preparing them for real life."

We as a committee understand where this comment has come from, and feel alarmed at the prospect that in a few years' time, computers and robots will have been developed to be able to do everything we can do. Schools must do more to develop creative, innovative thinkers and develop skills other than academic ones.

Another teacher mentioned that young people don't take Life Skills lessons seriously when they feel that there is no exam or qualification at the end. We'd hate to see so much investment into Life Skills teaching only for young people's attitudes not to change. As a committee we discussed a solution to this, and that was to develop a Life Skills qualification or certificate to be awarded to young people when they leave school at 16. The Welsh Baccalaureate was raised many times within this discussion, and although this qualification in principle is a skills certificate which sets out to do what we're recommending, we don't feel that it's successfully achieving its aim.

In focus groups, we asked young people to vote on whether teaching young people to pass exams or teaching Life Skills was most important. The results surprised us, as only 38% believed that teaching life skills was more important, 29% disagreed, and the remainder believed that both were as important as each other. Several young people commented that this was a difficult question to answer, as so much pressure is put on them to succeed in exams, and until a change in culture is seen with less pressure placed on schools to secure exam results, both were as important as each other.

As a committee we feel strongly that the Welsh Government and Estyn need to reconsider the way in which schools are judged, with much less focus on exam results, and much more emphasis on student wellbeing and developing young people as individuals.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01.** A consistent, nationwide Life Skills Specification containing all core life skills mapped out across appropriate key stages and taking in to account all learning needs.
- 02.** The core life skills within the specification should be agreed upon by young people and education professionals – their focus shouldn't be solely on teaching young people how to exist, but how to lead a full and healthy life.
- 03.** A life skills coordinator should be appointed within every school. The coordinator would be responsible for mapping the core life skills across the school's curriculum, ensuring that each pupil's experience is consistent and in line with the Life Skills Specification.
- 04.** Appoint a national Life Skills Commissioner to ensure that standards are met and that every young person's experience is consistent in schools across Wales.
- 05.** A specifically dedicated life skills lesson should be taught once a fortnight in every school, but should also be incorporated into other subjects where relevant.
- 06.** Each lesson that focuses on life skills should be clearly marked with a life skills logo – this would enable young people to know when the skills are being taught, and their relevance to life as adults.
- 07.** Schools should hold reflective feedback sessions every month/half term, so that their learning of life skills can be reviewed and reflected upon.
- 08.** Lessons should be interactive and life skills should be taught through workshops which are fun and memorable as opposed to talks and work books.
- 09.** Teachers should take responsibility for their roles as life skills educators, but investment must be made in their training so that they feel confident in teaching the lessons – this should include a section of their teachers' training course, as well as courses for all current teachers.
- 10.** Professionals from external organisations and charities should continue to be utilised by schools in the teaching of more sensitive or specialist subjects where they share their own experiences.
- 11.** The Government should work alongside the Welsh Youth Parliament to create resources to form a national toolbox so that teaching is consistent nationally.
- 12.** Estyn and Government should consider different approaches to the way schools are inspected – focus shouldn't be too heavily on exam results, and should focus more on schools' wellbeing and support strategies and the developing of young people as individuals.
- 13.** Create a core life skills certificate or qualification to be awarded to young people at 16 years of age.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LITTLE VOICES
LYNNE NEAGLE AM
SIÂN GWENLLIAN AM
LLOYD HOPKIN
BROOK CYMRU
CHALLENGE WALES
DEFFO
INTERNATIONAL FULL CIRCLE
PRINCE'S TRUST
PROMO CYMRU
MEIC CYMRU
CARDIFF MEDITATION
STONEWALL CYMRU
TALK THE TALK
THE MULLANY FUND
WCADA
BIG IDEAS WALES
NORTH WALES POLICE
WREXHAM INFO SHOP
MENTER IAITH FFLINT
RED CROSS
ADTRAC
BARCLAYS
SENEDD YR IFANC WRECSAM
GWE

NORTH WALES TRAINING
DENBIGH SCHOOL COUNCILS
**PEOPLE PLUS MERTHYR, ABERDARE,
PORT TALBOT**
PORT TALBOT YOUNG CARERS
LGBTQ+ GROUP PORT TALBOT
BRIDGEND YOUTH COUNCIL
KPC YOUTH CLUB PYLE
CAREERS WALES
**FLINTSHIRE INTEGRATED YOUTH
PROVISION**
CONWY YOUTH SERVICE
FLINT HIGH SCHOOL
YSGOL GLAN CLWYD
YSGOL MAES GARMON
PRESTATYN HIGH SCHOOL
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST SCHOOL
BISHOPSTON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
CALDICOT SCHOOL
YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHYMNI
GOWERTON COMPREHENSIVE
YSGOL GYFUN GWYR
PENTREHAFOD SCHOOL
PONTARDDULAI COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
PORTHCAWL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
ABERDARE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Agenda Item 3.3

P-05-861 Make political education a compulsory element of the new national curriculum

This petition was submitted by Kaiesha Ceryn Page having collected 117 signatures.

Text of Petition

Education should provide young people with the skills and tools that will ensure that they become valued and engaged citizens of the country.

Despite the vast advances that have been made by social media and fast-paced news cycles, young people often view politics as a taboo subject, seen as something that is not for the likes of them.

We believe that young people should leave education with a comprehensive understanding of political institutions within the United Kingdom. The Electoral Reform Society report recommended that four key aspects should be taught in school – the parties, democracy, the role of institutions and campaigning.

At present, the Welsh Government has a unique opportunity to lead the way on this matter as it is currently developing its first national curriculum. As one of its four key concepts, the new curriculum aims to produce citizens that are "ethical and informed". It therefore stands to reason that political education should be an essential part of this.

The development of this curriculum provides a unique opportunity for the Welsh Government to revolutionise how it educates its young people, providing citizens that will become the leaders of the future.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Rhondda
- South Wales Central

Agenda Item 3.4

P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage

This petition was submitted by Active Music Services having collected 1,745 signatures online and 481 on paper, a total of 2,226 signatures.

Text of Petition

* We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to produce an urgent National Plan for Music Education with dedicated central funding in line with the rest of the UK. This will ensure that affordable musical instrument and vocal tuition is available as a right for all children in Wales.

* The Music Services in Wales are integral to the development of Music Education as part of the creative curriculum across all domains.

* The contribution made by the Music Industry and Music Services to the economy and the well-being of the people of Wales is too important to ignore.

* Young people in Wales studying music at A-level has halved in 10 years while GCSE entries have fallen by 40%.

* Austerity is not an excuse for the Welsh Government to allow the decline of Music Services. Austerity should be the reason to invest in the equality of access for all and the sustainability of our communities.

Please sign this petition to support the campaign to stop the decline of Music Education in Wales.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cynon Valley
- South Wales Central

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-880
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/07431/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

5 November 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 29 October regarding the petition 'Wales is rapidly losing its musical reputation and heritage'.

As you are aware, following the Culture, Welsh Language and Communication's Committee report 'Hitting the Right Note', my officials have taken forward work in response to the recommendations including commissioning an independent contractor to carry out a feasibility study to identify and assess options for the future delivery of music education services.

There has been a delay in receiving the final report and I appreciate your patience in the matter. The study has now concluded and the contractor is in the process of finalising the report. I look forward to receiving the final report shortly and will be closely examining the content and its findings and considering the future delivery of music education in Wales.

I will ensure a copy of the report and my response is sent to you as soon as it is available.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@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.

**P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage,
Correspondence - Petitioner to Committee, 11.11.19**

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Music Consultancy & Choral Music Centre

**Senior Consultant: Dinah Pye AGSM, Dip. Ed, CFPS
Welsh Woman of the Year Winner**

Chair - Petitions Committee
Janet Finch-Saunders AM
National Assembly for Wales

10.11.19

Dear Chair

First can I thank the panel for revisiting the Petition:P-05-880 - "Wales is rapidly losing its musical reputation and heritage".

With regard to the letter you received from Kirsty Williams dated 6.11.19

- * It was decided after the publication of Hitting the Right Note in July 2018 that a Feasibility Study would be completed in 6 months so it was first expected to be completed by February 2019.
- * When it did not appear it then came to light that consultants had not been appointed and in fact tenders were not sought until March 2019.
- * The information following this was that the study would be completed by the end of August/ September 2019.
- * There is no explanation as to why there has been a long delay in receiving the final report and for the sake of transparency the Minister needs to explain the reasons why the music services, teachers, parents and pupils have got no idea about their future.
- * The Minister states that the study has now been concluded and that the contractor is still in the "process of finalising". As I am aware of the cost being paid to the chosen contractors I feel this statement is totally unacceptable and am therefore questioning the choice of contractor, the terms of reference and the timeline for completion.
- * How long is shortly? As I write more teachers are waiting either to be made redundant or downgraded to self employment while more pupils are going without access to music.

An update to the petition.

- * When the Minister made the decision to carry out a Feasibility Study I and my colleagues made it quite clear that Hitting the Right Note was such an efficient report that it was in fact a Feasibility Study in itself. There are growing concerns that with Education funding in serious

HEAD OFFICE

**HEULWEN, Hirwaun Road, Hirwaun, Aberdare, CF44 9HW, South Wales, UK
UK Tel: 01685 813318 International Tel: +44 1685 813318**

E: info@activemusicservices.co.uk

www.activemusicservices.co.uk



ACTIVE MUSIC SERVICES

Music Consultancy & Choral Music Centre

Senior Consultant: Dinah Pye AGSM, Dip. Ed, CFPS

Welsh Woman of the Year Winner

downfall that the £100,000 spent on contractors for irrelevant studies is not a sensible way forward and that money wasted is money that should have gone to the front line. Is the case then that the delay is due to the report being inadequate?

- * I wrote to the Minister on 14th October (copy attached) requesting an explanation for the delay of the Feasibility Study and the second grant of £1.4 million that the services are waiting for to plan ahead.
- * I received a reply from the Minister on 1.11.19 (copy attached) and the content is similar to the letter sent to you. I have not replied as the decision to revisit the petition came through.
- * It has come to my notice that the first part of the grant has been distributed to local authorities but that there is some controversy as to how the WLGA has monitored its distribution. There appears to be a lack of clarity in report backs between the WLGA and the Welsh Government on how the initial grant was used.
- * I wrote to the Chair of WLGA at the end of October requesting an update on the payment of the 2nd grant to which I had a reply that a member of staff would contact me but to date nothing has arrived.

Finally the petition P-05-880 - "Wales is rapidly losing its musical reputation and heritage" is now 16 months in further decline with no apparent timeline of any serious debate at Welsh Assembly level. I am of course aware of all the serious situations that Wales is facing at present but with daily reports regarding the importance of music for well being, creativity, equality and its profile in the New Curriculum any further delay is going to damage the present situation beyond rescue. I am therefore asking the petitions panel to break the impasse and call for an urgent debate in the Senedd to discuss the reasons for the delay and a decision that will allow local authorities, music services and all affected plan for the Spring 2020 term.

Yours sincerely

Dinah Pye

HEAD OFFICE

HEULWEN, Hirwaun Road, Hirwaun, Aberdare, CF44 9HW, South Wales, UK
UK Tel: 01685 813318 International Tel: +44 1685 813318

E: info@activemusicservices.co.uk

www.activemusicservices.co.uk

**P-05-880 Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage,
Correspondence - Petitioner to Minister for Education, 14.10.19**

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**Senior Consultant: Dinah Pye AGSM, Dip. Ed, CFPS
Welsh Woman of the Year Winner**

14.10.19

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Cabinet Secretary for
Education

Dear Cabinet Secretary

I and many others are becoming more and more concerned at the delays affecting decisions regarding the Music Services across Wales.

Firstly, there is still a £1.4 million grant overdue that services are dependant upon to continue delivering services pertaining to your policy for music education. Can you therefore please advise how much longer the services have to continue to apologise to parents and pupils for the lack of financial support.

Secondly, all concerned were initially informed that a Feasibility Study would be provided in 6 months by February 2019. This was then delayed until the end of September 2019. As there is now no sign of this important report can I please urge you to treat this report as an extremely urgent matter in order to sustain the already depleted services.

Finally the petitions office is patiently waiting to decide to apply for a debate in the Senedd on this crucial issue and again I trust there will be an immediate response from your department on the way forward.

Yours sincerely
Dinah Pye (Ms.)

HEAD OFFICE

**HEULWEN, Hirwaun Road, Hirwaun, Aberdare, CF44 9HW, South Wales, UK
UK Tel: 01685 813318 International Tel: +44 1685 813318**

E: info@activemusicservices.co.uk

www.activemusicservices.co.uk

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KW/07347/19
Dinah Pye
Senior Consultant
Active Music Services

info@activemusicservice

01 November 2019

Dear Dinah Pye,

Thank you for your letter of 14 October regarding music services in Wales.

As you are aware, following the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee's report, my officials have taken forward work in this important area in response to the recommendations.

I agreed to procure an independent contractor to carry out a feasibility study to assess options for the future delivery of music provision.

I continue to recognise the current pressures facing music services, but as I have said previously, and I am sure you agree, it would be remiss of us to not explore this issue properly and thoroughly. The study has now concluded and the contractor is in the process of finalising the report. I look forward to receiving the final report shortly and will be closely examining the content and considering the future delivery of music education in Wales.

I am pleased to confirm that my officials are currently in the process of issuing the additional £1.4 million funding to local authorities to support music service provision across Wales during 2019-20.

I am aware that the petitions committee have considered the petition 'Wales is Rapidly Losing its Musical Reputation and Heritage' submitted by Active Music Services and are awaiting the publication of the music services feasibility report to consider further.

Yours sincerely,

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@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.

Agenda Item 3.5

P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas

This petition was submitted by Alanna Jones having collected having collected 158 signatures online and 141 on paper, a total of 299 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to amend the current wording of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations"). We call on the National Assembly to make the amendments to the Regulations to address the current limitation of Regulation 6, Condition 5 which prevents Welsh students accessing student finance to study at UK higher education institutions where the location of study is at their overseas campus which we consider could be achieved in one of either two ways, by either:

widening the criteria in Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by UK higher education institutions at either their UK or overseas campuses; or amending Condition 5 to include courses which are provided by higher education institutions offering designated courses and to include the University of London Institute in Paris on the list of institutions offering designated courses, using your discretion under Regulation 8.

Proposed Amendment:

Option 1

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom or at any campus of a United Kingdom higher education institution located outside of the United Kingdom".

Option 2

"Condition 5

At least half of the teaching and supervision which comprise the course is provided in the United Kingdom. This condition shall apply, unless the course has been deemed to be treated as a designated course pursuant to Regulation 8(1) or 8(2)."

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to adopt the proposed amendments so that Welsh students applying for courses at institutions such as the University of London Institute in Paris, can be considered as "eligible students" for the purposes of receiving student support. The University of London Institute in Paris offers higher education courses in modern languages, where the teaching and supervision is carried out primarily in Paris. Nonetheless, students are taught by employees of the University of London and its collaborative partner, Queen Mary, University of London.

Unless an amendment is made to the current wording of the Regulations, Welsh students will continue to suffer an unjust disadvantage when applying for courses at specific UK institutions. We call on the National Assembly for Wales to make this change as there is no equivalent limitation across other parts of the UK. If no action is taken, the Regulations may continue to act as a deterrent for students hoping to apply for courses at the University of London, Institute in Paris.

Additional Information

Between September 2018 and February 2019 we received inconsistent messages relating to the University of London Institute in Paris' position and both current and prospective students received contradictory information on their eligibility. The University of London Institute in Paris took the following steps to address this:

Contacted the Students Loan Company

Contacted Student Finance for Wales

Contacted the 'Designation' department of the Welsh Government.

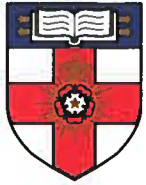
Copies of the relevant correspondence are available on request.

When the position was eventually clarified in February, Welsh applicants were informed by the University of London Institute in Paris of their ineligibility for student finance for these programmes which caused significant distress, so

we call on the National Assembly for Wales to please consider our concerns as a matter of priority.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
- Mid and West Wales



**UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON**
**INSTITUTE
IN PARIS**

9-11, rue de Constantine
75340 Paris Cedex 07
France
Tel.: +33 (0)1 44 11 73 73
www.ulip.lon.ac.uk

Janet Finch-Saunders
Assembly Member
Chair of the Petitions Committee.
National Assembly for Wales
SeneddPetitions@Assembly.Wales

30th October 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

The University of London Institute in Paris is a Central Academic Body of the University of London. Its legal headquarters is the University of London based in London.

For a number of years, we have registered our students through a Member Institution of the University of London, with this sister institution acting as the validating partner. This is currently Queen Mary University of London, with students receiving a University of London award. As the registering institution, Queen Mary University of London's registration with the Office for Students includes ULIP students, who benefit from the same provision as if they were studying at the main campus, including for access and participation, quality and standards and student policies.

ULIP has a long history in Paris playing a Franco-British academic bridging role since the end of the 19th century. It was formally incorporated into the University of London in 1969 and began offering University of London degree programmes in the mid 1990s. We have evidence of ULIP students beginning to be eligible for UK student financial support in the early 2000s but we were unable to trace back the exact terms of the special arrangement in place with the Student Loans Company. The current form of this agreement as expressed by the SLC in liaison with DfE is:

Eligible students attending designated undergraduate courses at ULIP are treated as if they are attending a designated UK course at London University. Therefore, eligible students will qualify for home fee status (i.e. subject to maximum £9,250 fee limits for a full-time course), fee loans to meet the full costs of their tuition and partially means-tested loans for living costs at the overseas rate.

ULIP is a very small institute with around 180 students, the main student body being British. It offers a wide-ranging university experience with undergraduate, postgraduate and research students on the premises, a full time bilingual and bicultural faculty and an active research programme including a busy public research seminar series which allows students to interact beyond the institute with experts and academic guests. Students benefit from support and resources both on site in Paris as well as from the central University of London and Queen Mary University of London.

ULIP gives students the opportunity for a longer-term immersion in a different cultural and linguistic environment, while studying for a UK degree. This immersion is particularly important for our French Studies students who normally become bilingual as well as achieving a first degree, but also for the International Politics students who benefit from exposure to a range of international political actors during their degree. Currently students of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are able to benefit

from the experience thanks to the financial support received from the Student Loans Company, whereas Welsh students are not.

We first became aware that there had been a change in the Welsh regulations in Autumn 2018 when four ULIP students from Wales were told their funding was being suspended. The issue was eventually resolved for the students who were already registered at ULIP and the Student Loans Company confirmed that they would remain eligible for funding until the end of their programme but confirmed that future students would not be eligible due to a change in Welsh regulations stipulating that at least 50% of the teaching should take place in the UK. The SLC recommended that we contact the Welsh government for further information on course designation. When we contacted the course designation service, the initial response we received indicated that the matter was being looked into and that we would be contacted as soon as it was resolved but after a couple of months the Deputy Director of the Higher Education Division informed us that programmes at ULIP did not meet course designation criteria because of our geographical location.

The petition submitted by one of students received strong support from current students, alumni and applicants who could not understand why the geographical location of the teaching would mean Welsh students would be ineligible for funding when in fact ULIP's location was offering a clear advantage to their learning, with the high standards, quality and support of a UK education.

The letter from the Minister for Education sent to the Petitions Committee in May and copied to the student petitioner raises the point that the regulatory framework is designed to provide the required protections for students, which is difficult when provision moves abroad. This response does not acknowledge the fact that ULIP provision is in fact covered by our partner institution's registration with the OfS, thus offering the required safeguards. There was also a comment in the letter about not wanting to increase the amount of fee income remitted overseas but the unique nature of the ULIP offering and size mean that historically we have only had a handful of Welsh students at any given time. It is also worth noting that fees are collected in the UK and ULIP does not generate a surplus, it is financially supported by the University of London.

I hope the information above has given you the required information on ULIP's particular situation and I would be happy to answer any outstanding questions.

Kind regards,



Dr Tim Gore OBE
Chief Executive Officer

P-05-884 Amendment to Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 to include UK institutions with operations overseas, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair, 12.11.19

Tuesday 12th November 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Following Dr Gore's letter, I do not feel that I have any more to add on the status of the University of London Institute in Paris (ULIP) as an academic institution and I hope that his letter has been able to clarify the unique nature of ULIP to the Petitions Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Committee for their participation and interest in this matter thus far and I hope it can be resolved soon.

Best regards,

Alanna Jones

Agenda Item 3.6

P-05-797 Ensure access to the cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of urgency

This petition was submitted by Rhian Barrance and was considered by the Committee for the first time in January 2018, having collected 5,717 signatures online.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to call for a resolution to ongoing negotiations between NHS Wales, the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group, the Welsh Health and Specialised Services Committee and Vertex Pharmaceuticals regarding access to the cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of the utmost urgency.

Additional Information

418 people in Wales have cystic fibrosis (CF). CF is a life-shortening, inherited disorder. The median age at death for a person with CF in 2016 was just 31 years of age. CF is caused by mutations in the CFTR gene which result in the build-up of thick, sticky mucus in the lungs and other organs. Gradually, this build up causes chronic lung infections and progressive lung damage. The treatment burden for a person with CF is high and daily life can be a struggle.

Orkambi is a precision medicine that 40% of people in the UK with CF could benefit from. While conventional CF treatments target the symptoms, precision medicines tackle the underlying genetic mutations that cause the condition. Though Orkambi is not a cure, it has been found to slow decline in lung function – the most common cause of death for people with CF – by 42%.

In July 2016, the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) recognised Orkambi as an ‘important treatment.’ They were, however, unable to recommend the drug for use within the NHS on grounds of cost effectiveness and a lack of long-term data.

In June 2017, the Cystic Fibrosis Trust organised a day of national protest at the Senedd, Stormont, Holyrood, Downing Street and online to demand an

end to the deadlock. Since the protests, the Welsh Health and Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) have presented the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) with the portfolio approach developed by the drug's manufacturer, Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to call for a resolution to these ongoing negotiations between NHS Wales, the AWMSG, WHSSC and Vertex Pharmaceuticals as a matter of the utmost urgency. It is essential that a fair and sustainable method of reimbursement is found for Orkambi and for the exciting pipeline of future treatments.

People in Wales have been waiting too long for this transformative drug. They deserve better.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff West
- South Wales Central



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

**WRITTEN STATEMENT
BY
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

TITLE **Access agreement for the cystic fibrosis medicines Orkambi® and Symkevi®**

DATE **13 November 2019**

BY **Vaughan Gething, Minister for Health and Social Services**

Last month I issued a written statement confirming discussions were taking place between Welsh Government officials and representatives of Vertex Pharmaceuticals to discuss how the agreement reached with NHS England to make Vertex's licensed cystic fibrosis medicines available could be made on equivalent terms for patients in Wales.

I made clear my expectation that Vertex must offer NHS Wales the same agreement made with NHS England. Following a short but intensive period of joint work between Welsh Government officials, the NHS Wales Procurement Service and Vertex, I am pleased to confirm that expectation has now been met. Today I have agreed in principle the terms of an agreement which will mean patients in Wales have access to Orkambi® and Symkevi® as well as continued access to Kalydeco® where these medicines are clinically appropriate. Work will now progress to finalise the detail of the contract between Vertex and the NHS Wales Procurement Service.

I am very aware that patients and their families will expect these medicines to be made available promptly. I have therefore asked for the agreement to be finalised before the end of November to allow the highest priority patients to access treatment in December with all eligible patients being offered treatment from 2020.

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1NA

13 November 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Petition P-05-797 Ensure access to cystic fibrosis medicine, Orkambi, as a matter of urgency

Further to my last communication to you of 27th September regarding Petition P-05-797, I'm pleased to provide you with the latest update.

On 24th October, Vertex and NHS England reached an agreement on access to our currently licensed cystic fibrosis (CF) medicines and any future indications of these medicines. This included provisions for an agreement on the same terms to be offered to the NHS in Wales and Northern Ireland, aligned to the specific patient numbers of Wales and Northern Ireland. We have therefore been in intensive discussions with Welsh Government officials on extending access.

We are pleased that the Minister for Health and Social Services has today announced that NHS Wales has accepted an offer to make Orkambi (lumacaftor/ivacaftor) and Symkevi (tezacaftor/ivacaftor) available to eligible patients in Wales, as well as to expand access to Kalydeco (ivacaftor) to all eligible patients (see Cabinet Statement: Written Statement: Access agreement for the cystic fibrosis medicines Orkambi® and Symkevi®, 13 November 2019).

Previously, your Committee asked for confirmation as to when appraisal applications would be made to the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) in respect of lumacaftor/ivacaftor and tezacaftor/ivacaftor. I can confirm that these were submitted to the AWMSG in October, however, it is expected that these appraisals will be suspended in view of the above developments and provision for appraisals of these medicines by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in due course.

We are pleased that the agreement will give access to our licensed medicines to all eligible CF patients (approximately 270 patients) in Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Oliver
UK Country Manager
Vertex Pharmaceuticals

Cystic Fibrosis Trust Statement: Response to Welsh Government announcement regarding access to cystic fibrosis medicines.

David Ramsden, Chief Executive at the Cystic Fibrosis Trust said: "It is great news that Welsh people with cystic fibrosis will soon have access to the life-saving CF drugs Orkambi and Symkevi.

"This has been a hard-fought four-year battle, which has caused real damage and pain and I want to thank everyone, including the Petitions Committee and Assembly Members from all parties, who have contributed to this campaign, for their persistence and determination.

"We must now work with Welsh health authorities to ensure that future cystic fibrosis therapies, including those that will have greater health benefit for a larger number of people with CF in Wales, are not subject to the same damaging delay and are available at the earliest opportunity."

There are 402 people with CF living in Wales according to the 2018 [Registry report](#), and approximately 190 could stand to benefit from these drugs.

The Cystic Fibrosis Trust (as host and sponsor of the [UK CF Registry](#)) has co-signed a data collection agreement with NHS England, NICE and the company, Vertex Pharmaceuticals. The purpose of this agreement is to support evidence-gathering that may address uncertainties identified by NICE's technology appraisal committee.

This is a similar arrangement in place with the Scottish Government, following their separate agreement to provide interim reimbursement of these therapies, in advance of a formal HTA by the Scottish Medicines Consortium.

The UK CF Registry is a secure centralised database, which records health data on consenting people with cystic fibrosis. CF care teams enter data at every specialist centre and clinic across the UK, with over 99% of people with CF consenting to their data being submitted.

These agreements in England and Scotland have been a product of close collaboration with national authorities, and address relevant requirements identified in those geographies. We have offered the same opportunity to Welsh health authorities.

Agenda Item 3.7

P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales

This petition was submitted by the Contaminated Whole Blood UK Group, having collected 159 signatures.

Text of Petition

This petition calls on the Welsh Assembly to end the unfairness and discrimination in financial support for all victims of the infected blood scandal for those infected in Wales, by changing the scheme to at least mirror the provisions for those infected in England.

Many categories of victim infected in Wales are potentially worse off under the scheme by £20,000 or more. Thousands of people were infected as result of receiving infected blood or infected blood products given to them by the NHS until at least September 1991. Over two thousand people have already died.

Following devolving of powers, the responsibility for support of victims and their families, for those infected in Wales, sits under the Welsh Assembly. The schemes for support are operated by the Welsh Infected Blood Support service (WIBSS) which is administered by Velindre NHS Trust and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) who are ultimately accountable to the Welsh Assembly.

For those infected in England, the comparable scheme is run by EIBSS, ultimately accountable to parliament in London. Even though the victims were all infected by the NHS pre - devolution, the EIBSS and WIBSS have vastly different provisions in financial support. The determining factor as to which scheme you fall under is where the victim was infected not where they live. There are two schemes that those under the WIBSS cannot access. They are called the 'Special Category Mechanism' and 'The discretionary top up scheme'. The net effect of all this is that many categories victim infected in Wales are potentially worse of under the scheme by £20,000, more if they have children, irrespective where of where they live. Two people living in say Cardiff, both infected by the NHS, both with the same impact might receive £20,000 difference in support simply because one of the two had the 'good fortune' to be infected in England.

We call on the Welsh Assembly to intervene end this injustice now.

Additional Information

Who are we: we are an self organised peer support group that has victims of the infected blood scandal right across the uk

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ContaminatedWholeBloodUK/> Where can details of the comparative schemes for those infected in England and those infected in Wales be found: For Wales infected people it is here <https://wibss.wales.nhs.uk/> For those infected in England the comparable scheme is found here <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/england-infected-blood-support-scheme>

What has happened so far:

A number of attempts from various organisations have tried to raise the issue through the inquiry being led by Sir Brian Langstaff and by making the press aware such as this piece which is focussed on the differentials between Welsh and Scottish schemes <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-43898899>

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Clwyd West
- North Wales

P-05-831 End the unfairness and discrimination in the financial support for victims of the contaminated blood scandals who were infected in Wales, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 07.11.19

The Paper by the WG is welcomed and for a period equalised the payment level to those in England.

However, the £18,500 payment level in England has been increased to £28k meaning again that those infected in Wales are out of Kilter. It would be useful if the Welsh govt could respond to that point

Agenda Item 3.8

P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse

This petition was submitted by Mayameen Meftahi, having collected 227 signatures.

Text of Petition

The child house concept is based on best practice learned from the USA and Scandinavia. Recognising the vulnerability of the child victim and the harm caused to the child by multiple interviews, the child house uses a child-friendly response to child sexual abuse (CSA).

In the UK, 2 child houses are available in the city of London, in Wales there is none.

As a child, you do not know who and where to run to, you do not know that there is any support available, if we can offer Child Houses across the UK, we can save children.

Continuation of Refuges for Domestic Violence, there should be Child Houses for children suffering child sexual abuse.

We know that many children who are suffering child abuse will at some point try and escape, they will want to free themselves, but they have nowhere to go. They will be returned back home, back into the arms of their abuser.

Providing a safe house, that is child-friendly, that can open the way for disclosure and safeguarding.

In Iceland, the 'Barnahus' model has been in place since 1998, and offers in one place, forensic interviews, making court statements, medical examinations and access to therapeutic services. We should make this available like we do a domestic violence refuge. Since the Barnahus model was established in Iceland, the number of child victims of CSA coming forward for help has more than doubled per year, indictments have tripled, and convictions have doubled. This is enough evidence to show they are crucial.

Not only should we be providing child houses, but we should continue this

with educating children that these options are available. Please join us in the Campaign to address this issue and let's make a push for the Welsh Government to provide a Safe House in Wales, we surely cannot expect children to get to London, if they are even aware such houses exist. Sadly this is currently not the case.

Additional Information

Our children need somewhere to run to, they need to be safe and they need to have access to the correct support to save themselves from the life sentence of child sexual abuse.

Please sign this petition and start to make movements!

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Swansea East
- South Wales West



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/07985/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

24 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 1 October regarding Petition No. P-05-859; seeking an update on the roll-out of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) model and access to SARC and other support services.

The committee has specifically requested:

- a) *an update on the rollout of the new model for Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), including the proposed locations of the two paediatric hubs and local centres;*

There remains a commitment to establishing two paediatric SARC hubs (Swansea and Cardiff) to provide paediatric acute and historic services across the region with ongoing support being provided from the more local SARC spokes. The multi-agency SARC project continues to work collaboratively to develop a sustainable service model.

Issues relating to the recruitment of paediatricians is a national issue. Unfortunately as a result of these recruitment challenges, the acute service in Swansea Bay has been suspended and an interim service model has been established. The interim service provides an acute service from Ynys Saff SARC in Cardiff and Vale UHB, for all children across the region under the age of 14 years. Follow up care is provided by more local service providers, as appropriate. Children over the age of 14 continue to be seen by a forensic medical examiner at their nearest SARC. There is no change to the management of historic cases at this time, which continue to be seen in Singleton Hospital, Swansea and Nevill Hall Hospital, Abergavenny or to the out-of-hours provision.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@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 parallel to the establishment of the interim service, the SARC project reviewed the two-hub paediatric model originally proposed, in terms of feasibility and achievability. The review consisted of a multi-agency option appraisal followed by a focus group with paediatricians from across the region.

The two-hub paediatric model (Swansea and Cardiff) was supported by the review with a number of additional recommendations to support the service model. These include:

- Increasing the age from 14 to 16 for children that can be seen at the paediatric hub. This is in line with national guidance and services in North Wales.
- The need to develop a sustainable clinical workforce model.
- Developing pathways and commissioning arrangements with North Wales for children living in north Powys
- Exploring options to expand the role of the paediatrician to undertake the forensic examination, in addition to the health assessment.

The proposals recognise that clinicians need to see a minimum number of children to develop and retain the skills and experience needed to ensure services can meet the needs of children and young people. This is particularly important in order to minimise any further trauma from the assessment which may occur if a child is seen by the wrong person. The two-hub paediatric model balances the current number of children needing to access support, with the need for clinicians to maintain skills and experience. The aim is for the majority of children to be seen during the day, and as a minimum, be able to offer a paediatric assessment within 24 hours of referral.

These recommendations were made to the SARC project board in August and are being considered by health boards through Board meetings (September/October).

Children living in Powys.

The Project recognised the geographical challenges for children needing to access acute SARC services in Powys. The SARC project has recommended that children in North Powys should be able to access acute SARC services from the Amethyst Centre in North Wales, rather than traveling to Swansea or Cardiff if they so wish. Ongoing support would be provided from the more local SARC services and local Health Board in line with the existing commissioning arrangements for the health board. Following approval of the recommendations, work will need to take place with North Wales SARC service to develop pathways and the commissioning arrangements to enable children up to their sixteenth birthday who live in North Powys to access SARC services in Colwyn Bay, if they require forensic examination.

Next steps

There is significant work needed to move to a sustainable two-site service model for the paediatric SARC hubs in the region. The project board is developing a provisional timeline to which they are working. However, it should be noted that this timeframe may change in response to external influences e.g. PCC elections, engagement requirements etc. Specialist advice is currently being sought in relation to this.

The Committee will be aware North Wales have not been part of the recent service development work, but it is recognised that there are significant benefits from working across Wales. The next phase of the work will therefore involve working with colleagues in the North Wales SARC service to explore opportunities for closer working and as part of an All Wales network model.

I can assure the Committee that the interim model will remain in place until a new sustainable service model is implemented.

b) more information about waiting times for accessing existing SARCs;

There is no waiting time for accessing Sexual Assault Referral Centres. Individuals who present at the SARC service (self-referrals) will be seen immediately.

If a referral or a telephone call is received as an acute case (incident happened within the last seven days), the individual will be seen straight away under a 24/7 access. Non acute cases (incident occurred in last 12 months) will be seen within five days of a referral or telephone contact and this will be the offer of a face to face appointment. Historic cases (longer than 12 months) are managed in the same way as non-acute cases.

c) details on whether there are existing support services in place for children to access without the need for a referral.

The usual mechanism for a young person to access the SARC service is a referral from social services or the police, although some older children may self-refer. However, any child under the age of 16, attending the SARC would be seen and appropriately advised that, in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures, an incident would need to be disclosed to police and children's services. This would engage all relevant support services.

I hope this information is helpful to the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

**P-05-859 Provide Child Houses in Wales for victims of child sexual abuse,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 12.11.19**

Thank you for the update with regards to the petition and letter. It's reassuring to know there are movements taking place to better secure the needs of victims of child sexual Abuse.

I note the following:

c) details on whether there are existing support services in place for children to access without the need for a referral.

The usual mechanism for a young person to access the SARC service is a referral from social services or the police, although some older children may self-refer. However, any child under the age of 16, attending the SARC would be seen and appropriately advised that, in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures, an incident would need to be disclosed to police and children's services. This would engage all relevant support services.

* Again, we are not addressing the complexities of Child Sexual Abuse, that is different from Sexual Assault that can be seen or addressed often easier.

Child Sexual Abuse is very often over time abuse. The fact that there is still no service available that a child can access is the issue. Some older children may be able to refer... And yet younger children only by way of local authority involvement. This goes right back to the start of the petition, that victims of child sexual Abuse are unlikely to report to authorities.

So there is still no safe place for children to access by their own account and then if it's not an immediate sexual act, they will be spoken to over the phone.

There needs to be more facilities and safe spaces for children to access if they need.

With regards

Mayameen Meftahi (MASC P.Th & NLP)

Trauma Recovery Coach & Sexual Violence Expert

Agenda Item 3.9

P-05-896 Prevent the closure of Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital

This petition was submitted by Beverly Gillespie having collected a total of 281 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to prevent the closure of Merthyr Tydfil's only dementia ward. Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital provides vital respite to the families and loved ones of local residents suffering with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Without this vital asset in place, there is a real threat of preventable harm coming to those most vulnerable. Many people are no longer able to look after family members with this condition as they require care themselves or are under pressure due to work and childcare commitments. Please consider the wider negative implications of this closure and the pain it would cause to many families, whose nearest dementia ward would be many miles away.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
- South Wales East



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board

Your Ref/Eich cyf:
Our Ref/Ein cyf:
Date/Dyddiad:
Tel/ffôn:
Fax/Ffacs:
Email/eibost:
Dept/Adran:

ALFMG
23rd October 2019

Executive

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
Welsh Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Janet,

Re: Petition P-05-896 Prevent the closure of Ward 35 at Prince Charles Hospital

Thank you for writing to me on 2nd October 2019 after the petitions Committee gave consideration to the above which was submitted by Beverly Gillespie. Firstly I would like to acknowledge the impact any change in service has on our population, particularly as in this instance where the changes may impact on some of the most vulnerable people we service.

People were not directly admitted to Ward 35, the beds for assessment and initial treatment for people living with dementia are in the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant and the Princess of Wales Hospital in Bridgend. After assessment some people require a longer period of stabilisation to enable discharge, ward 35 was used in such instances.

There has been a longstanding and comprehensive change in Cwm Taf Morgannwg in how people living with dementia and their families are supported. Decisions and early stages of the transformation date back to 2014 where there was full support for the change in how services would be delivered. The change proposed was part of a wider recovery model consultation that was undertaken in line all the approaches such work should follow in conjunction with the Community Health Council. Following the initial decision to endorse the service transformation, the Board has reviewed progress on the agreed plan many times including twice in 2019. The strategic direction agreed by the Board involved was implicit in first increasing community resources, joint working across a range of settings and as these impacted to then to reduce longer stay assessment beds as demand for admission changed.

Phase 1 completed in late 2014 involved the closure of Ward 1 in Dewi Sant Hospital (18 beds), commissioning of a single site assessment & Enhanced Care Unit at Royal Glamorgan Hospital (RGH) and also an investment in 7 day Crisis Mental Health Team working. This was successfully implemented with no adverse impact on occupancy in other similar wards. Phase 2 completed in 2016 with the closure of Dinas Ward in Ysbyty George Thomas (YGT) (19 beds). The bed reduction was enabled through further investment to increase the Psychiatric Liaison Service from 5 to 7 days per week and change to the function of older adult mental health wards in RGH.

Cyfeiriad Dychwelyd/ Return Address:

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Cwm Taf Morgannwg, Pencadlys, Parc Navigation, Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Headquarters, Navigation Park, Abercynon, CF45 4SN

Cadeirydd/Chair: Professor Marcus Longley

Prif Weithredydd/Chief Executive: Dr Sharon Hopkins

Phase 3 took the approach of reducing demand on beds in YGT through investment in community services and providing a focal point for these through the development of a new Health and Wellbeing Centre there. This phase completed in May 2018. Fernhill Ward (19 beds) closed in December 2017 and Cambrian Ward (19 beds) closed May 2018.

The last phase of work related to ward 35 which closed in August this year. The 10 bed ward had cared for five patients for most of the year and had not been taking new admissions for some time. To further support the model of supporting more people at home further investment had been made in supporting people with dementia and behaviours that challenge as well as enhancing the more traditional community services with significant investment. A small number of people still need longer than is typical in hospital to stabilise and prepare them for discharge. For the Rhondda, Taf Ely, Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon population a ward in Ysbyty Cwm Cynon in Mountain Ash is available for people.

Ward 35 also provided a respite service for the population of Merthyr Tydfil and Cynon Valley. This bed was retained and moved to Ward 7 YCC on 27 May. All the people accessing the bed on Ward 7 were engaged as were their families and carers and the transition has gone smoothly.

Although difficult for families and staff the closure went smoothly and as planned. Concerns were raised during the process and the team worked hard to meet with as many people and groups as possible both at the time the board made the initial decision, and in the months where the change was more imminent.

Myself or the team would be happy to discuss this change further if it would help.

Yours Sincerely



Mr Alan Lawrie
Director of Primary, Community Care & Mental Health Services
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

c.c **Ms Julie Denley, Assistant Director for Mental Health Services**

Agenda Item 3.10

P-05-902 Paternal Mental Health (New Fathers Mental Health)

This petition was submitted by Mark Williams having collected a total of 116 signatures.

Text of Petition

In a "landmark move" NHS England will screen and support fathers for their mental health if the partner has a perinatal mental health illness.

The biggest killer in men under 50 is suicide and with a new debate in Parliament we feel the Welsh Government should be following and funding new father's mental health as without the support it can impact on mums and the development of the child.

The National Childbirth Trust "Dads in Distress report in 2015 found 38% of dads worry about their own mental health and 73% worry about their partners mental health.

1 in 10 dads suffer postnatal depression which looks different more anger, drinking, substance abuse and of course dads struggle to bond with their children too.

Fatherhood pressure is different than years ago with same gender couples and stay at home dads support needs to be in place.

Due to lack of support and screening dads often go into other services at crisis point after the relationship sadly has ended.

The Still Face experiment with dads explains the importance of supporting dad for his mental health due to importance of the first 1001 days antenatal and postnatal period.

When supporting all parents it has far better outcomes for the whole family.

We would like Wales to follow NHS England's new long term plan and include fathers.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Ogmore
- South Wales West



Ein cyf/Our ref VG/08117/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

4 November 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 14 October regarding Petition P-05-902 Paternal Mental Health (New Fathers Mental Health) from Mark Williams.

We remain committed to improving perinatal mental health services and it is a proposed priority area for action within the new Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019-2022 which will be published later this year. The work that is being led by the National Clinical Lead for Perinatal Mental Health towards developing a perinatal pathway will form part of the final Delivery Plan. I recognise the Committee's concerns that this pathway will need to take account of mothers and their partners which I can confirm will be considered as part of the pathway development work.

As stated previously all health boards are expected to work towards meeting agreed standards for integrated perinatal health services in Wales by March 2020. These standards include considering the mental health and well-being of fathers/partners.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Vaughan.Gething@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Vaughan.Gething@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 Wales, we have also implemented the Mental Health (Wales) Measure which provides services at an early stage through the Local Primary Mental Health Support Service, as well as ensuring those in need of specialist services receive the highest quality of care and treatment.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in "Gething".

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services

Agenda Item 3.11

P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales

This petition was submitted by the Brecon and Radnor Branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales having collected 2,469 signatures online and 2,098 on paper, a total of 4,567 signatures.

Text of Petition

We the undersigned call on the Welsh Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to take long-term strategic action to ensure that the poultry product industry is environmentally sustainable through effective delivery of the Environment (Wales) Act, Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Powerful agricultural drivers reinforced by BREXIT are increasing intensive egg & poultry production. The WG is ignoring the devastating environmental consequences for biodiversity, soil and water quality and avian and human disease. The public is vocal about poultry welfare but largely ignorant of the environmental impact of intensive poultry farming units (IPUs). "Free-range" egg units with concentrations of up to 2,500 birds/Ha are a particular risk (NRW report 218: Powys Poultry Pilot Study & INI nitrogen alerts 6/17).

Steep-sided valleys, high rainfall causing heavy nutrient run-off and populations of rare natural species make much of rural Wales wholly unsuitable for the current explosion of IPUs. After a decline from 1990, ammonia emissions have been increasing since 2010 (NAEI 2017 report for DEFRA). Critical loads of ammonia and nitrogen deposition (estimated thresholds for unacceptable damage to plant diversity) are far exceeded at some European & UK protected sites, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland. Excess phosphates threaten our watercourses (Wye & Usk Foundation 2017).

In failing to act on the evidence, WG, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Powys County Council (PCC) are neglecting the duty to "maintain and enhance biodiversity" (Environment Act Sec 6).

The WG must use its powers to control the industry:

1. *Provide proper resources for NRW to do urgent research, regulate and monitor IPU's and give better planning help to Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).*
2. *Issue planning policy and guidance to LPAs to improve decisions, ensure cumulative impacts are considered and monitor and enforce planning conditions.*
3. *Make the industry contribute towards the costs of regulation and monitoring and hold it to account for breach of environmental responsibility.*
4. *Publish transparent public reports on progress.*

Additional information

Our evidence is from Powys but our petition applies to all Wales.

Chair Diane McCrea confirms that NRW is shamefully under-resourced (BBC 14/12/17). NRW assesses impacts of IPU applications on European and UK nature sites and issues permits for IPU's over 40,000 birds. Improved NRW guidance (April 2017) covers cumulative impacts but assessment methods fail to prevent development where existing critical loads are exceeded.

The LPA assesses proper description of outdoor ranges and impacts on water quality, air quality, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, landscape, residential amenity and local traffic.

LPAs lack the skills and resources for these responsibilities. PCC does not consider the cumulative impact of applications, together with all neighbouring IPU's, on the natural environment, landscape or rural residents. Schedule 2 Environmental Impact Assessment should ensure assessment of cumulative impacts but fails in practice. PCC is reluctant to award EIA status because the WG can overturn the decision (see P/2016/0608 & P/2017/0007).

CPRW has data on intensive poultry planning applications in Powys since 2011. In the last 30 months, there have been 99 APPLICATIONS involving over 3 MILLION BIRDS, of which 72 are for free-range eggs. Of the 99, only 10 have EIA status: 65 applications have been approved and ONLY ONE HAS BEEN REFUSED.

We have evidence of developments approved without contour or outdoor range mapping, close to nature reserves (71m), vulnerable ancient woodlands (adjacent) watercourses (10m) and residents (50m). Residents suffer health risks from flies, airborne ammonia, poultry dust, traffic-generated particulates and offensive smells. Environmental stakeholder and public objections are ignored, rare plant species are dying, disease risks are increasing and watercourses are failing WFD standards.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: A unique set of POWYS IPU DATA including applications, interactive map, hot-spot map and animated chronological IPU growth display can be viewed at <http://www.brecon-and-radnor-cprw.wales>.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-815
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/06329/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

28 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter regarding petition P-05-815 Control Rapidly Expanding Intensive Poultry Industry in Wales and the outcomes of your meeting with the petitioners on 9 July.

I note that since receiving your letter, the Town and Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group has been established and met on two occasions, 7 August and 25 September. Representatives of the Brecon and Radnor Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural Wales have been present on both occasions as full members of the Working Group.

The Terms of Reference have been debated by the Group in detail and the petitioner has been able to raise their points as a member of the Group.

The objective of the Group is to identify the various roles and responsibilities of all bodies involved in the planning process relevant to intensive agriculture and examine technical advice and scientific evidence in relation to planning permission. The work will include looking at the impacts of intensive agriculture on biodiversity and climate change. The preparation of new a Technical Advice Note (TAN) will be the key output of the Working Group to help improve the quality of planning decisions benefiting both the industry and local communities.

In relation to the concerns raised by the petitioners regarding the cumulative impacts of intensive agriculture, the Chief Planner wrote to LPAs in June 2018 reminding them to take in to account the cumulative impacts of intensive agriculture units resulting from similar developments nearby before approving a planning application.

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Gohebiaeth.Julie.James@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Julie.James@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.

Back Page 194
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.

The letter also invited authorities to contribute to work which would look at how cumulative analysis of nitrate and ammonia emissions can be better assessed. The management of cumulative effects has been included in the Terms of Reference of the Intensive Agriculture Working Group and will be a key area for discussion.

I look forward to the continued involvement of the petitioners in the Working Group.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government



BRECON AND RADNOR BRANCH

Response for Petitions Committee Meeting 19/11/19

Petition 1305 Expansion of intensive poultry farming in Wales

Attachments:

1. Terms of Reference TCIAWG

2. How Ammonia is killing off the Countryside (Wales case)

Bureau of Investigative Journalism 13/6/19

<https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2019-06-13/how-ammonia-is-killing-off-the-countryside>

3. Ammonia report for Powys Application 19_1733/Ful.

Llangadfan, Welshpool.

<https://www.rogerparry.net/images/user/Mills - Appendix 16 - Ammonia Report.pdf>

Dr Christine Hugh-Jones

Secretary: Brecon and Radnor Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales.

13/6/19

Thank you for forwarding the response from Julie James Minister of Planning dated 28/10/19 for which we are grateful. Minister Julie James thought we had met with the Petitions Committee on 9th of July but the Committee only requested a written response from us.

1. Minutes from last Petitions Committee meeting 2ND JULY 2019

“provide the additional information from the petitioners to:

- *the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and **ask for her response to the proposal to apply the ‘polluter pays’ principle to the costs of regulation, monitoring and breaches; and***
- *the Minister for Housing and Local Government in relation to the petitioners’ comments on the terms of reference for the Town& Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group and await the outcomes of its work. **The Committee also agreed to ask the Minister what consideration she has given to the cumulative impact of planning decision and whether she will consider amending the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 to take this into account”***

We thank Julie James for her current response but note that it only deals with the TCIAWG and not the **cumulative impact** issue. We note there has been no response from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs about **the principle of “polluter pays” contributions to regulation costs**.

2. TCIAWG meetings

The Meetings are held under the Chatham House Rule, however we can report there has been no communication or notification of a third meeting since the second one on 25/9/19. Progress is disappointingly slow compared with the September **Terms of Reference** below.

- *The group will operate virtually or in person on an as needs basis but at least for half a day each month. The group will draw on external expertise as required if it is not available directly from members.*
- *The responsibility for decisions relating to the direction and development of the project rest with the Welsh Government Planning Directorate.*

August 2019 - Initial Meeting

August/ September 2019 – Evidence gathering (where we are Nov. 2019)

September 2019 – Second Meeting

September/ October - Analysis of Evidence

October 2019 - Report on Analysis/ Recommendations Stage – identify what needs to be done.

October 2019 - TAN drafting stage commenced

Winter 2019/20 – Consultation on Draft TAN

Direction rests with Welsh Planning Directorate. Although we are supposedly gathering information about the various agency responsibilities with respect to planning and intensive agriculture, there has been no direction about this and no system to streamline procedure by having participants submit structured information for collation and circulation to be read before the meeting. We anticipate that it will not prove possible to fulfil the terms of reference unless a dedicated work program, with sub-group reporting informs full group meetings.

We further note that the TOR does **not** include “looking at the impacts of intensive agriculture on biodiversity and climate change” as described in the Minister’s response.

In view of the slurry pollution incidents over recent years, we are concerned that there are no planning officers or agents on the committee from areas of Wales where large cattle farms predominate.

The final item in the TCIAWG group role in the Terms of Reference and as described to participants by the Planning Directorate is to support the drafting of a **Technical Advice Note**:

PPW10.1.11 says: “*Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales.*”

It is unclear at present to what extent a new TAN can set policy (as in the Spatial Policy in TAN 8) or whether it is merely “detailed planning advice” (see <https://gov.wales/technical-advice-notes>.) which guides interpretation of existing policy such as PPW10. It follows that it is not clear how much a new TAN will change planning practices on the ground.

3. “Polluter Pays” and improved regulation.

We do not know what measures will be announced in January by Minister Lesley Griffiths to address agricultural regulation to control pollution, nutrient management, and protection of air and water quality. Nor do we know how these will integrate with the Sustainable Farming and our Land proposals for farm payments for environmental services. The SF&OL consultation draft describes payment schemes as optional which means that large-scale polluters with the most profitable intensive livestock enterprises may not enter the schemes to avoid environmental obligations.

4. CPO letters

There has been another very welcome CPO letter on biodiversity since we initiated this campaign, This should reinforce the message of the intensive livestock letter.

CPO(Intensive Livestock Units) 12/6/18. Safeguarding communities and the environment from negative impacts, particularly cumulative impacts, of intensive livestock units, mentioning NRW guidance.

CPO (Biodiversity) 19/10/23 Development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally, and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity, through avoidance of loss, management for enhancement or through habitat creation.

Unfortunately, the Biodiversity letter does not mention **ammonia, nitrogen deposition or phosphates** which threaten our land-based and fresh-water ecosystems. No Intensive livestock unit can achieve a net gain in biodiversity without a substantial habitat management plan or habitat creation plan because, even if the contribution to ammonia levels is acceptable according to NRW guidance, it invariably brings the levels at ancient woodlands and other tree habitats (hedgerows, farmland trees, park lands etc.) into (or, more often, further into), the range which is critical for lower plant life. Run-off from spreading the ever increasing quantity of manure/slurry from intensive units is contributing to phosphate pollution of rivers but is not addressed in planning.

We have pointed out repeatedly that NRW ammonia guidance focuses on protecting top-tier nature designations (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites and SSSIs) and also includes an extremely low level of protection for ancient woodland. The guidance **allows a single intensive unit** to contribute sufficient ammonia to put lower plants at unacceptable risk to an ancient woodland outside a top-tier designation. It does not address any other habitats or designations.

We know that some in NRW are well aware of the threats. Simon Bareham, **NRW's principal adviser on air quality and biodiversity**, said that the threat agricultural ammonia posed to ecosystems was unprecedented. He described the plight of a Powys site surrounded by poultry farms: *"If we don't do something about it we risk losing some of these internationally important [ecological] communities that we have and have hung onto since the last ice age. In the short term, this poses one of the biggest threats to biodiversity that I've come across in my working career of over 30 years"* (Bureau of Investigative Journalism 6/13/19). <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2019-06-13/how-ammonia-is-killing-off-the-countryside>

We note that, in spite of increasing evidence about the devastating impacts of agricultural emissions, the WG Air Quality website front-page **fails to list Ammonia** as a pollutant: <https://airquality.gov.wales/about-air-quality/pollutants>

We also know that Herefordshire Council, on Environment Agency advice, has halted development in the river Lugg catchment as a result of "the Dutch Case" which ruled that since phosphate measures in top-tier protected river sites were declining, authorities could no longer claim that "river catchment nutrient management plans" were sufficient protection. NRW has not yet replied to our question about their own reaction to this case. They were also notably absent from the latest Wye catchment nutrient management plan meeting on October (ref)

4. Local Planning History

Since the **CPO ILU letter** on cumulative impacts of intensive livestock developments, approval of new units continues in Powys. Cumulative impacts are not being properly considered in Officer's Reports and impacts of pollutants on ecosystems are confined to the limited scope of the NRW guidance, even when existing measurements (ammonia, phosphates) are **already** high enough to pose significant environmental threats. Neither Powys Council nor applicants have proved capable of providing robust in-combination assessments for pollutants or rural living conditions. The ammonia modelling consultancy invariably used by developers is now saying they cannot provide this information because they do not have the evidence about locations and emissions from other units.

Since our last submission, there have been 7 approvals.

19/0508/FUL 4/7/2019 100k BROILERS

P/2017/0980 24/7/2019 34K PULLETS

18/0779/FUL 28/8/2019 37K PULLETS

19/0562/FUL 12/9/2019 100K BROILERS

19/0524/FUL 13/9/2019 16K FRE

18/0129/FUL 11/10/2019 38K PULLETS

18/0499/FUL 6/11/2019 6K FRE

and one refusal: on grounds of flood zone/insufficient information on odour & biodiversity

18/0689 16/7/2019 6K FRE

5. Request to the Petitioners (to NRW) providing strengthened guidance about ammonia/phosphate impacts on habitats both for "top-tier" tier designations and for "lower tier designations" and other habitats. This should include advice about how LPAs can assess cumulative impacts on biodiversity and reference clear evidence about mitigation and compensation measures.

- **Ask the WG to bring intensive livestock units below the current thresholds into a permitting regime**
- **Ask the WG to reconsider its unsustainable blanket support for intensive livestock farming and to require and fund proper mapping of intensive livestock units across Wales and match this to updated background ammonia/nitrogen levels in order to define areas where a threshold has been reached and no more units are acceptable.**
- **Ask the WG to commit to reducing background levels of ammonia and publish a strategy with targets in order to comply with the Environment (Wales) Act and commitment to address the BIODIVERSITY EMERGENCY it has declared.**

Town & Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group

Terms of Reference

Background

1. In 2017, Welsh agriculture accounted for 3.62% of regional employment in Wales and a total gross value added of 0.59% in 2016. These values are both greater than the UK average. Land use is dominated by grassland pasture which accounts for 76% of land use in Wales, 80% of which is Less Favoured Areas (LFA land). This reflects the upland terrain and wet climate of the country. Cattle and sheep grazing accounts for 21% of active farm holdings in Wales. Only a small proportion of holdings are dedicated to crops. Welsh sector output is heavily focused on livestock (49%) and livestock products (36%). 29% of the UK's sheep are within Wales and 11% of the UK's cattle. 60% of Welsh cattle are dairy.
2. Welsh farmers are a central part of rural economies, providing jobs and driving growth in diversified industries such as renewable energy and tourism as well as food production. Wales has the opportunity to ensure the interests of food production, wildlife, landscape, forestry, culture and all the other public benefits rural communities provide continue to complement each other. Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities states the Government's objective is "a sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses through the production and processing of farm products while safeguarding the environment, animal health and welfare, adapting to climate change and mitigating its impacts, while contributing to the vitality and prosperity of our rural communities."
3. There are still significant gaps in our knowledge about current farm practices and how these contribute to environmental improvement. We need better data on wider biodiversity delivery, like insects, and more data on the quality of our soils and emissions to air such as ammonia. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) highlights potential issues in relation to rising levels of airbourne pollution through the intensification of agriculture and emphasises the need for this trend to be addressed (Chapter 6). PPW also highlights the role of sustainable agricultural practices in assisting in nature conservation and enhancement to help support the seven goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
4. Farms undertaking intensive animal rearing are expanding in number and size. It is driven by changing market conditions and farm management practice and has the potential to increase given the uncertainties facing the farming section as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union.
5. Public Health Wales, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Local Authorities and the Welsh Government are individually and collectively receiving enquiries about potential health and environmental impacts arising from intensive farming.

6. Intensive Agriculture can lead to issues relating (but not exclusive) to:
 - Air Pollution / Odour
 - Water Pollution
 - Noise
 - Impacts on Habitats and Species
 - Health
 - Management of cumulative effects
 - Co-ordination of regulatory regimes
7. Agriculture is a dominant source of ammonia emissions which contribute to acidity and nutrient nitrogen. Intensive livestock units can be a significant local source of ammonia. The Welsh Government final supplemental air quality plan states whilst the focus of the plan is to reduce concentrations of nitrogen dioxide around roads exceeding legal limits in Wales, the Welsh Government is also developing a wide range of measures to support our aspirations for clean air, including identifying key pollutants and their effects on public health and the natural environment in Wales, including noise; and creating legally binding targets to reduce emissions of the most damaging pollutants under the National Emissions Ceiling Directive (fine particulate matter, ammonia, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, non-methane volatile organic compounds) by 2020 and 2030.
8. A number of regulatory regimes apply to intensive agricultural units including environmental permitting controls, biosecurity requirements, the Water Framework Directive, controls over the storage of slurry as well as a number of management measures relating to designations, such as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones. Council environmental health teams are required to investigate statutory nuisance at sites (reactively).
9. Planning applications for intensive agriculture units in Wales are a matter for each local planning authority (LPA) which will determine planning applications in accordance with its Local Development Plan (LDP) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The planning system has been the subject of criticism for not properly assessing the cumulative effects of poultry developments, however, the LDP provides the opportunity to comprehensively consider in-combination or cumulative effects. When determining applications, LPAs should consider factors such as noise, smells, pollution and health as well as any in-combination or cumulative effects. LPAs need to ensure they have access to sufficient expertise to consider the effects of development.
10. Whilst the work carried out by the group will extend to all methods of intensive agriculture (pig farming, cattle etc.), one example of where issues can arise is where poultry farms with greater than 40,000 birds require an environmental permit issued by NRW and must employ Best Available Techniques (BAT) to control emissions. Existing farms may expand, diversify or increase their flock size above or below the threshold for a permit. There is anecdotal evidence suggesting an increase in sub-permit threshold farms.
11. The Chief Planner wrote to LPAs on 12 June 2018 to advise about the need to exercise particular care when considering planning applications which bring

livestock units and residential or sensitive environmental areas close together. He reminded LPAs, where necessary, to take into account the cumulative impacts resulting from similar developments nearby. The letter also invited authorities to contribute to work which would look at how cumulative analysis of nitrate and ammonia emissions can be better assessed.

12. The preparation of a new sign-posting TAN for applications involving intensive agriculture is considered to be an important step in helping to improve the quality of planning decisions as well as providing a constructive and supportive way forward for the industry.

Role of Working Group/ Purpose Statement

13. The role of the Group is to:

- identify the various roles and responsibilities of all bodies involved in the permitting processes relevant to intensive agriculture.
- identify the full extent of powers held under planning legislation for agricultural development, with particular focus on intensive agriculture.
- identify the evidence in relation to intensive agriculture required for the preparation of Local Development Plans.
- identify the range of material considerations Local Planning Authorities should be considering when determining planning applications, including suitable assessment methods of typical impacts.
- identify technical advice and scientific evidence in relation to the processes involved in intensive agriculture and their impact which would inform planning processes.
- assess the capacity of Local Planning Authorities to provide internal advice and expertise on intensive agriculture projects (both during plan preparation and development management stages).
- identify and make recommendations on the availability of permanent sources of external advice for Local Planning Authorities in relation to LDP preparation and determination of planning applications.
- Examine challenges of monitoring and enforcement of planning decisions relating to intensive agriculture.
- make recommendations for further research.
- engage with other stakeholders not present on the Working Group, as appropriate.
- support the drafting of guidance (Technical Advice Note) on planning for Intensive Agriculture.

Scope / Limits

14. The Working Group will operate in the following way:

- The group will operate virtually or in person on an as needs basis but at least for half a day each month. The group will draw on external expertise as required if it is not available directly from members.

- The responsibility for decisions relating to the direction and development of the project rest with the Welsh Government Planning Directorate.

Engagement/ Confidentiality

15. Respect other members' views.

16. Email addresses will be shared within the group but kept confidential – not to be used for external correspondence.

Membership

17. The Working Group can invite new Members as the need arises. Initial invitations have been sent to the following:

Organisation	Specialist Area Representatives
CPRW Brecon and Radnor Branch	Landscape / Environment
Country Landowners Association	Development economics
Powys CC	Land use planning
Pembrokeshire CC	Land use planning
Brecon Beacons NP	Land use planning
Public Health Wales	Health
Planning Consultancy	Land use planning
ADAS	Farm operation / Development economics/ Environment
Wildlife Trust	Ecology
AHDB	Farm operation / Development economics
FUW	Farm operation / Development economics
Wales Environment Link	Landscape/ Environment
NFU	Farm operation / Development economics
NRW	Agriculture
NRW	Air quality
NRW	Planning Advice
WG	Environmental Quality and

	Regulation
WG	Agricultural Policy
WG	Air Quality Policy
WG	Agricultural Regulation
WG	Office of Chief Veterinary Officer

Chair and Secretariat

18. The chair will be [.....] Head of Development Management Branch.

19. It is the responsibility of WG to co-ordinate papers and presentation material, agendas and meeting notes for the Working Group meetings. Meeting notes are to be agreed by Marged Wyatt prior to being finalised and circulated to the Working Group.

Timetable

20. The following tasks shall be completed by the group, with a view to producing a draft TAN by the end of 2019:

- August 2019 - Initial Meeting
- August/ September 2019 – Evidence gathering
- September 2019 – Second Meeting
- September/ October - Analysis of Evidence
- October 2019 - Report on Analysis/ Recommendations Stage – identify what needs to be done.
- October 2019 - TAN drafting stage commenced
- Winter 2019/20 – Consultation on Draft TAN

Agenda Item 3.12

P-05-837 Green Energy for the Wellbeing of Future Generations in Wales

This petition was submitted by Welsh Anti Nuclear Alliance, having collected 1,028 signatures online and 288 signatures on paper, a total of 1,316 signatories.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to invest in green renewable energy sources thus reducing the need for fossil fuels and nuclear energy in Wales. More specifically to

- Support emerging low carbon technologies that could put Wales at the forefront of renewable energies and help to slow - down climate change; and
- Invest in energy sources that do not leave a legacy of radioactive waste, spoil heaps and damage to health and the environment.

We applaud the establishment of the "Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015", as it offers a huge opportunity to make long-lasting, positive changes for current and future generations particularly around clean energy.

We agree with the Energy Statement by Lesley Griffiths 6/12/2016 when she said the Assembly has 3 priorities. First, we will reduce the amount of energy we use in Wales. Second, we will reduce our reliance on energy generated from fossil fuels. Third, we will actively manage the transition to a low-carbon economy. However a reduction in nuclear should be included as it's not renewable or a low-carbon option.

Additional Information

Nuclear power stations rely on Uranium to operate and considerable amounts of carbon are released in the mining, milling and separation of the Uranium from the ore and then it has to be transported. Current estimates for Uranium say reserves will last 50 - 70 years and the higher the demand the more and more poor ores will have to be processed. This will lead to a CO2 balance for atomic power, which gets worse and worse over time (J. W. Storm van Leeuwen and P. Smith, 'Nuclear Power: The Energy Balance', www.stormsmith.nl.)

"Nuclear energy is not renewable and Earth's uranium would eventually deplete meaning that we are effectively depriving our future generations from using that in new and maybe less harmful ways in the future." (Sophie Howe – Future Generations Commissioner for Wales 2018 when supporting the Swansea Tidal Lagoon)

"Claims that nuclear power is a 'low carbon' energy source fall apart under scrutiny. Far from coming in at six grams of CO2 per unit of electricity for Hinkley C, as the Climate Change Committee believes, the true figure is probably well above 50 grams – breaching the CCC's recommended limit for new sources of power generation beyond 2030." (Professor Keith Barnham <https://theecologist.org/2015/feb/05/false-solution-nuclear-power-not-low-carbon>)

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Brecon and Radnorshire
- Mid and West Wales



PO Box 90. Llandrindod Wells. Powys LD1 9BP info@wana.wales
www.wana.wales

November 11th 2019

PETITION P-05-837

“ Green Energy for the Wellbeing of Future Generations”

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to Invest in green renewable energy sources thus reducing the need for fossil fuels and nuclear energy in Wales. (AN UPDATE)

BACKGROUND

WANA presented evidence in relation to the above petition in October and again in November 2018, we also wrote to the then Chair - Mr Rowlands AM on January 22nd 2019 (in light of the postponement of Wylfa Newydd) asking the Petitions Committee to ask Welsh Government to :

- step-up actions to invest more in low carbon renewable technologies NOW as Wylfa Newydd has been a costly distraction,.
- ensure money allocated to Wylfa is made available to develop a job intensive conservation and renewable energy programme for Wales,
- take the opportunity to revise the Welsh Government’s energy strategy, take control and ensure the resources are re-invested into renewable energy programmes that directly benefit Wales.(Westminster has visibly failed in making good choices whilst holding the energy portfolio.)

Since then the Welsh Government has declared a Climate Change Emergency and has outlined measures to tackle this in Wales, which we applaud.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Climate change is the most important issue facing us today. We know we have to cut our emissions and move towards a green energy future, and the Welsh Government is taking steps to do this. However, the people who signed this petition take the view that nuclear power has NO part to play in a low carbon future for Wales.

We contend that Wylfa Newydd and any talk of Advanced Nuclear Technologies(ANTS) / Small Modular Reactors (SMR's) are :

1. Not low carbon options
2. Are a costly distraction to meeting climate change targets
3. Likely to be located where climate change may have dire consequences
4. Are at variance with Welsh Government policy

There is now substantial evidence that Wales can become 100% self –sufficient in energy without any input from nuclear. Both the Institute for Welsh Affairs (IWA) and Zero Carbon Britain show how it can be achieved.

Wales should follow the lead of the Scottish Government which has stated its ...”
continued opposition to new nuclear stations under current technologies. And is moving ahead with ambitious targets to cut emissions
...<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-energy-strategy-future-energy-scotland-9781788515276/>

WANA recently received a letter from The Secretary of State (Dept.Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) regarding the Planning Inquiry into Wylfa Newydd. The letter asks for comments on the Application and notifies us of the Secretary of State’s decision to set a new date for the determination of the Application - **EN010007**. WANA will be making the following points under Item 36 ie. . Welsh Planning Policy & Climate Emergency Declaration :

1. Nuclear power is not low carbon.

The nuclear fuel cycle is a filthy, dangerous and unhealthy process leaving a legacy of radioactive wastes at all stages; from fuel production to decommissioning. Uranium the vital fuel component for nuclear reactors is a finite resource, its production is energy intensive and it travels an average distance of 2,500 + miles before it reaches us. Greenhouse gases are emitted at all stages of the nuclear cycle and no solution has yet been found for nuclear waste disposal .

In January 2019 the Welsh Government released its summary of responses on the consultation on “ Geological Disposal of Radioactive Waste - Working with Communities” . As a result 86 county, city, town and community councils in Wales have passed motions declaring their total objection to nuclear waste disposal in their communities despite financial bribes. It is immoral for us to go ahead and produce more nuclear waste when we are unable to take responsibility for existing waste.

2. Nuclear plans for Wales are a costly distraction to meeting our climate change targets

According to the latest research we have 12 years to act on climate change before it becomes seriously problematic. Currently Wales generates no energy from nuclear and the most optimistic scenario for new nuclear generation at Wylfa Newydd was 2027 so why waste time we need to act now.

The Institute of Welsh Affairs Report “ The Economic Costs and Benefits of Renewable Energy Transition in Wales “ shows that the development of an energy system that can enable Wales to become 100% self-sufficient in renewable electricity by 2035, requires around £25bn of investment in renewable electricity generation, and £5bn in domestic energy efficiency interventions. This analysis also shows that some 40% of renewable electricity spending could potentially be captured by Wales, along with 70% of domestic energy efficiency spending. In addition these investments could support some 20,150 jobs annually across Wales during the investment period . AND there is no need for nuclear power

<https://www.iwa.wales/click/2018/11/the-time-is-now-tick-tock-its-ticking-away/>

The Zero Carbon Britain Project offers hard data and the confidence required for visualising a future where we have risen to the demands of climate science. It shows we can provide a reliable energy supply for the UK with 100% renewable energy sources and flexible carbon neutral back up - without fossil fuels, nuclear power, or gambling on the promise of future technology

<https://www.cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/>

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales White Paper: “Ten Point Plan to Fund Wales Climate Emergency” (June 2019) outlines 10 areas for investment. Under Point 6 The Report suggests that £200 million be set aside in the next budget (2020-21) for renewable energy. https://futuregenerations.wales/resources_posts/10-point-plan-to-fund-wales-climate-emergency/

Estimated costs of building Wylfa Newydd lie in the region of 15 -20billion and rising and that does not include waste management and decommissioning. In January 2019 work at Wylfa was suspended by Hitachi due to rising costs and in July 2019 accounts filed by Horizon Nuclear Power Ltd cut the value of the land and equipment by 1.2 billion as it is not intending to build at Wylfa. Even so there is still a lobby to push ahead with nuclear developments in Wales with little evidence of progress.

In July 2019 a Report – “ NCG / NFLA report – Prospects for Small Modular Reactors in the UK and Worldwide” was published. This Report outlines in detail the huge obstacles to overcome. Some of these are technical, others are around building up an effective supply chain, while the financing of such schemes will only be possible with significant and large subsidy from the public purse.

...” Spending so much time and effort pursuing such an uncertain technology, at a time when the ‘climate emergency’ has now reached the political and public lexicon in requiring urgent attention, does not appear to be an effective use of taxpayer resources. Abundant evidence shows that renewable energy supply, storage, distribution and management technologies are being developed ever cheaper and swifter at a time when real urgency is required across society and government to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. SMRs are no answer to creating low-carbon economies by 2030 or close to that date.”

<https://www.nuclearpolicy.info/news/nfla-joint-ncg-report-on-smrs/>

3. Concerns about the actual Wylfa Newydd site re. climate change

On January 11th 2019 at the Issue Specific Hearing re. Granting Development Consent for Wylfa Newydd (Item on Climate Change). WANA asked for reassurance that up- to- date data on sea level rise had been incorporated into the Application for Wylfa Newydd – we were shocked to hear that 2009 data had been used to estimate the likely flood / sea level rise for the site.

A number of reports published in 2018 suggest that climate change will impact on coastal nuclear plants earlier and harder than the industry, governments or regulatory bodies have expected, and that the safety standards set by national nuclear regulators and the IAEA, are out of date and take insufficient account of the effects of climate change on nuclear power.

<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/2018/new-study-finds-sea-level-rise-accelerating>

Sea level rise data for 2018 is available and it shows a significantly worse picture than the 2009 data SO both Horizon and NRW are taking a view that is dated and possibly inaccurate.

Flooding at a nuclear site can be catastrophic as was shown at the Fukushima Daiichi plant in Japan. This was as a result of the March 2011 tsunami which caused severe flooding damage to several of the plant's reactors. Further flooding in October 2019 brought by Typhoon Hagibis led to 2,667 bags stuffed with radioactive contaminants being released into a local stream.(Taiwan News)

4. Any new nuclear developments in Wales are at variance with Welsh Government Policy and the Climate Emergency Declaration.

4.1 Devolution

In relation to the Welsh Government energy policy has not been totally devolved but things have recently altered. In April 2019 the Welsh Government received greater permitting and consenting powers which are expected to a) allow Wales to exercise more influence over levels of emissions and b) expand Welsh Ministers' decision-making remit from 50MW onshore to 350MW (on and off shore for the power sector).

4.2 The "Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015" .

Any new nuclear developments in Wales, in our view, are at variance with the "Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015" . This flagship legislation offers a huge opportunity to make long-lasting, positive changes for future generations around clean energy. Any new developments will increase our legacy of radioactive waste that future generations will have to manage .

A key theme of "Prosperity for All – A Low Carbon Wales"***Our climate change ambitions also have wider implications such as improving the health of our nation and resilience of our natural environment....*** Substantial evidence was provided by NGO's in North Wales at the Wylfa Planning Inquiry about the effect of such a huge nuclear development on the nature reserves and SSI's on Ynys Mon. We believe that upwards of 750 acres of such land will be destroyed.

4.3 Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), which was launched in December 2018, will underpin all future planning decisions onshore.....

....." ***PPW will help to ensure that the planning decisions taken in Wales, no matter how big, or how small, are going to improve the lives of both our current and future generations. It will support changing the way we live and work, and the buildings and environment of Wales, today, building a better environment to accommodate current and future needs.***"

It puts an emphasis on people and places and will ensure developments built today leave a legacy of well-designed, sustainable places that improve lives. Planning is a key lever for Wales in determining the sources of fuel for power generation.

<https://gov.wales/planning-policy-wales>

4.4 Section 6 Duty – Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty

Part 1 of the Environment Wales Act 2016 outlines the Section 6 Duty which introduced an enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty for public authorities in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales. The S6 duty requires that

public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/contents/enacted>

Agenda Item 3.13

P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy

This petition was submitted by Jonathan Burton having collected a total of 91 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to encourage all supermarkets and retailers to have doors on all their fridges and freezers, and so reduce our national carbon footprint, electricity consumption and pave a way for a greener Wales.

Irish retailer, Supervalu estimates that a typical 2.5 metre mineral fridge with doors will typically save 10,000kWh per year compared to fridges without doors [1].

This is the equivalent of 7 tonnes of carbon dioxide greenhouse gas and would be enough to power at least two homes of electricity for one year! The power saved from one fridge with doors is enough to power two homes! [2]

The Environment (Wales) Act of March 2016 [3] (Part 2: Climate change) gave Welsh Ministers the "powers to put in place statutory emission reduction targets, including at least an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050 and carbon budgeting to support their delivery. This is vital within the context of our existing UK and EU obligations and sets a clear pathway for decarbonisation. It also provides certainty and clarity for business and investment."

This is a great opportunity for the Welsh Government to work towards this goal and contribute to the 80% reduction to emissions by 2050. This act could have huge consequences nationally and globally! Let Wales be a leading nation on the international stage with a "healthy and resilient environment" [3] by shutting the door to wasted energy for this and the next generation!

Additional Information

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) in a chilling report [4] states that if retailers put doors on fridges, they would cut their energy use by a massive 33% and 1% of the UK energy bill would be cut if the top 5 supermarkets put doors on fridges.

A coalition of European NGOs have pointed to a report requested by the European Commission, which states that up to 58TWh of power by 2030 would be saved throughout Europe if supermarkets and retailers put doors on their fridges and freezers – this is the equivalent of 25 medium size coal power plants. They further commented, "the step to install doors on supermarket fridges and freezers is a no-brainer. Retailers will benefit from lower energy bills, a more climate conscious image, and ultimately, happier consumers. It's a win-win for everyone, especially for the environment. Because of climate change, we simply can't afford to be so careless with energy any longer." [5]

[1] Customer Care Team, SuperValu. Personal Communication. Thursday 7th Sep 2017. Irish retailer SuperValu quotes these figures directly from their fridge manufacturer.

[2] Office of Gas and Electricity Markets. Typical Domestic Consumption Values. Available from: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/gas/retail-market/monitoring-data-and-statistics/typical-domestic-consumption-values> [Accessed Friday 11th January 2019]

[3] Welsh Government. Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Available from: <http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/natural-resources-management/environment-act/?skip=1&lang=en> [Accessed Friday 11th January 2019]

[4] Environmental Investigation Agency, Chilling Facts VI: Closing the door on HFCs. 2014; p14. Available from: <https://eia-international.org/report/the-chilling-facts-vi-closing-the-door-on-hfcs/> [Accessed: Friday 11th January 2019].

[5] Coolproducts, Why don't supermarket fridges have doors? Available from: <https://www.coolproducts.eu/news/why-dont-supermarket-fridges-have-doors> [Accessed Saturday 12th January 2019]

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Cardiff North
- South Wales Central

P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy, Correspondence – Morrisons to Committee, 19.06.19

Please refer to our corporate website below for information on this.

<https://www.morrisons-corporate.com/cr/corporate-responsibility/>

P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy, Correspondence – Aldi to Committee, 20.06.19

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding Petition P-05-878 'Shut the Door on Wasted Energy'.

Aldi takes energy efficiency incredibly seriously and we have introduced numerous initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint in the UK and Ireland. These include increasing the purchase of green electricity to 100%, implementing an ISO 50001 certified energy management system, installing over 100,000 solar panels, and investing £20m in environmentally friendly refrigeration systems which are being installed across all new stores.

Through these and other initiatives, we have reduced our carbon footprint by 53% since 2012. I am also very proud that we are now a carbon neutral business in the UK and Ireland.

Specifically, in relation to our fridges and freezers, I can confirm that all of our freezers in all stores nationwide have doors. Our chiller cabinets do not have doors, however, for the past year, we have been running a trial in a number of stores in which we have fitted doors to our chiller cabinets to measure any improvements in energy efficiency, whilst also reviewing operational and customer impact.

Climate change is an extremely important issue and we are committed to continually reviewing our operations and looking to reduce emissions wherever possible.

I hope this information is useful.

Kind regards,

P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy, Correspondence – Sainsbury's to Committee, 21.06.19

Dear Ms Saunders,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 June to Mike Coupe who has asked to me respond on his behalf.

As one of the UK's leading retailers, we are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our business and we have the bold ambition to be the greenest grocer by cutting carbon emissions from our heating, cooling, lighting and logistics. Since 2005 we have reduced our absolute carbon emissions by 35%.

We continuously work to reduce our carbon footprint through new technologies to maximize energy efficiency and this year we rolled out aerofoil technology for our refrigerators across 1,400 Sainsbury's stores. Inspired by Formula 1 innovations, aerofoil prevents cold air from fridges spilling out into aisles, reduces energy use by 15 per cent and complements our night blinds, which save an additional 35% energy when the store is closed.

We believe that aerofoils are currently the best solution to meet our energy reduction targets while serving our customers. In the coming year we will also continue to test opportunities for further energy efficiency in our stores including doors on fridges and Internet of Things technology linked to metering.

If you would like to discuss what we are doing in more detail or have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC
Chair Cadeirydd
29 Madoc Street
Llandudno
Conwy LL30 2TL



1st July 2019

By email: SeneddPetitions@assembly.wales.

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter to Steve Murrells dated 14 June 2019 regarding Petition P-05-878, 'Shut the Door on Wasted Energy'. Steve has asked me to reply on his behalf as I am the Managing Director of Property for the Co-op.

The Co-op was one of the first retailers' to start fitting doors to our fridges, back in 2013. In fact, the Environmental Investigation Agency report referenced in your letter cites the Co-op as a 'Green Cooling Leader'. We're proud that our refit and maintenance schedules allow us to review how our refrigeration is performing, with our latest big development being the phasing in of natural refrigerants across our estate. This will drive some meaningful environmental carbon reductions that show our commitment in this area.

We put doors on the majority of our fridges in our stores in Wales, and indeed across the UK. We don't place doors on all our fridges, however, because of the way that our customers want to be able to shop – for example, fridges for sandwiches, milk, soft drinks and fruit and vegetables.

That said, in our larger stores where we have the space for roll in milk cages, we have now introduced doors onto this category. This is because the chiller used is much larger, and customers shop this category in a different way compared to how they shop in a convenience store. The store aisle width also allows us to introduce hinged doors which wouldn't be possible in our smaller convenience stores. As you can see, we carefully consider the types of fridges used, taking into account the products they will hold, the expectations of our customers and the space available, as well as environmental considerations.

We would also note that combining technology performance with the real time optimisation managed by our Technical Services Bureau, we believe that the quoted 10,000kWh saving through the installation of fridge doors for a typical 2.5m mineral fridge is overstated. Our experience is that the saving would typically amount to less than 2000 kWh.

Reducing the resources we use is a key priority for the Co-op and we don't stop at considering doors on fridges. We have optimised energy performance in our stores through inclusion of technologies such as:

- Shelf edge technology (aerofoils)
- LED lighting
- Electronically commutated (EC) fans which have been independently verified and have reduced energy use by up to 20%

Registered Office: Co-operative Group Limited
1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG. Reg No 525R

We are committed fully to supporting the effort to reduce the environmental impact of supermarkets and other retailers. However, there is other positive action that we have already taken – and innovation that we have planned – that we believe will achieve this objective through a more holistic approach rather than simply focussing on installing doors to all our fridges.

I hope this letter provides you and the Petitions Committee with the information that you require.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DR', written over a light grey rectangular background.

David Roberts

Managing Director – Co-op Property

Registered Office: Co-operative Group Limited,
1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG. Reg No 525R

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Committee Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

23/09/2019

Dear Committee Chair,

Thank you for your letter to our Chief Executive Dave Lewis regarding Petition p-05-878. Mr Lewis has asked that I should respond to you on his behalf.

Tesco is committed to reducing the carbon produced by our store operations and is the only UK grocery retailer to set ambitious science-based targets to become a zero-carbon business by 2050 (in line with the Paris Climate Agreement). Since 2015/16 we have reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by more than a quarter, and now source all of the electricity for our UK stores from renewable sources.

We are continually looking at ways to improve the efficiency of our refrigeration systems and are currently fitting Aerofoil Shelf Edge Technology throughout our stores, a move which will reduce energy consumption by around 15%.

I hope this information is useful to the committee and its work, but should you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Waterside House
35 North Wharf Road
London
W2 1NW

15th October 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders,

Thank you for the letter dated 18th September on behalf of the Committee regarding Petition P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy.

We recognise that climate change matters to M&S customers and addressing this challenge is vital to our long-term success as a retailer. Over a decade ago, we took decisive action and set our first climate target and we became the first major retailer to become carbon neutral in 2012. More recently, we have ensured that 100% of the electricity we use comes from renewable sources.

Our business emissions have reduced by 75% over the last 12 years and we're continuing to investigate new solutions for heating, transport and refrigeration. We're also working to support our suppliers to reduce their carbon usage and helping our customers to do the same.

In addition, the M&S Property team is focused on reducing the impact of our refrigeration. In 2015, we moved to using a natural refrigerant in our sales floor refrigeration, and we have already reduced our refrigeration emissions by 74% based on a 2006/2007 baseline.

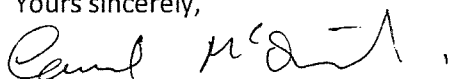
This year, we have retrofitted Aerofoil Shelf-Edge Technology to our fridges in 625 stores, which improves the coherence of the fridge's cold air curtain at point of origin and has led to a 9% saving in energy. Furthermore, for our new stores, we have recently specified a new fridge case which includes Shelf-Edge Technology and a new freezer which does have doors which we are rolling out further. The new fridge case will lead to a 20% energy saving and the new freezer case will lead to an energy saving of at least 45%.

We continue to evaluate new and innovative approaches to help reduce the environmental impact of our stores whilst improving the customer experience. Solutions that effectively reduce emissions from fridges can vary significantly in their capital and investment cost, their applicability to retrofit to existing equipment versus new equipment and in terms of the ease of refilling and cleaning by store colleagues. From our experience of testing various options, we know that customer acceptance can depend on individual store format and trading pattern, which is why we would caution against mandating any one industry-wide solution.

I hope this response reassures you that we take these issues very seriously and are committed to making further progress.

Thank you again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,



Carmel McQuaid

Head of Sustainable Business

JOHN LEWIS
PARTNERSHIP

JOHN LEWIS & PARTNERS WAITROSE & PARTNERS

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC
Chair of the Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

171 Victoria Street
London SW1E 5NN

johnlewispartnership.co.uk
Telephone 020 7828 1000

16 October 2019

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

Thank you for your letter to Rob Collins regarding Petition P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy. He has asked me to reply on his behalf as I am responsible for the John Lewis Partnership's property, which includes our refrigeration systems. We are absolutely committed to doing all we can to minimise our impact on the environment and have set ourselves some challenging targets to achieve this. I am delighted to have the opportunity to share details with you.

As you may know, Waitrose and Partners is a trading brand of the John Lewis Partnership which has pledged to achieve "net-zero" carbon emissions for its direct operations by 2050 at the latest, without purchasing carbon offsets.

In a first step towards the commitment, the Partnership has set an interim aim of cutting its operational carbon footprint by one-third by 2028. This initial reduction will be achieved through a series of investments into low-carbon technologies such as biomethane trucks, electric vans and energy-efficient refrigeration. Overall, the John Lewis Partnership is targeting 100% British-generated renewable electricity for its stores, offices, distribution centres and other UK facilities within the next nine years.

These short-term moves are collectively predicted to mitigate the emissions equivalent of those produced by 16,000 petrol cars annually.

Looking to the long-term, the Partnerships has set a target of 2028 to reduce its energy use by 25% against a 2010 baseline, phasing out all hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) from its core refrigeration and cooling systems and developing all new stores in line with BREEAM building standards.

We have developed innovative solutions for our refrigeration systems to ensure they are as environmentally friendly as possible and are soon to introduce a next generation system. In early 2019 we will install new frozen food cabinets in some of our shops. These will have glass doors and contain a refrigerant which is extremely low in its global warming potential. Two of our shops in Wales have Water Cooled Refrigeration which is an all natural solution and does not use any hydrofluorocarbon refrigerants.

We are also introducing EcoBlade™ technology - shelf edge strips - to our shops to reduce energy consumption by up to 25%, equivalent to running 150 average houses for a year. When introduced to all our shops, it could save the equivalent amount of electricity to run 3,300 average houses in the UK for a year. It will also have the added benefit of creating an improved shopping environment for our customers and Partners (employees) due to warmer aisles. We have fitted EcoBlades where we've been able to do so in our shops in Wales, for example in Pontprennau.

Pack Page 223

JOHN LEWIS
PARTNERSHIP

JOHN LEWIS
& PARTNERS

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

We have one of the lowest refrigerant leakage rates in Europe at below 5% . This means we keep more of the refrigerant gases within the pipes than others in the industry.

In our efforts to further reduce energy loss at our shops, we will be introducing an 'invisible door' call the Air Door in partnership with Wirth Research. This will prevent warm air being lost from our shops during colder temperatures and cold air being lost during warmer temperatures as customers enter and exit our shops. We will trial this technology from November this year.

I hope this helps to reassure the Committee that we are finding innovative ways to reduce our impact on the environment and make our shops as sustainable as we can.

Yours sincerely



Chris Harris
Group Property & Development Director



Janet Finch-Saunders
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Lidl Great Britain Limited
19 Worples Road
Wimbledon
London SW19 4JS

Telephone: 020 8971 1100
Facsimile: 020 8971 1119

29 October, 2019

Dear Janet,

Re Petition P-05-878 Shut the Door on Wasted Energy

Many thanks for your recent letter to our CEO regarding the Shut the Door on Wasted Energy petition, which he has respectfully asked me to respond to on his behalf.

We share the Assembly's objectives of reducing carbon emissions in supporting the transition to a low carbon economy.

At Lidl, we have long been committed to reducing our operational energy use and are continuously exploring and implementing solutions to achieve this.

All GB operations have been certified with the energy management system ISO:50001 international standard. During the last year, we continued to invest in energy-saving refrigeration and lighting technologies across our stores and warehouses. From heat recovery systems for our chillers (achieving energy savings of approximately 27%), to rapid action insulated doors with air curtains within our warehouses and, in 2018, we completed the roll-out of efficient LED lighting in all stores.

More recently, we have installed glazed doors on all our fresh meat, fish and roll-in milk chillers. It is estimated that these measures result in a 30-40% energy saving compared with chillers without doors.

As part of our continual improvement approach to energy efficiency we are exploring measures that improve the efficiency of our chillers to ensure we can remain operational efficient whilst employing best in class technologies across our stores.

I hope that the above provides you with the necessary information around the installation of glazed doors.

Yours sincerely,

Georgina Hall
Head of Communications and CSR
Lidl GB LTD

11/11/19

Dear Senedd Petitions,

I am writing in response to the evidence provided by the major retailers in response to the petition calling for the Welsh Government to encourage all supermarkets and retailers to have doors on all their fridges and freezers, and so reduce our national carbon footprint, electricity consumption and pave a way for a greener Wales. I have been informed this will be debated again on Tuesday 19th November 2019, and I have been given the opportunity to respond.

Firstly, thank you for making the time to seriously consider this petition and writing to the major retailers. It is clear that most supermarkets are taking steps forward in thinking about how they consume energy. For example, Sainsburys "have reduced [their] absolute carbon emissions by 35%" since 2005, and M&S have said that their "business emission have reduced by 75% over the last 12 years". However, Morrisons did not even reply properly, but instead referred to their corporate responsibility webpage. Lidl have said, they "have installed glazed doors on all [their] fresh meat, fish and roll-in milk chillers. It is estimated that these measures result in a 30-40% energy saving compared with chillers without doors." Progress is being made but it is not enough.

It has been declared by the UK Government and scientists across the world that we have an "environment and climate emergency". An emergency can be defined as: "something dangerous or serious, such as an accident, that happens suddenly or unexpectedly and needs **fast action** in order to **avoid harmful results**". In others words, an emergency demands immediate and fast action, which means it is not good enough to be making progress as if we have plenty of time. We don't. If we are serious about tackling this emergency then we must be serious about putting in legislation to tackle it. How will the Welsh Assembly respond?

This petition gives the Welsh Assembly the opportunity to respond to this state of emergency. To act now and to act fast. We are therefore calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to encourage all supermarkets and retailers to have doors on all their fridges and freezers, and so reduce our national carbon footprint, electricity consumption and pave a way for a greener Wales.

Placing doors on fridges and freezers is a simple way of saving a lot of energy, since as previously stated in the petition, just one "typical 2.5 metre mineral fridge with doors will typically save 10,000kWh per year compared to fridges without doors. This is the equivalent of 7 tonnes of carbon dioxide greenhouse gas and would be enough to power at least two homes of electricity for one year!" This is an opportunity for the Welsh Government to take action against the climate emergency.

What will the Welsh Government do in regards to placing doors on fridges and freezers inside all supermarkets and retails across Wales and so help slow down and eventually prevent catastrophic effects of this climate emergency?

As stated in my previous response:

- I petition the Welsh Government to think carefully how they are **urgently** addressing the issues of climate change.
- I petition the Welsh Government to think through how they will keep food retailers **accountable** to their energy usage rather than simply reporting figures.
- I urge the Welsh Government to consider encouraging all supermarkets and retailers to have doors on all their fridges and freezers and petition the UK Government for legislation so that

we can **reduce** our national carbon footprint, electricity consumption and pave a way for a **greener** Wales.

I believe the Welsh Government has a role and responsibility to respond to this state of emergency, set an example for others, take this opportunity to take a stand against climate change and take action now that will pave a way for a greener Wales and a greener world.

Thank you for taking the time to debate this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Burton

Agenda Item 3.14

P-05-899 Buses for people not profit

This petition was submitted by Cllr Carolyn Thomas having collected 514 signatures online and 3,164 on paper, a total of 3,705 signatures.

Text of Petition

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge Welsh Government to regulate commercial bus operators and give powers and funding to Local Authorities to run services that best meet the needs of local people. As well as providing access to employment and education, public transport is a social, health and wellbeing issue which is growing as bus services are being rapidly reduced, affecting the mental and physical health and well being of many residents who will become socially isolated and unable to get to basic services.

Additional Information

Bus operators are cutting many core services which were previously operating with little or no subsidy. Operators are not tendering for new contracts and some are requesting 6 figure sums as a subsidy to continue which is unaffordable for Local Authorities who are facing budget pressures. Local Authorities cannot run services in competition with operators. Passenger journey times for those accessing employment take too long as direct services are being cut if still exist at all and some are overcrowded. The majority of residents attending the many public meetings we have held are older people who are concerned about accessing services, attending health appointments and becoming isolated. Loneliness is a huge issue in our society. It is our aim to enable older people to live in their own homes longer. It is our aim for them to stay mentally and physically fit and active. Public bus transport is now a huge urgent issue that needs addressing quickly.

Assembly Constituency and Region

- Alyn and Deeside
- North Wales



Ein cyf/Our ref KS/08076/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

23 October 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of 11 October regarding petition P-05-899 Buses for people not for profit.

The Public Transport (Wales) Bill, now called the Buses (Wales) Bill, is a key part of wider reforms and will help us to achieve our ambition of creating an integrated public transport network, planned and provided in the public interest, and which meets the needs of the travelling public.

The changes proposed in the Bill will seek to address some of the negative impacts of de-regulation on bus users, operators and authorities, by creating a number of tools which would assist local authorities with the planning and delivery of local bus services in their area. The tools will enable local authorities to intervene by, for example, introducing franchising schemes or deliver local services directly should they choose to do so. The changes proposed in the Bill will provide the Welsh Government and local authorities with the tools needed to drive change.

For further information on the Bill and the wider bus reform agenda, please refer to my written statement [here https://gov.wales/written-statement-update-public-transport-wales-bill-and-wider-bus-reform-agenda](https://gov.wales/written-statement-update-public-transport-wales-bill-and-wider-bus-reform-agenda).

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

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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.

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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.

My officials are working closely with Legal Services and the Office of Legislative Counsel (OLC) to progress this work in line with the timetable requirements for introduction in year 4 of the current legislative programme.

Yours ever,


Ken Skates AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy and Transport



Cllr Carolyn Thomas
Flintshire County Council
County Hall
Raikes Lane
Mold
Flintshire CH7 6NB

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Dear Janet

Bus Petition – Buses for People Not Profit

I have submitted the background information as requested which was attached to the petition, I hope you find it useful. It covers the consultation process we started undertaking with residents three years ago when we knew there was an issue regarding the sustainability of the public services. Commercial operators started pulling out of areas they were regarding as non profitable and we could not keep increasing subsidies as a result of decreasing Council funding. We gathered a lot of information at the community meetings and via questionnaires.

In response to the Minister's letter forwarded to me by the petitions Clerk I welcome that he will be introducing a Public Transport Bill in this Assembly term and hope to work with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and Neighbouring Authorities across Wales (and across the border in England for border Counties) in delivering a sustainable, integrated public bus (&rail) transport solution for our residents.

The Bus Services Support Grant, although significant, even with match funding from Local Authorities isn't enough to sustain bus transport without reform. When divided, it equates to approx £500k for Flintshire, the Council matches this, however, one route can cost £200k - £300k and many operators have been requesting six figure sums as subsidies for them to continue to operate routes which were recently commercially run with no subsidies. The amount of operators is diminishing affecting the market and pushing up the cost as well as inflationary costs such as fuel. School transport costs have increased by 10%.

I would be interested to hear the outcomes of the four pilot projects or indeed how many have taken place. In Flintshire we were in dialogue with an operator regarding a demand responsive service but they wanted £500k subsidy, they would not take concessionary passes and the fare was estimated at £5 per journey.

I know that funding comes from the Environment service area regarding access to employment, education and social activities. However, the impact on health is a huge part of providing a public bus service and residents wanted to do something to help me raise this with Welsh Government. Providing a bus service helps people stay physically and mentally fit and independent in their own homes longer, it has a social impact and combats loneliness and isolation. When I travelled by bus from Cardiff station to Cardiff Bay last week, I chatted to a mental health nurse from Bridgend who said that her patients were devastated to discover that the public service bus they used would be reduced to just two per day, she said they would not walk to town, further impacting on their health and wellbeing. I know funding priorities focus on the NHS but preventative measures and services are vital and will save in the long run.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn

Cllr Carolyn Thomas, Cabinet member for Streetscene & Countryside
Deputy Leader
Flintshire County Council