

# Cofnod y Trafodion

## The Record of Proceedings

### 05/06/2013

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*Cyfarfu'r Cynulliad am 1.30 p.m. gyda'r Llywydd*  
*(Rosemary Butler) yn y Gadair.*

*The Assembly met at 1.30 p.m. with the Presiding Officer*  
*(Rosemary Butler) in the Chair.*

13:30 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)  
The National Assembly for Wales is now in session.

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## Cwestiynau i'r Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau

## Questions to the Minister for Education and Skills

### Chwilio am Waith

### Seeking Work

13:30 **Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)  
*Arweinydd Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru / The Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats*

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*1. A wnaiff y Gweinidog amlinellu cymorth Llywodraeth Cymru i bobl ifanc sy'n chwilio am waith ym Mrycheiniog a Sir Faesyfed? OAQ(4)0287(ESK)*

*1. Will the Minister outline Welsh Government support for young people seeking work in Brecon and Radnorshire? OAQ(4)0287(ESK)*

13:30 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)  
*Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau a Thechnoleg / The Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology*

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[Fideo Video](#)

We are delivering our commitment within the programme for government to support young people to enter work. This includes extending apprenticeships, providing training opportunities, and creating 12,000 job opportunities for young people over three years through our Jobs Growth Wales programme. For Brecon and Radnorshire, 252 Jobs Growth Wales job opportunities have been created. At the moment, 170 have been filled.

13:31 **Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

[Senedd.tv](#)  
[Fideo Video](#)

Thank you for that answer, Deputy Minister. I am sure that you will be as concerned as I am if those opportunities have been created by Jobs Growth Wales, that they have not been taken up and fulfilled. Have you carried out an analysis of why that is the case? Of those young people entering the scheme in Brecon and Radnorshire, how many have gone on to secure long-term, full-time employment as a result of participation?

- 13:31 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 On your last point, I will write to you with the precise details for Brecon and Radnorshire in terms of staying in jobs. However, I can say that the point that we have always made is that what we are particularly keen about is how many young people who complete the six months, or who have a positive experience before that, go on into employment or into apprenticeship. On that basis, the figure is well over 70%. In terms of young people who drop out—and, clearly, by definition they are not completing the programme—we are concerned that, across Wales, there are just over 400 young people who have not completed. We are analysing the reasons for that. We want to make sure, as far as we can, that, in years two and three, we do the maximum amount of work to minimise the drop-out rate.
- 13:32 **Nick Ramsay** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 Kirsty Williams has beaten me to the question that I was going to ask. However, part of Kirsty Williams's question was about specific issues in Brecon and Radnorshire. There are clearly issues with creating and sustaining employment in rural areas, which are different to urban areas of Wales. What are you doing to specifically tailor programmes such as Jobs Growth Wales to the rural environment? You mentioned those jobs that have been created, but how many of those are long term and sustainable, particularly in a rural area such as Brecon and Radnorshire?
- 13:33 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 In general, all the jobs that are approved to be within the Jobs Growth Wales scheme have to be considered to be sustainable, and the host employer must provide a business plan to show that that is the case. Careers Wales is working closely with Jobs Growth Wales to ensure that there is no barrier to any young person who is seeking to take up a place. In that sense, Brecon and Radnorshire is no different from any other part of Wales.
- 13:33 **Simon Thomas** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 Deputy Minister, you have announced, together with Plaid Cymru, an expansion of the apprenticeships schemes that will be available. Can you say what is being done, particularly in Brecon and Radnorshire, and other such rural areas, to encourage the take-up of apprenticeships, particularly shared apprenticeships, among small and medium-sized enterprises?
- 13:34 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 In the Powys local authority area—and we do not have specific figures for Brecon and Radnorshire at present—there are 1,133 following apprenticeships. The figure for traineeships, which is often the introductory programme to apprenticeships, is 202. As I am talking about work-based learning programmes, I will mention that 137 people are following the Steps to Employment programme, for those aged 18 plus. As I said in answer to Nick Ramsay, we are working closely through the careers service to make sure that those offers are understood and are pursued.

## Fframwaith Llythrennedd a Rhifedd

## Literacy and Numeracy Framework

- 13:34 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
*2. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am weithredu'r Fframwaith Llythrennedd a Rhifedd? OAQ(4)0274(ESK)*
- 13:34 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
*Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau / The Minister for Education and Skills*  
 Mae'r fframwaith llythrennedd a rhifedd cenedlaethol wedi bod ar gael i'w ddefnyddio mewn ysgolion ers mis Ionawr a bydd yn ofyniad statudol yn y cwricwlwm o fis Medi 2013. Mae rhaglen gymorth genedlaethol wedi'i rhoi ar waith i helpu i weithredu'r fframwaith llythrennedd a rhifedd ac mae eisoes wedi dechrau rhoi cymorth uniongyrchol i ysgolion.
- 13:35 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)  
 Diolch am yr ateb hwnnw, Weinidog. A fyddai modd inni dderbyn diweddiariad ar y paneli ymarferwyr? Hynny yw, a allwn ni gael mwy o wybodaeth ynglŷn â'r nifer o ysgolion sydd ar bob panel, faint sydd wedi'u hapwyntio hyd yn hyn ac a ydych wedi adolygu'r broses o gwbl, neu'n bwriadu ei hadolygu?

- 13:35 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I appointed a practitioner panel of leading headteachers from across Wales who were due to serve for two years and that period has not yet expired. The practitioner panel—if that is the one to which she is referring—meets with me and officials on roughly a monthly basis. The term of office of the people on that panel will expire after two years when we will appoint a new set of heads to join the panel.
- 13:36 **Angela Burns** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, I have raised concerns with you about how children with additional learning needs are being disadvantaged by the literacy and numeracy tests, following on from Bethan's question. I thank you for your answer in respect of one of my constituents, however, I believe that you are missing the point. Are you testing the child's numeric ability, or testing the child's intellectual capability to interpret the written paper? Children with language deprivation or additional learning needs might have difficulty with representations of numbers and written questions, but it does not mean that they cannot cope with the mathematical concepts. Would you please consider re-evaluating how children with additional learning needs can access other tests and have a true representation of their capabilities?
- 13:37 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
She raises a fair issue, I think, and I am perfectly happy to explore these issues over the next month or two. The reality is that there will be a number of things that we will need to look at following the first round of tests and I am open to further discussions on those.
- 13:37 **Peter Black** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, I have raised with you previously that, despite the fact that Welsh and English are considered equal, English-medium pupils are not tested in terms of literacy through the Welsh language whereas Welsh-medium pupils are tested through both languages. Will you consider looking at that again to ensure that, when we carry out those tests, pupils in English-medium schools are at least able to compete in both languages?
- 13:37 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am interested. The Member is the only person in the Chamber to be pressing me to introduce more tests, I think, at the present time. [Laughter.]

I think that there are different issues, bluntly, in the teaching of Welsh as a second language and I am not sure that the testing framework that we have introduced is necessarily the appropriate way of developing those skills.

## Cyllido Ysgolion

## Funding of Schools

- 13:38 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*3. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ganllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru a gyflwynwyd i awdurdodau addysg lleol o ran cyllido ysgolion? OAQ(4)0269(ESK)*
- 13:38 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Local authorities are responsible for school funding and education budgets. The majority of funding for schools is distributed via the revenue support grant to local authorities. We have made it clear that we want local authorities to delegate a higher proportion of the funding that we provide to their schools.
- 13:38 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*3. Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Government guidance issued to local education authorities regarding the funding of schools? OAQ(4)0269(ESK)*  
Thank you for that response, Minister. There is a concern in Denbighshire that there is an attempt to introduce middle-school funding guidance for a school that serves my constituents, which is an all-through school with pupils from three to 19 years of age. It would be the only school in the local authority area to have a different funding formula than the one that has served it for a number of years. Is that something that you might be prepared to discuss with the local authority to ensure that children in that school are not disadvantaged?

- 13:39 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I think that this is something that the Member should raise with the local authority.
- 13:39 **Mike Hedges** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, is it also not important that local authorities hold enough money centrally so that they can provide free school transport for those children who are eligible for it, and adequate advisory support for schools using advisory teachers, and other advisors, to try to ensure that standards are improved?
- 13:39 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
My colleague the Member for Swansea East will know that home-to-school transport is a matter for the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport.
- Clearly, he raises issues that are important, however, and that need to be weighed in the balance by local authorities when they are considering how they allocate funding to schools. We want to increase the ratio of funding that we provide to local authorities that is delegated to schools to 85%, as has been agreed by the local authorities, but if schools themselves then consider that they need to obtain services on a collective basis, possibly on a whole authority basis, or on a cluster basis, then it is entirely open to them to negotiate those arrangements with the local authority or other providers.
- 13:40 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I call the Plaid Cymru spokesperson, Simon Thomas.
- 13:40 **Simon Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you, Presiding Officer. Minister, may I draw your attention to John Beddoes School in Powys? You know that the proposal there is that the school will be amalgamated with another school, as it has been an unsuccessful school to date. If that proposal does go ahead, can you say whether there are any guidelines in place to ensure that the funding for that location, and for the teaching in that location, is protected within the new school proposal?
- 13:40 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Llywydd, this is currently a matter under consideration by Powys County Council. I do not comment on issues that may come back to me for determination.
- 13:40 **Simon Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I was really asking whether you had any guidelines in place, but there we are, you have made your comment. May I turn to another issue on which you definitely have guidelines in place, which is the pupil deprivation grant, as you published those last month? In those guidelines, you set out the aim of closing the attainment gap between pupils who receive free school meals and those who do not. Can you tell us today whether there has been a measurable closing of that gap due to the pupil deprivation grant in its first full year of implementation?
- 13:41 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
No, it is far too early to do that.
- 13:41 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I call the Welsh Liberal Democrat spokesperson, Aled Roberts.
- 13:41 **Aled Roberts** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, the School Funding Wales Regulations (2010) have been in operation now since April 2011. They dealt with the issue of reserves as a part of the process. The most recent figures suggest that some 26% of secondary schools currently have negative funding in place, while the number of schools with more than 10% in reserves has only decreased by some 20 schools. Do you have concerns with regard to the operation of those regulations currently?
- 13:42 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I have given the powers to local authorities and I suggest that they use them.

- 13:42 **Aled Roberts** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Dealing with your own powers, with regard to the pupil deprivation grant, I understand that you are looking to Estyn to report on the effectiveness of the grant itself. I have taken your advice and I have written to schools in my region to see how that grant is being used. Quite a lot of the grant is being used for increasing staffing. If the effectiveness is justified as far as Estyn is concerned, would you anticipate that the grant will continue for the whole of this Assembly term?
- 13:42 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am not going to comment on budgetary matters, as the Member knows.
- 13:42 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Question 4, OAQ(4)0285(ESK), is withdrawn.

## Awtistiaeth

## Autism

- 13:42 **Paul Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*5. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am yr hyn y mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn ei wneud i gynorthwyo plant ag awtistiaeth yng Nghymru? OAQ(4)0270(ESK)*
- 13:42 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Hyd yma, rydym wedi darparu tua £13 miliwn mewn grantiau uniongyrchol i helpu i roi cynllun gweithredu anhwylderau yn y sbectrwm awtistig ar waith. Mae hyn yn ychwanegol at yr £1.7 miliwn sy'n cael ei roi yn setliad refereniw awdurdodau lleol bob blwyddyn i helpu i gyflenwi wasanaethau i blant ag ASD.
- 13:43 **Paul Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Rwyf yn ddiolchgar i'r Gweinidog am yr ateb hwnnw. Fel rhan o broses ymgynghori Llywodraeth Cymru ar anghenion addysgol arbennig, rydych chi wedi sefydlu cynlluniau peilot ar draws Cymru i dreialu'r cynlluniau datblygu unigol newydd, gan gynnwys un yn sir Benfro, wrth gwrs. Un o'r pryderon ynghylch offer gwe y cynlluniau datblygu unigol yw bod y plant yn gallu cael mynediad iddynt, sydd yn codi materion ynghylch sut y maent yn gallu delio â'r wybodaeth honno, yn enwedig os oes ganddynt awtistiaeth. Pa gefnogaeth a ydych chi fel Llywodraeth yn ei ddarparu i blant ag awtistiaeth er mwyn sicrhau eu bod nhw'n gallu delio â'r wybodaeth yn y cynlluniau hyn mewn ffordd briodol?
- 13:44 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I think that it is very difficult to generalise about the specific needs of particular children with autism or Asperger's, or those children who are on the spectrum, because they will have different levels of needs and different levels of ability to use materials such as those that the Member is talking about. May I suggest that, if he has a very specific question, or a specific issue that has arisen in his constituency, he should write to me and I will be very happy to look at that and to follow it through?
- 13:44 **William Powell** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, concerns have recently been raised with me regarding the perception of a diminishing level of support for young people with autism as they move through the education system into further education. In its evidence to the Enterprise and Skills Committee late in the third Assembly, Colegau Cymru highlighted the need for greater support, particularly for those with high-functioning autism, who otherwise would fall above the threshold for certain services. Will you please outline what progress has been made in the intervening time in this particular area, and also your priorities for the fourth Assembly?

- 13:45 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- It is a very good question. This is something that I have decided that I want to talk about further with my officials, because the Member is absolutely right to raise the challenges for young people with ASD as they move through the system. What we have done over recent years is hold a review of support for young people with additional learning needs post 16, which looked at the general issues there. However, a number of Members have made representations to me specifically with regard to young people with autism spectrum disorder issues post 16, and I will consider further, as I said, the provision that is currently in place and what may be needed in the future.
- Pynciau STEM** **STEM Subjects**
- 13:46 **Antoinette Sandbach** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
6. Beth yw blaenoriaethau'r Gweinidog ar gyfer hyrwyddo pynciau STEM yng Ngogledd Cymru? OAQ(4)0276(ESK) 6. What are the Minister's priorities for promoting STEM subjects in North Wales? OAQ(4)0276(ESK)
- 13:46 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- The delivery of quality learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects in north Wales from primary through to higher education remains a priority for this Government. We established the National Science Academy with a primary role to promote and better co-ordinate STEM outreach and engagement across Wales.
- 13:46 **Antoinette Sandbach** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, you will be aware of the long-standing gender imbalance among students in north Wales and elsewhere who go on to study sciences at A-level, in particular physics. Can you confirm what work you will be carrying out to help schools challenge the cultural prejudices that discourage girls from studying sciences? Given the success of the stimulating physics network in England, what consideration are you giving to similar partnerships with schools in north Wales?
- 13:47 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- It is an issue that the Member is right to raise, and it is one that we are concerned about. We are working with partners to look at a number of initiatives to encourage more young women to move into science-based careers. We need to look at that from the earliest years; we need to look at what is happening in primary schools, as yesterday's Estyn report on science teaching suggested. There are a number of issues that we need to take forward. Partly it will be about ensuring that young women are introduced to areas of science in an interesting way, that they see active role models, and that we look at effective co-operation between our higher education institutions and schools. I was very pleased, when I was at the Urdd Eisteddfod just a week or so back, to see a number of young women scientists there demonstrating a whole series of different aspects of science to children on the 'maes'.
- 13:48 **Alun Ffred Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I sbarduno diddordeb mae'n bwysig i ddisgyblion weld bod astudio pynciau yn arwain at hyfforddiant ac at yrfa. A ydych yn derbyn y byddai cynyddu a chodi proffil hyfforddi ac ymchwil yn y maes meddygol yn y gogledd, mewn prifysgolion ac o fewn yr ysbytai, yn gallu annog mwy o ieuencid i astudio pynciau STEM? In order to engender interest it is important that pupils can see that a subject leads to training and a career. Do you accept that raising the profile of training and research in the medical field in north Wales, in both universities and hospitals, could encourage more young people to study STEM subjects?
- 13:48 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- There are a number of areas, and medicine could be one of them. It is important that people understand which qualifications lead to which careers, and that they obtain the right qualifications. One of the issues is that we find that young people have not chosen the right qualifications; that is why we have undertaken a labour market initiative, and I hope that the new Careers Wales service, brought back into the public sector by this Government, by my colleague the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology, will have an active role in promoting this.
- 13:49 **Eluned Parrott** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Professor David Reynolds this week suggested that pupils in Wales were falling behind their peers elsewhere in terms of science, and that action needed to be taken to address this if it was not to have an impact on our Programme for International Student Assessment results in future. Science communication activities such as festivals can give children a really positive experience of engaging with the sciences, and I am very proud to be hosting the Cardiff science festival here this autumn. What help can you give to the Wrexham science festival to make sure that school pupils in north Wales have the same kind of opportunity to engage positively with STEM subjects?

- 13:49 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
The Government is obviously investing in science initiatives in north Wales, including through the support to Techniquest. I am certainly keen that we explore further examples of higher education and schools collaboration in this area, and, as I said, there was some very positive work being demonstrated by Swansea University on the Urdd 'maes' a week or so back.
- Gwobrau Addysg Pearson** **Pearson Teaching Awards**
- 13:50 **Vaughan Gething** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*7. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi manylion am unrhyw ran a chwaraeodd i gydnabod arfer da yn y proffesiwn addysgu a gydnabyddir gan wobrau addysgu Pearson?  
OAQ(4)0286(EDS)* *7. Will the Minister detail any involvement he has had in the recognition of good practice in the teaching profession recognised by the Pearson teaching awards?  
OAQ(4)0286(EDS)*
- 13:50 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
My department sponsors the awards as part of our commitment to raising school standards in Wales and celebrating best practice. I have written to each winner in Wales congratulating them on their achievement.
- 13:50 **Vaughan Gething** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that response, Minister. You will, of course, be aware that three schools in my constituency won awards this year: Gareth Ritter at Willows High School for outstanding use of technology, Mary Lane at Albert Primary School as the teaching assistant of the year in Wales, and, of course, Cogan Nursery School as the teaching team of the year in Wales. I am especially pleased to see Willows school acknowledged, given that it was a band 5 school a couple of years ago and that it serves a largely deprived community within the city of Cardiff. It is great news. However, Minister, can you confirm that you agree with me that excellence in teaching is essential if the greatest numbers of our children are to reach their potential in life?
- 13:50 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I was very pleased to have the opportunity to congratulate some of those teaching teams when I met with my colleague the Member for Cardiff South and Penarth and headteachers from his constituency just a couple of weeks ago. I am particularly pleased, as he is, at the progress that Willows High School has made under its new leadership to improve the number of young people gaining five good GCSEs including English or Welsh and maths. The figure has risen from only 14% in 2011 to 28% in 2012. I look forward to seeing that progress continue. I want to congratulate all those who won awards in his constituency and elsewhere.
- 13:51 **Angela Burns** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I would like to congratulate the schools in Vaughan Gething's constituency and ask you, Minister, to join me in congratulating Sarah Arthur, the deputy head and early years teacher at Tavernspite Primary School in Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire, who won a distinction. To go on to make a wider point, at a time when teaching is under an enormous amount of pressure and a lot of criticism, it is very good to be able to raise to a great level those teachers among us who are very good. I will briefly mention that, only a few years ago, Dyffryn Taf won the Pearson outstanding team award for physical education, and it has produced three outstanding Wales rugby players, so inspiration is the key. It is a very good thing that we have these.
- 13:52 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
There was a danger there that the Member was going to run through every school in her constituency. However, we would certainly want to congratulate the people that she has mentioned. We are very keen—that is why we sponsor the Pearson teaching awards—to praise quality teaching throughout Wales.
- 13:52 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I call Ieuan Wyn Jones—to congratulate more schools in his constituency, I presume. [Laughter.]

13:52 **Ieuan Wyn Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Wel, na, fel mae'n digwydd. Gan fod gwobrau addysgu Pearson yn cydnabod arfer da, ydy'r Gweinidog yn siomedig bod adroddiad Estyn ddoe yn dangos bod diffyg rhannu arfer da yng nghyfnod allweddol 2 a 3 mewn dysgu gwyddoniaeth? Pa gamau bydd y Gweinidog yn cymryd i sicrhau bod arfer da yn cael ei rannu yn y pwnc hwnnw?

Well, no, as it happens. As the Pearson teaching awards recognise good practice, is the Minister disappointed that the Estyn report published yesterday states that there is a lack of sharing of good practice in key stages 2 and 3 in the teaching of science? What steps will the Minister take to ensure that good practice is shared in that subject?

13:53 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I agree with the comments of the Member for Ynys Môn and I had a meeting with my officials to discuss that report just this morning. We are currently undertaking a review, particularly of key stage 2. I do think that we need to look at the issues around science in primary school for a whole host of reasons, some of which Members have already touched on in the Chamber this afternoon. The spreading of best practice is key, and we have seen some very good examples of the spreading of best practice in ICT this week, and there will be more about that in the media later in the week through the work that has been going on in the Digital 2013 conference, which my colleague the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology has participated in. I recommend that all in the Chamber look at the high-quality work that is going on in ICT and the attempts that have been made to spread that around schools in Wales, not least by Casllwchwr Primary School in Swansea.

### Datblygiad Cymdeithasol ac Emosiynol

### Social and Emotional Development

13:54 **Lindsay Whittle** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

*8. Pa fesurau y mae'r Gweinidog yn eu cymryd i asesu pa mor dda y mae ysgolion yng Nghymru yn cyfrannu at ddatblygiad cymdeithasol ac emosiynol disgyblion, yn enwedig y rhai mewn gofal? OAQ(4)0282(ESK)*

*8. What measures is the Minister taking to assess how well schools in Wales are contributing to the social and emotional development of pupils, particularly those who are in care? OAQ(4)0282(ESK)*

13:54 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Learner wellbeing is key to helping all children achieve their educational potential. We have established a counselling service for children and young people, and are developing a new strategy focused specifically on raising the educational attainment of looked-after children.

13:54 **Lindsay Whittle** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Thank you for your answer, Minister. You have almost anticipated my next question. The reason I asked the question in the first place is because I sometimes feel that we can be too focused on literacy and numeracy levels and on exam results as the only criteria for assessing the quality of our schools. It is much more than that, and we owe it to schools to recognise that as well. Minister, could you tell us what training is being given to teachers in our schools to identify and assist those pupils, some of whom may be experiencing mental health issues, for example?

13:55 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I will start by saying that I make no apology for the focus that we have on raising standards of literacy and numeracy. However, the Member is right that it is important that the school experience as a whole places a high priority on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners, and that is one of the key elements in Estyn's common inspection framework.

In respect of support for teachers in this area, as the Member knows, we have invested in the school counselling service, and it is open to schools to use funding from the school effectiveness grant, or, indeed, the pupil deprivation grant, to provide further support.

13:55 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

*Arweinydd yr Wrthblaid / The Leader of the Opposition*

Minister, the transition between key stage 2 and key stage 3 is a very important transition, both emotionally and educationally, in the journey of a pupil through school. This has proven to be a problem area, as identified by educationists. Are you confident that the measures that your Government has in place to support local education authorities are doing all that they can to assist pupils in that important transition from primary to secondary school, or do you believe that more could be done? If the latter, what do you think needs to be done to assist that transition?



13:56	<b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>Over the last decade, the Welsh Government has invested in a number of projects to support the transition from primary to secondary school. We have examples of what I think is very good practice in certain places in Wales that I have seen, where there is great co-operation between feeder primary schools and the secondary schools in the area. That may involve an exchange of teachers, primary-school pupils visiting the secondary school, getting to know their likely secondary school teacher in advance, and many other initiatives. What is important, of course, is that all those involved in education in Wales look at the best practice that there is and learn from it.</p>		
	<b>Safonau</b>	<b>Standards</b>	
13:57	<b>Kenneth Skates</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p><i>9. A wnaiff y Gweinidog amlinellu pa gymorth y mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn ei roi i ysgolion yng Ngogledd Cymru i godi safonau yn yr ystafell ddosbarth? OAQ(4)0278(ESK)</i></p>		
	<p><i>9. Will the Minister outline what support the Welsh Government is providing schools in North Wales to raise standards in the classroom? OAQ(4)0278(ESK)</i></p>		
13:57	<b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>My improving schools plan sets out the wide range of measures that I am introducing to raise standards in education in primary and secondary schools throughout Wales, including north Wales. The literacy and numeracy framework and the establishment of lead practitioner schools are among the many actions being taken forward.</p>		
13:57	<b>Kenneth Skates</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>Two schools in my constituency—Ysgol Min-y-Ddol in Cefn Mawr and Ysgol Penrhyn New Broughton Primary—were put into special measures in 2011. However, since then, and after a series of follow-up inspections by Estyn, progress at the schools has been judged as good, and I am pleased to say that both are now being taken out of special measures. Minister, would you join me in congratulating Wrexham LEA, management and governing bodies on the work that they have done over the past 18 months in taking the two schools out of special measures?</p>		
13:58	<b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>I am certainly pleased that both of those schools are now out of special measures, and I would want to extend my best wishes to all of those, both in the local authority and the schools themselves, who worked hard to turn that situation around.</p>		
13:58	<b>Antoinette Sandbach</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>Minister, I am sure that you share my concern at Estyn's recent findings that, despite Welsh students being well motivated to learn science, they were being let down by the quality of teaching at key stages 2 and 3. Do you accept that these shortcomings need to be addressed as a matter of urgency?</p>		
13:58	<b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>If you read the Estyn report in detail, it also praised examples of good teaching in science across Wales. It is wrong simply to focus on some of the challenges in this area; we should praise best practice where it exists. However, as I said in answer to an earlier question from the Member for Ynys Môn, I met officials this morning to discuss that report and I think that there are a number of initiatives that we need to look at.</p>		
13:59	<b>Llyr Gruffydd</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a>		<a href="#">Senedd.tv</a> <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a>
	<p>Weinidog, yr ydym yn gwybod am yr adolygiad o ddarpariaeth addysg yng Nghymru yr ydych wedi'i gyhoeddi, a goblygiadau posibl hynny i'r consortia addysg yng Nghymru. Rwy'n meddwl bod hynny yn ddo'i hun wedi creu ychydig o ansicrwydd ynglŷn â dyfodol hir dymor rhai o'r gwasanaethau hyn. Pa sicrwydd neu arweiniad ydych wedi'u rhoi i gonsortium gogledd Cymru er mwyn sicrhau bod ysgolion a dosbarthiadau'r gogledd yn gallu parhau i gael y cymorth sydd ei angen arnynt yn ystod y cyfnod nesaf, a fydd, heb amheuaeth, yn reit ansicr.</p>		
	<p>Minister, we know of the review of education provision in Wales that you have announced, and the implications of that for the education consortia in Wales. That in itself has, I think, caused a little uncertainty about the long-term future of some of those services. What assurances or guidance have you given to the north Wales consortium to ensure that schools and classes in north Wales can continue to receive the support that they require during a period that will be, without doubt, quite uncertain.</p>		

- 13:59 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I will be saying more about the review of the delivery of education services in the Chamber shortly. What I would say to the Member is that I am still not satisfied with progress in the north Wales consortium.
- Polisiau Cymraeg i Oedolion** **Welsh for Adults Policies**
- 14:00 **Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*10. Pa gynlluniau sydd gan y Gweinidog i adolygu ei bolisiau Cymraeg i oedolion? OAQ(4)0273(ESK)* *10. What plans does the Minister have to review his Welsh for adults policies? OAQ(4)0273(ESK)*
- 14:00 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
In July 2012, I established a group to review the provision of Welsh for adults in terms of learner attainment, curriculum content, delivery structures and value for money. The group is due to report to me with recommendations by July and I will respond to the report in the autumn.
- 14:00 **Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Diolch am yr ymateb hwnnw, Weinidog. Credaf eich bod yn cymryd eich dyletswydd i hyrwyddo'r defnydd o'r iaith Gymraeg o ddirif. A ydych yn fodlon bod Llywodraeth Cymru yn gwario llai ar addysg Gymraeg i oedolion yn y gymuned nag y mae ar gefnogi Cadwch Gymru'n Daclus? Thank you for that response, Minister. I believe that you take your duty to promote the use of the Welsh language seriously. Are you happy that the Welsh Government spends less on Welsh education for adults in the community than it does on supporting Keep Wales Tidy?
- 14:00 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Well, we spend a significant amount on Welsh for adults, in fact. We spend around £10 million purely through the higher education centres currently. We need to ensure that we get good value for money for that investment. The Welsh for adults group has made good progress. I have had an initial verbal report from it and met it recently. I look forward to receiving its report in due course and to proceeding to address the recommendations that it makes.
- 14:01 **Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that answer as well. I was speaking very specifically about adult education in the community. Of course, you have your coalition of the unconventional, and the First Minister has his 'cynhadledd fawr'—both of which seek to involve local people in developing language policy. 'Y gynhadledd fawr' was originally announced in February, yet there is still no online forum and we are no clearer about who makes up your coalition of the unconventional. Neither of you is delivering, but can you confirm that you actually agree on the way forward?
- 14:01 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
The First Minister and I look forward to 'y gynhadledd fawr'.
- 14:01 **Rhodri Glyn Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I fynd yn ôl at ddysgu Cymraeg i oedolion, mae nifer o oedolion yn cwyno ei bod yn anodd iawn cyrraedd rhai o'r gwersi hyn oherwydd eu bod yn cael eu canoli. A wneuch chi ymrwymo, Weinidog, i wneud popeth o fewn eich gallu i sicrhau bod y gwersi hyn ar gael o fewn pellter rhesymol i bobl er mwyn rhoi pob cyfle i oedolion sydd am ddysgu'r Gymraeg yng Nghymru i gael y cyfle hwnnw? To go back to teaching Welsh to adults, a number of adults complain that it is very difficult to get to some of these lessons because they are being centralised. Will you commit, Minister, to doing everything in your power to ensure that these lessons are available within a reasonable distance so that adults who want to learn Welsh in Wales have every opportunity to do so?
- 14:02 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I certainly will take that question into account in the context of recommendations from the Welsh for adults review. We have to look at the availability of courses and their accessibility.

## Agenda Allgymorth

## Outreach Agenda

- 14:02 **Julie James** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*11. Pa asesiad y mae'r Gweinidog wedi ei gynnal o bwysigrwydd yr agenda Allgymorth i gysylltiadau cymunedol yn y sector Prifysgolion? OAQ(4)0272(ESK)* *11. What assessment has the Minister made of the importance of the Outreach agenda for community relations in the University sector? OAQ(4)0272(ESK)*
- 14:02 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Through widening access initiatives, universities have the potential to transform the communities in which they are situated. I will be making a statement shortly on higher education policy that will restate the Government's commitment to widening access and outline my expectations of the higher education sector in relation to community outreach.
- 14:02 **Julie James** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 In light of the unprecedented attack on access to good advice services that accompanies the UK Government's unrelenting downgrading of services for many of the most vulnerable people in our society, how can we encourage university law schools and their students to get involved in assisting local advice agencies with pro bono work?
- 14:03 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 It is important to note that universities in Wales are not legal practices. However, we have existing examples of good practice of law schools linking to their local citizens advice bureaux to provide pro bono advice as well as providing experience to their students, as can be seen, for example, from the links between the University of South Wales and Rhondda Taff Citizens Advice Bureau. In a similar manner, Cardiff Law School provides pro bono advice to those seeking advice and through its NHS continuing healthcare scheme and its Innocence project, it offers support casework to prisoners. Therefore, I hope that there are good examples, but it is important that we maximise the opportunities. I would be very happy to talk further with my colleague about how we might do that.
- 14:03 **Byron Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Minister, you will be aware of the interesting work commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into the outreach agenda in the university sector, concentrating on support for disadvantaged communities. One of the key conclusions was that Government and the funding councils need to encourage and support universities to play their part in supporting disadvantaged communities. What specific measures are you taking to promote this agenda in Wales?
- 14:04 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 We have taken very specific steps through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales's corporate strategy, in which there have been detailed targets in terms of the recruitment of students from, for example, Communities First areas. We have also, obviously, invested significantly in the Universities Heads of the Valleys Institute as well. As I said, when I bring forward the new higher education policy, this will remain a key objective for us.
- 14:04 **Yr Arglwydd / Lord Elis-Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 A fyddai'r Gweinidog yn cytuno ei bod yn bwysig sicrhau bod llwybrau dysgu cysylltiol i gymunedau rhwng y sector ysgolion, yn enwedig ysgolion uwchradd yn amlwg, y sector addysg bellach a'r sector prifysgol er mwyn sicrhau bod gwell llwybr ar gael i fyfyrwyr aeddfed nag oedd ar gael adeg sefydlu Coleg Harlech? *Would the Minister agree that it is important to ensure that there are linked learning pathways for communities between the schools sector, particularly secondary schools, of course, the further education sector and the university sector in order to ensure that there is an improved pathway for mature students than what was offered at the time of the establishment of Coleg Harlech?*
- 14:05 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 The Member makes an important point. Certainly, I am pleased at the co-operation that we have seen in north Wales between the Bangor University and Coleg Llandrillo in offering those kinds of pathways. We must build on that best practice across Wales.
- Darpariaeth Meithrin Cyfrwng Cymraeg** **Welsh-medium Nursery Provision**
- 14:05 **Jocelyn Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*12. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ddarpariaeth meithrin cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Nwyrain De Cymru? OAQ(4)0283(ESK)* *12. Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh medium nursery provision in South Wales East? OAQ(4)0283(ESK)*

- 14:05 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
In south-east Wales, as in many other parts of Wales, the provision of pre-school playgroups and nurseries is essential to enabling many children to have their first contact with Welsh-medium education. It plays a vital role in helping young children to learn Welsh and to progress to Welsh-medium education.
- 14:06 **Jocelyn Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I note that you said it can play a 'vital role' and you will be aware of the surge in demand for Welsh-medium education, particularly in south-east Wales. Many parents have raised concerns with me about the threat to one of the Welsh-medium nurseries in Newport and they fear that it will not reopen in September due to the lack of a suitable site. What discussions have you had with Newport City Council about this matter and how will you ensure that the upsurge in demand for Welsh-medium education in Newport from nursery right through to secondary will be met?
- 14:06 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am aware of concerns around Cylch Meithrin y Delyn in Newport. I know that work has been going on to try to find suitable accommodation for the 'cylch'. I believe that a meeting was held recently to look at future accommodation possibilities. The Member will be aware from the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Bill that we passed into law this year that there is a duty now on local authorities. The Welsh in education strategic plans have been put on a statutory basis. Obviously, we will be scrutinising local authority plans within that statutory context.
- 14:07 **Mohammad Asghar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Cylch Meithrin y Delyn is the only Welsh-medium nursery in the west of Newport that takes children from the age of 2. From July this year, this nursery will be forced to find alternative premises as its current home at Malpas Court Primary School will no longer be available. Surely, this will put its future at risk. What assistance can the Welsh Government offer to ensure that this nursery can continue to provide Welsh-medium nursery education in the west of Newport?
- 14:07 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
As I said in answer to the Plaid Cymru Member for South Wales East just a moment ago, there have been meetings in Newport in the last week to look at possible alternative accommodation for Cylch Meithrin y Delyn.

## Comisiynydd y Gymraeg

## Welsh Language Commissioner

- 14:08 **Rhodri Glyn Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*13. Pa drafodaethau diweddar y mae'r Gweinidog wedi eu cael gyda Chomisiynydd y Gymraeg? OAQ(4)0275(ESK)*
- 14:08 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Roedd fy nghyfarfodydd diwethaf gyda Chomisiynydd y Gymraeg ar 25 Chwefror a 25 Ebrill.
- 14:08 **Rhodri Glyn Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Diolch yn fawr am roi imi ddyddiadau'r cyfarfodydd. Roeddwn wedi gobeithio y byddech yn taflu ychydig mwy o oleuni ar gynnwys y cyfarfodydd. A gaf i ofyn yn benodol i chi, Weinidog, a ydych wedi bod yn trafod gyda Chomisiynydd y Gymraeg yr angen i sicrhau bod effaith datblygiadau tai enfawr yn ein cymunedau ar yr iaith Gymraeg a natur ddwyieithog cymunedau yng Nghymru yn cael eu hystyried yn llawn yn ystod y broses gynllunio? Os nad ydych wedi cael y drafodaeth honno'n barod, a ydych yn bwriadu ei chael gyda'r comisiynydd er mwyn sicrhau nad yw ein cymunedau yn cael eu gweddnewid dros nos gan y datblygiadau enfawr hyn?
- 13. What recent discussions has the Minister had with the Welsh Language Commissioner? OAQ(4)0275(ESK)*
- My last two meetings with the Welsh Language Commissioner were on 25 February and 25 April.
- Thank you very much for giving me the dates of those meetings. I had hoped that you would shed slightly more light on the content of the meetings. May I ask you specifically, Minister, whether you have had any discussions with the Welsh Language Commissioner about the need to ensure that the impact of large housing developments in our communities on the Welsh language and the bilingual nature of communities in Wales are fully considered during the planning process? If you have not had that discussion already, do you intend to hold that discussion with the commissioner in order to ensure that our communities are not transformed overnight by these huge developments?

14:09	<p><b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>I am aware of the commissioner's views on these issues. I have had conversations with my ministerial colleagues on this matter.</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:09	<p><b>Suzy Davies</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Weinidog, rydym wedi gweld oedi gyda newidiadau i nodyn cyngor technegol 20 ac oedi ar safonau'r iaith Gymraeg. Rwyf yn dechrau meddwl nad ydych wedi rhoi eich calon ar gynnydd, wedi'r cyfan, Weinidog. Pa mor ddiarydd oedd y comisiynydd iaith annibynnol yn ymddangos yn ystod eich trafodaethau diweddar?</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:09	<p><b>Leighton Andrews</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Nid wyf yn bwriadu darparu sylwebaeth ar bob cyfarfod yr wyf i neu fy swyddogion yn cael gyda'r comisiynydd a'i staff.</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
<p><b>Addysg Ôl-16</b></p>		<p><b>Post-16 Education</b></p>
14:09	<p><b>Elin Jones</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p><i>14. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad yn ymwneud â chynnydd tuag at gyflawni targedau Llywodraeth Cymru ym maes addysg ôl-16? OAQ(4)0284(ESK)</i></p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:10	<p><b>Jeff Cuthbert</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Good progress is being made against most of the indicators in the programme for government, with performance exceeding expectations in a number of areas, including post-16 staying-on rates, take-up of the young recruits programme and further education and apprenticeship success rates.</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:10	<p><b>Elin Jones</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Ddirprwy Weinidog, byddwch yn gwybod fod rhai ysgolion uwchradd gwledig yn ei ffeindio'n heriol i gynnis 30 pwnc yn y chweched dosbarth. Pa gyngor rydych yn ei roi i ysgolion uwchradd i gydweithio a rhannu adnoddau er mwyn cynnis y pynciau hyn i fyfyrwyr chweched dosbarth?</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:10	<p><b>Jeff Cuthbert</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>We strongly support and encourage collaboration, and the national planning and funding system, which is currently under serious development, will encourage that further.</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:11	<p><b>Lynne Neagle</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Deputy Minister, I know that you are well aware of my long-standing concerns about post-16 provision in Torfaen, and I know that this is something on which you have been working with the local authority to try to resolve. What assurances can you give that good progress is being made, and that we can soon expect to have an announcement that guarantees good post-16 provision for all students throughout Torfaen?</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>
14:11	<p><b>Jeff Cuthbert</b> <a href="#">Bywgraffiad</a> <a href="#">Biography</a></p> <p>Thank you very much for that. You are quite right—I remain very concerned about the situation, and I know that active and, I believe, constructive dialogue is taking place between local authority officials, Coleg Gwent and my officials on this matter. I understand that the viable options have been narrowed down to just two, or possibly three. However, I will write to you with an update on the current situation.</p>	<p>Senedd.tv <a href="#">Fideo</a> <a href="#">Video</a></p>

- 14:11 **Angela Burns** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Deputy Minister, you will be aware of the tensions of providing post-16 education in rural areas when it comes to giving choice, and the travel distance to access a course. What further thought have you given to what we can do to support the more rural communities, and enabling their children to travel to get to those courses, when budgets in local education authorities are being so constrained and as subsidies end?
- 14:12 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
You are quite right—budgets are constrained. Nevertheless, we continue to give very close consideration to fair accessibility to a wide range of education and training opportunities, whether that is through pathways to apprenticeships, traineeships or shared apprenticeships, which enable employers, particularly in rural areas, to collaborate to provide the full experiences. So, we want to be absolutely sure, especially by working through the careers service, that all possible advice was given on those practical problems. If you have any specific issues in mind, then, if you would care to write to me, I will look into them.
- Cynlluniau Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg**

**Welsh Education Strategic Plans**
- 14:13 **Keith Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*15. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am Gynlluniau Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg? OAQ(4)0279(ESK)*  
*15. Will the Minister provide an update on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans? OAQ(4)0279(ESK)*
- 14:13 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Mae pob awdurdod lleol wedi cyflwyno cynllun strategol Cymraeg mewn addysg i ni o dan y trefniadau gwirfoddol presennol ac wedi cael adborth. Mae swyddogion o'm hadran wedi dechrau trafod yr adborth hwn gyda nhw. Cyn bo hir, byddwn yn ymgynghori ar y rheoliadau drafft o dan adrannau 86 ac 87 o'r Ddeddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013.  
Each local authority presented a revised Welsh education strategic plan to us under the current voluntary arrangements and they have received feedback. Officials from my department have begun discussing this feedback with them. We will shortly consult on draft regulations under sections 86 and 87 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- 14:13 **Keith Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Diolch, Weinidog. Croesawaf yn gryf gyflwyno'r cynlluniau gan Lywodraeth Llafur Cymru, nid dim ond i sicrhau cynllunio ond hefyd i hybu poblogrwydd addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg. Yr ifanc yw ein dyfodol, wedi'r cyfan. Yn fy etholaeth, Llanelli, rwyf newydd gwrrd â rhieni sy'n ceisio cael addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg i'w plant, ond maent yn apelio am ysgol o'u dewis, gan fod problem oherwydd system ardal dalgylch. Mae'r ysgol o'u dewis tu fas i'r ardal dalgylch, ond yn y gorffennol cafodd plant o'u hysgol gynradd i gyd eu derbyn. Yn awr, mae'r ysgol uwchradd wedi cyrraedd capasiti llawn. Hysbyswyd y rhieni yn hwyr iawn yn y flwyddyn bod yn rhaid i'w plant fynd i'r ysgol dalgylch, ac maent yn awr yn apelio yn erbyn y penderfyniad. Er ei bod yn wych bod mwy o alw am addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg, a gytunwch fod angen i awdurdodau roi gwybod i rieni mor gynnar ym mlwyddyn olaf eu plant yn yr ysgol gynradd ag sy'n bosibl, ac nid gadael y penderfyniad hyd ddiwedd tymor yr haf?  
Thank you, Minister. I warmly welcome the introduction of these plans by the Welsh Labour Government, not only to ensure planning but also to encourage the popularity of Welsh-medium education. The young are our future, after all. In my constituency, Llanelli, I have just met with parents who are trying to access Welsh-medium education for their children, but they are appealing for a school of their choice, given that there is a problem because of the catchment area system. The school is outwith the catchment area, but in the past children from their primary school have all been accepted. Now, the secondary school has reached full capacity. The parents were informed very late in the year that their children would have to go to the catchment school, and they are now appealing against that decision. Although it is excellent that there is more demand for Welsh-medium education, do you agree that there is a need for local authorities to inform parents as soon as possible in the last year of primary school, and not to leave the decision until the end of the summer term?
- 14:14 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am aware of the issue that my colleague the Member for Llanelli raises, because some of the parents have written to me. My officials have responded to them in writing. Parents refused places will be able to appeal to an independent panel. However, I would agree with my colleague that local authorities should inform parents of these decisions as early as possible.
- 14:15 **Angela Burns** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, what discussions have you or your officials had with further education institutions that are likely to be affected by local authority plans to deliver the Welsh in education strategy?

14:15 **Leighton Andrews** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
When we are looking at Welsh in education strategic plans, we would expect local authorities to provide an approach that is comprehensive and looks at all aspects of learning in their areas.

## Cwestiynau i Weinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth

## Questions to the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport Cyllideb Trafnidiaeth

### Transport Budget

14:15 **Peter Black** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*1. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am sut y mae'n defnyddio ei chyllideb drafnidiaeth i gynorthwyo busnesau? OAQ(4)0277(EST)* *1. Will the Minister make a statement as to how she is using her transport budget to support business? OAQ(4)0277(EST)*

14:15 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth / The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport*  
Transport investment has an important role to play in enhancing the economic competitiveness of business in Wales by improving infrastructure. I am also working to ensure that Welsh companies are able to compete for work and to secure local employment and training opportunities in all our projects.

14:16 **Peter Black** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that answer, Minister. Thank you for the meeting that you had with me and Julie James with businesses on the Swansea west business park. As you know, issues were raised there regarding access to that particular industrial estate. Can you confirm that, if a proper bid is put forward, there is a fund to which the local council is able to bid to try to improve that situation?

14:16 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am currently looking at the arrangements with regard to how local authorities prioritise what bids they wish to make in terms of transport. I may be putting a more economic skew on any future bids in terms of the development of businesses.

14:16 **Vaughan Gething** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, you will be aware that effective transport links are essential to recruitment, retention and the creation of business, which is why so many people in the public and private sectors have bought into the idea of a south Wales metro. Can you provide an update on when you expect to have a more detailed feasibility study that you can publish of how a metro could be funded and implemented? In particular, how would you expect that land around new stations on a metro system could be used?

14:17 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am hopeful that, in September, I will have a report from Mark Barry, looking at all the issues around the metro in terms of the economic development potential. If the metro does open up land, there are opportunities there for enhanced jobs et cetera. So, I very much hope that, when we return in the autumn, I will be able to update Members on any proposals that I may be taking forward on it.

14:17 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I call the opposition spokesperson, Byron Davies.

14:17 **Byron Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, I have raised in the Chamber with you before the disconnect between the current enterprise zones strategy and the national transport plan. You have always answered that you are addressing the issue, but both plans now fall within your remit. Can you give a timescale for a new or reviewed transport plan?

- 14:17 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes. I am looking at revising the transport plan before the summer recess and I will update Members appropriately.
- 14:17 **Byron Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Would you concede that, without the significant investment in infrastructure that your national transport plan represents, the enterprise zones strategy looks very much isolated and a policy that you do not seem too committed to?
- 14:18 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
At the end of the day, the enterprise zones strategy is working very well, as was the previous national transport plan. The only thing I have to say on the issue of investment is: please speak to your colleagues up the road about not cutting any more budgets.
- 14:18 **Yr Arglwydd / Lord Elis-Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
A all y Gweinidog roi sicrwydd y bydd hi'n cymryd golwg llawn dychymyg at y dyfodol ynglŷn â phosibiliadau defnydd pellach o gysylltiadau rheilffyrdd ar gyfer busnes o safbwynt teithio i waith ac o safbwynt cario nwyddau, gan gynnwys rheilffyrdd gwledig megis rheilffyrdd y Cambrian a rheilffordd Blaenau Ffestiniog i Llandudno, sef rheilffordd sy'n agos iawn at fy nghalon fel defnyddiwr cyson yn rhad ac am ddim?  
Can the Minister give us an assurance that she will take an imaginative view of the future in terms of the potential to make further use of rail connections for business in the contexts of commuting and freight, and that this will include rural railways such as the Cambrian line and the Blaenau Ffestiniog to Llandudno line, the latter being a railway that is very close to my heart as a regular user, free of charge of course?
- 14:19 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
In terms of rail, I concur with your comments. Of course, any further work we can do in the rail area is dependent on financial settlements. I am refocusing some of our work on freight so that we can ensure that we have the maximum benefit in terms of not only transportation, but the environment.
- 14:19 **Kenneth Skates** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, the concept of green corridors in the development of attractive, sustainable and accessible transport routes into our towns and cities is one that has been explored by urban planners for some time. I am sure that we can all identify roads into our towns and villages that would be improved with better tree cover. Minister, will you look at the concept of green corridors and explore what can be done to improve the entry points into our towns and cities?
- 14:19 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes. The north-east Wales integrated transport taskforce is already looking at issues in this area, and I have asked officials to ensure that they look at the concept of green corridors in that regard. More broadly, I agree that it is important that routes into our towns and cities are well designed and promote good access. I have already asked my officials to look at how we can enhance the way that the transport estate supports trees and wildlife.

## Afon Menai

## Menai Strait

- 14:20 **Ieuan Wyn Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*2. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gynlluniau i adeiladu croesiad newydd ar draws afon Menai yn agos at Bont Britannia? OAQ(4)0265(EST)*  
*2. Will the Minister make a statement on plans to build a new crossing over the Menai Strait, close to the Britannia Bridge? OAQ(4)0265(EST)*
- 14:20 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
In line with the current prioritised national transport plan, my officials are investigating options to increase capacity on the A55 across the Menai strait, particularly capacity for walkers and cyclists.



- 14:20 **Ieuan Wyn Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Yr hyn a fyddai'n ddefnyddiol fyddai medru rhoi rhyw fath o amserlen ar gyfer y gwaith. Gan fod rhywun yn sylweddoli'r pwysau cynyddol sydd ar arian cyfalaf y Llywodraeth, a yw hi'n fodlon, yn ogystal â rhoi amserlen ar gyfer pont newydd, ystyried camau tymor byr y gellid eu cymryd i leddfu'r drafnidiaeth drom, yn arbennig yn gynnar yn y bore ac ar ddiwedd y prynhawn?
- What would be useful would be to have some kind of timetable for the work. One realises the increasing pressure on the Government's capital funds, so, in addition to giving a timetable for a new crossing, is she willing to consider any short-term steps that could be taken to alleviate the heavy traffic early in the morning and towards the end of the afternoon?
- 14:21 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I can give you a positive response to the latter part of your question. We have to look at some short-term measures. My officials are currently looking at all short-term measures across Wales in terms of pinchpoints to bring forward work in some of these areas. That is key. There are wider issues here, because there are issues about the grid et cetera with regard to Wylfa, and we are talking to our colleagues in the Sustainable Futures Directorate to gain an understanding of them. As soon as I have any further news, I will report it to Plenary.
- 14:21 **Mark Isherwood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Related to that, I understand that it is six years since a consultation commissioned by the Welsh Government came up with eight options, two of which involved a new, third bridge. It is reported that the Welsh Government will appoint consultants later this year to review the proposals. A bridge, however, may be just one of the options that would have to be compared in more detail with others. When, at least, do you expect a preferred option to be decided upon?
- 14:22 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I am very much taken with your point that it could be one of the options. We have to look at this strategically and at the needs and requirements up there. I have asked officials to see whether we can make this work go a little faster in terms of how we can look at things, and I will drop you a line when I get a clearer timetable.
- Diwydiant Ynni** **Energy Industry**
- 14:22 **Joyce Watson** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- 3. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am werth y diwydiant ynni i economi Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru? OAQ(4)0281(EST)*
- 3. Will the Minister make a statement on the value of the energy industry to the Mid and West Wales economy? OAQ(4)0281(EST)*
- 14:22 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- The energy and environment industry is a key sector in generating jobs and growth in Mid and West Wales. The sector generates approximately £6.2 billion to the economy of Wales.
- 14:22 **Joyce Watson** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Thank you for that answer, Minister. Have you had any discussions with your UK and Irish counterparts about plans to import wind power from Ireland to the national grid via cables under the Irish sea to north and west Wales?
- 14:23 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Welsh Government officials are engaged in discussions with National Grid to obtain information about the project and assess its implications for Wales.
- 14:23 **Russell George** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, I know that you are interested in small-scale hydro schemes and have made a commitment to do what you can to develop the commercial aspect of the industry in Wales. What discussions have you had with the Minister for Natural Resources and Food and with Natural Resources Wales about increasing the development of hydro schemes on forestry land managed by NRW so that that land can bring increased economic benefits to the rural economy beyond commercial timber?
- 14:23 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- The Minister and I are at one about hydroelectric schemes and so, I can see, is the Minister for planning about the issues around planning for hydroelectric. Therefore, I can assure you that all these options will be looked at.

- 14:23 **Rhodri Glyn Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Weinidog, diolch am y wybodaeth ynglŷn â'r budd economaidd sy'n dod i Gymru o'r diwydiant ynni adnewyddadwy. Mae hynny'n bwysig, ond mae'n rhaid gweld y cyfan o fewn y cyd-destun ehangach a phwysicach o'n hamgylchedd a'i barhad. A ydych yn cytuno ein bod wedi methu, mewn gwirionedd, â sicrhau bod diwydiannau o Gymru wedi llwyddo yn y maes hwn, ond bod cyfle mewn rhai o'r meysydd eraill megis hydro, y soniwyd amdano yn awr, a 'solar', i sicrhau bod cwmnïau o Gymru yn manteisio fel rhan o'r diwydiant ynni adnewyddadwy hwn a'n bod ni i gyd yn gwneud ein cyfraniad er mwyn sicrhau dyfodol ein hamgylchedd a bywyd dynol o'i fewn?
- Minister, thank you for the information about the economic benefit that accrues to Wales from the renewable energy industry. That is important, but we have to look at this within the broader and more important context of our environment and its survival. Would you agree that we have in fact failed to ensure that industries from Wales have succeeded in this field, and that there is an opportunity in other fields such as hydro, as we have just heard, and solar, to ensure that Welsh companies take advantage of the renewable energy industry and that we all make our contribution in order to secure the future of our environment and human life within it?
- 14:24 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Yes, the future of our environment and of energy security for us as a nation are important. There is room for more work in terms of assisting firms and allowing them to create jobs as part of the energy sector, and that work is being undertaken by my panel.
- Creu Swyddi** **Job Creation**
- 14:25 **Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- 4. Pa gamau y mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn eu cymryd i helpu i greu swyddi ym Mrycheiniog a Sir Faesyfed? OAQ(4)0282(EST)*
- 4. What steps is the Welsh Government taking to help create jobs in Brecon and Radnorshire? OAQ(4)0282(EST)*
- 14:25 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Our plans for encouraging job creation in Wales are set out in the programme for government.
- 14:25 **Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, local growth zones were your Government's answer to economic development in rural areas. Could you outline what outcomes and outputs there have been for the significant time and effort that has gone into the local growth zone work in Powys?
- 14:25 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- In the very real terms, we must recognise that, in terms of the Powys local growth zone, we took people with us in it, and we had a lot of volunteers in terms of the work that was being undertaken. Obviously, one of the priorities was next generation broadband in relation to looking at that zone. There were recommendations in the original report that went to Powys County Council some time ago, and there is the pilot business project in Llandrindod Wells with Justin Baird-Murray, for which we have support via the Welsh Government. I would be delighted, if the Member wished and if Plenary was agreeable, to give a full update before we go into recess on local growth zones and some of the lessons that we have learned.
- 14:26 **Rebecca Evans** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I recently visited Beacons Creative Wales in Brecon. It is a social enterprise providing employment and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities. What steps is the Welsh Government taking to promote and develop such social enterprises in Brecon and Radnorshire and beyond?
- 14:26 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Promoting and developing social enterprise is a key commitment of the Welsh Government. You will be aware, of course, that Professor Andrew Davies is looking at alternative means of co-operatives and mutuals, and that work is being taken forward.

- 14:26 **Nick Ramsay** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I think that we would all agree that you cannot have enterprise zones everywhere as that would defeat the object. In mid Wales, local growth zones are a potentially valuable alternative. However, it strikes me that, just across the border from Brecon and Radnorshire, in Herefordshire and Shropshire, there are enterprise zones not too far away from Wales. What are you doing to ensure that the rural economy in mid Wales is able to compete on an even footing with those areas just across the border? We would not want to see job opportunities slip in the way across what Gerry Holtham called the extremely porous border of England and Wales
- 14:27 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes, it is an extremely porous border. I think that opportunities for bringing jobs and work into Wales will come as a result of the packages we have available, whether in an enterprise zone or not. The important thing is that we put the levers in place within the local economy, with transport infrastructure and other aspects, in order to ensure that we get the jobs into Wales.
- 14:27 **Simon Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, the Heart of Wales line is an essential link for jobs and communities throughout Brecon and Radnorshire and throughout the mid Wales area. It is also essential for building tourism in that area. Would you consider meeting with the Heart of Wales line group and relevant Assembly Members to discuss the plans and ideas that they have for expanding and enhancing that railway line? It might even make a nice trip on the train itself.
- 14:28 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes. Thank you very much; I would be delighted to take up the offer, and my officials will make the appropriate arrangements for a meeting. Obviously, if they could bring cheque books to help with any of the capital costs, that would also be very welcome indeed. [Laughter.]

## Rhaglen Ardal Fenter

## Enterprise Zone Programme

- 14:28 **Eluned Parrott** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*5. A wnaiffy Gweinidog ddatganiad am y cynnydd a wnaed gan Lywodraeth Cymru o ran creu swyddi drwy ei rhaglen ardal fenter? OAQ(4)0271 (EST)*
- 5. Will the Minister make a statement on the progress made by the Welsh Government regarding job creation through its enterprise zone programme? OAQ(4)0271 (EST)*
- 14:28 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Enterprise zones are enhancing opportunities for economic growth and job creation by acting as an enabler for the key sectors.
- 14:28 **Eluned Parrott** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you, Minister. According to the programme for government update yesterday, enterprise zones are now fully established. However, in terms of the central Cardiff enterprise zone not a brick has been laid on the new investment to date. When will you be in a position to demonstrate to us that the first new permanent private sector job has been created as a direct result of that enterprise zone?
- 14:28 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
In terms of jobs, a lot of interest has been expressed. There are jobs coming in and out continually in terms of discussions. In the long term, I will probably look at some information that I would want to give out towards the end of the year, with the publication of some indicators, which might be helpful to Members in this particular regard.
- 14:29 **Eluned Parrott** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you, Minister. We will look forward to that with great interest because it has been 18 months already and that will bring us up to two years. Clearly, the enterprise zones are developing at different speeds. The First Minister was very keen to talk to me about north Wales developments yesterday when I asked about Cardiff. It is difficult for us, as Members, to understand what is happening in those enterprise zones. Will you ask the enterprise zone chairs to each submit an annual report to this Assembly so that we can properly scrutinise the work that they are doing on behalf of Wales?

- 14:29 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- The enterprise zone chairs and their boards report to me. They are organisations that report to me when I look, perhaps, at the long-term structure for them. I might then give consideration at that stage. However, this obsession about what enterprise zones are doing is not particularly helpful. We should be more supportive of the work that they do.
- It is particularly interesting to note—because I am always being asked about the situation across our border—that the Leeds city region downgraded the jobs forecast for its enterprise zone from 700 by 2015 to 200. Therefore, you can see how useful some of this information is.
- 14:30 **Mike Hedges** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- As the person who represents the largest enterprise zone in Britain, which is also known as an out-of-town shopping area, does the Minister agree with me that it is important for her to take her time over the creation of enterprise zones, rather than rushing into it, as happened last time, when they failed to achieve anywhere near what they were meant to achieve? Will the Minister also look into ensuring that they do not just relocate jobs—in some cases, by just a few hundred yards—but that they actually bring new jobs into the area?
- 14:30 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- We are very clear that our enterprise zones should promote additionality, not displacement. The zones are about building on cluster developments, and supporting additionality. In terms of specific policy levers, for example, business rates, we will not be funding a business to serve only a local market—it has to be a wider market.
- 14:31 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, you know that many areas are not designated as enterprise zones but that they do require support. Some of those are not rural areas either, so may fall through the gaps, as it were, in terms of some of your economic strategies. What support will you give to coastal communities, in particular, which have no current economic focus, and what support might you make available to businesses in those areas to reduce business rates, perhaps, or give other forms of support?
- 14:31 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Order. Please bear in mind, Minister, that this question is about enterprise zones, and not about places that are outwith enterprise zones.
- 14:31 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Darren Millar makes a good point. We cannot put enterprise zones anywhere. However, I indicated in my original statement on enterprise zones that those areas that had applied for an enterprise zone unsuccessfully, I would assist, and I have done so in a few areas already. For those outside those areas, there are the general things that we are able to do to support business. In terms of coastal towns, the tourism policy is also very important.
- 14:32 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I call on the Plaid Cymru spokesperson, Alun Ffred Jones.
- 14:32 **Alun Ffred Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Nid oes ffigurau ar gael am y swyddi a grëwyd o fewn y parthau menter. Nid oes ffigurau creu swyddi ar gael ychwaith am y rhaglenni buddsoddi eraill o fewn eich adran chi. A oes unrhyw reswm am hynny? Rwy'n cyfeirio at adroddiad y Llywodraeth a gyhoeddwyd ddoe.</p> | <p>There are no job creation figures available for the enterprise zones, and there are no job creation figures available for your department's other investment programmes either. Is there a reason for that? I refer to the report issued by your Government yesterday.</p> |
|--|---|
- 14:32 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- There is no reason. However, in terms of the Wales economic growth fund—and as asked by Members—I will publish details; I will be able to put some flesh on the bone, which might be helpful.
- 14:32 **Alun Ffred Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Os y deallais yr ateb yn iawn, sut y gallwch chi—a ninnau—fesur llwyddiant nid yn unig y parthau menter, ond hefyd y rhaglenni eraill, heb ffigurau creu swyddi perthnasol, a hynny o flwyddyn i flwyddyn?</p> | <p>If I understood the answer correctly, how can you—and we—measure the success of not only the enterprise zones, but also the other programmes, without the relevant job creation figures on a year-to-year basis?</p> |
|---|---|

- 14:33 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Job creation is very important, as is job retention. You do not necessarily see the benefits that some of the schemes will have in terms of job retention. Therefore, it is not just a simple argument, and my saying, 'There is 100 here, and 200 here'; it is a far more substantial piece of work, which will have to take other criteria into account.
- Gwyddoniaeth i Gymru** **Science for Wales**
- 14:33 **Christine Chapman** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*6. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am gynnydd tuag at gyflawni'r nodau a nodir yn Gwyddoniaeth i Gymru? OAQ(4)0270(EST)* *6. Will the Minister provide an update on progress towards achieving the aims set out in Science for Wales? OAQ(4)0270(EST)*
- 14:33 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I wrote to Assembly Members last week informing them that I had posted information on our progress with the science for Wales agenda on the Welsh Government website.
- 14:33 **Christine Chapman** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
A key action in science for Wales is to increase the number of girls and women who study and pursue careers in science. To achieve these goals, the Institute of Physics has called for a cultural change in how we discuss and think about science and scientific issues. Minister, do you join with me in welcoming the decision by a well-known high street retailer to change its designation of science toys as 'boys' toys'? Furthermore, how else can the Welsh Government bring about a transformation in attitudes, so that girls are not discouraged from taking an interest in science?
- 14:34 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am certainly pleased with that retailer's decision. The Government has a major role to play, as do others in society. For example, my colleague Leighton Andrews has supported the two-year Get on with Science pilot scheme, to develop a more co-ordinated approach to delivering science in schools. In my own department, we are also supporting projects around the STEM subjects. However, it is also important to have role models out there that girls can identify with in those fields. There is a lot of work to do in that area, particularly in the further and higher education sectors. We also have the STEM ambassadors programme, which I also believe will help.
- 14:34 **Antoinette Sandbach** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, part of the Welsh Government's vision in the science for Wales strategy is to create an environment for learners to want to study science, perform well internationally at school level and progress in science-related careers. Do you accept that, without improvements in the forthcoming Programme for International Student Assessment test results this December, Wales will be fighting an uphill battle to attract investment in science? What additional work do you plan to carry out with institutions and industry if there is insufficient improvement on this key international benchmark?
- 14:35 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Interestingly enough, when I meet industry representatives, they are very pleased with the science policy that we have and the work that we are putting in, and when I meet people, particularly in those areas that require a lot of science input, there are an awful lot of businesses in Wales that have started here and are growing here. So, I do not quite see where you are coming from on this.
- 14:35 **Llyr Gruffydd** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yn dilyn y cytundeb diweddar rhwng Llywodraeth Cymru a Phlaid Cymru, bydd £10 miliwn yn cael ei wario ar ddatblygu parc gwyddoniaeth yn y gogledd-orllewin, a bydd hwnnw, rwy'n siŵr, yn cyfrannu'n sylweddol at ddatblygu canolfan o arbenigedd ac arloesedd mewn ymchwil a datblygu yno. Ond, mae angen hefyd i Lywodraeth Cymru sicrhau bod pobl ifanc o'r ardal yn manteisio ar y cyfleoedd y bydd y parc yn eu cynnig. Felly, pa gynlluniau sydd gennych chi fel Llywodraeth i hyrwyddo'r cyfleoedd hyn i bobl ifanc ar draws y gogledd-orllewin?  
Following the recent agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, £10 million will be spent on developing a science park in north-west Wales, which will, I am sure, contribute significantly to the creation of a research and development centre of excellence there. However, the Welsh Government also needs to ensure that young people in that area take advantage of the opportunities that the park will offer. Therefore, what plans do you have as a Government to promote these opportunities for young people across north-west Wales?

14:36 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I think that we will get the building in place first and let them get on with the project, to be frank with you, but it is a very exciting development.

14:36 **Julie Morgan** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Will the Minister join me in congratulating Professor Malcolm Mason, the head of Cardiff University's Institute of Cancer and Genetics and the director of the Wales Cancer Bank, on the major scientific award that he received in London last week—the William Farr Medal—for his pioneering research into the way prostate cancer is treated? Also, does she agree that this is a sign of the groundbreaking scientific research that is being done in Wales?

14:37 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that lovely supplementary question, because it gives me the opportunity to offer my congratulations—and I am sure that the Assembly will join me in that—on something that indicates the high quality of work that we have in the sciences in Wales. We must never underestimate that. If we talk it down, we do so our peril.

## Band Eang

## Broadband

14:37 **Gwyn R. Price** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*7. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am fynediad i fand eang i fusnesau yn Islwyn? OAQ(4)0274(EST)* *7. Will the Minister make a statement on access to broadband for businesses in Islwyn? OAQ(4)0274(EST)*

14:37 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*Y Dirprwy Weinidog Sgiliau a Thechnoleg / The Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology*  
Islwyn has benefitted from investment in fibre broadband through BT as a part of its commercial roll-out plans. The Superfast Cymru programme seeks to build upon commercial roll-out to bring the benefits of fibre broadband to those premises outside of the planned commercial footprint in Wales by 2016.

14:37 **Gwyn R. Price** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that answer. Deputy Minister, businesses in Islwyn need reliable, fast broadband connections, and they are often contacted by companies offering faster speeds. How do we keep these companies true to their word and ensure that the speeds that they promise are the speeds that they deliver?

14:38 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that supplementary question. This is a matter for Ofcom, and any examples of this practice should be brought to its attention. However, I am more than happy to assist in that matter if you would let me have the details.

14:38 **Mohammad Asghar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Deputy Minister, following on from the question from my friend here, the Superfast Cymru programme is vital to the future economic growth of Valleys communities in Islwyn and elsewhere. Fibre broadband roll-out will commence this year in 14 local authorities, but it will not be under way in Islwyn until 2014-15. Will the Deputy Minister provide an assurance that the Superfast Cymru programme is on schedule to deliver high-speed fibre broadband to homes and businesses in Islwyn by 2016?

14:38 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
My understanding is that the roll-out in the Caerphilly borough, which includes Islwyn, is for this financial year. However, in light of your question, I will check those facts and I will write to you. Certainly, however, the intention is that BT will provide, through Superfast Cymru, the roll-out of coverage of 96% of Wales by 2016.

## Manteision Economaidd

## Economic Benefits

- 14:39 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*8. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am ei hasesiad o'r manteision economaidd posibl i Gymru yn sgil enwau parth lefel uchaf .cymru a .wales? OAQ(4)0264(EST)* *8. Will the Minister make a statement on her assessment of the potential economic benefits to Wales of .cymru and .wales top level domain names? OAQ(4)0264(EST)*
- 14:39 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 It has been very pleasing to see the support that we have had on this, and we will continue to work with Nominet to ensure that the Welsh economy gains the maximum benefit from the .wales and .cymru domain names.
- 14:39 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Thank you for that response, Minister. Naturally, there is an important issue that still needs to be addressed, which is the issue of reserved domain names for the Welsh public sector—organisations such as Visit Wales, the NHS et cetera. Could you update the Assembly today on what progress has been made in the development of a reserved domain name list?
- 14:40 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 I have had no update myself on what progress has been made in this particular area. I will certainly get one from my officials and write to Members accordingly.
- 14:40 **Elin Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Weinidog, rwy'n edrych ymlaen at y diwrnod pan fydd fy nghyfeiriad e-bost yn newid i elin.jones@cynulliad.cymru, neu rywbeth tebyg. A fyddwch yn edrych yn ofalus—a, gobeithio, yn gynnes—ar y posibilrwydd o ddefnyddio .cymru a .wales fel Llywodraeth Cymru, pan ddaw'r opsiwn hwnnw i fodolaeth? *Minister, I look forward to the day when my e-mail address will change to something like elin.jones@cynulliad.cymru, or something similar. Will you look carefully—and, hopefully, positively—at the possibility of the Welsh Government using .cymru and .wales when that option is available?*
- 14:40 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Now that you have raised that matter with me, I will certainly look at it and discuss it with my colleagues.
- Ardaloedd Menter** **Enterprise Zones**
- 14:40 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*9. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am ardaloedd menter yng Nghanol De Cymru? OAQ(4)0272(EST)* *9. Will the Minister provide an update on enterprise zones in South Wales Central? OAQ(4)0272(EST)*
- I apologise for asking this question, Minister.
- 14:40 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 I am absolutely delighted. I provided an update on key developments and activity within each enterprise zone in my statement to Plenary on 23 April.
- 14:41 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Thank you, Minister, for your statement. I appreciate that enterprise zones are not a fixation for me—they are an important part of my electoral region, and I am grateful that the Government has nominated two areas in that region, St Athan and Cardiff, to be enterprise zones. I would be even more grateful if, after numerous questions put to the First Minister yesterday—and now I will try again with you—you could outline how many jobs have been created in the Cardiff enterprise zone area, and what investment has gone into that area in the 18 months since it was established. In England, for example, I can find out that—
- 14:41 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
 Order. You have already had three questions there. Try to bring it to a conclusion.

- 14:41 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Okay; if that is the way that you want to do it.
- 14:41 **Y Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
There are three questions for you there, Minister.
- 14:41 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
There were only two questions.
- 14:41 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Obviously, there is evidence of the rising attractiveness of the Cardiff enterprise zone, and Cardiff as a location of choice. We had the recent announcement of the 450 jobs at Serco. We are also looking at a number of other job creation projects, and we have at least 10 job creation enquiries in the pipeline. There is interest both in the city centre and the enterprise zone, and, as you are aware, I have taken the first step in terms of property with the purchase of office space within the enterprise zone, until we are able to get on site with Callaghan Square.
- 14:42 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*Arweinydd Plaid Cymru / The Leader of Plaid Cymru*  
Minister, a significant part of Plaid Cymru's vision for economic growth is to build resilience into local economies, and to generate growth, particularly in deprived areas like the central Valleys. One key determinant in generating wealth is the commuting rate. What assessment have you made of the impact of the South Wales Central enterprise zones on the outward commuting rate in the central Valleys?
- 14:42 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Commuting is a big issue—the public transport infrastructure to allow people to commute in, if you can only attract business to Cardiff. It is also important with the enterprise zone that you do not concentrate just on attracting business into Cardiff, and if there is no suitable site, we move something further out. We are doing further work in this area on commuting, which I will be pleased to share with Members.
- 14:43 **Eluned Parrott** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am glad to hear you say that, Minister, because I understand that Cardiff Bus plans to axe the X91 service to Cardiff Airport and the St Athan enterprise zone on Sundays from 21 July—just in time for the summer holidays. I am wondering, with a Sunday rail service just once every two hours, what impact this will have on the development of the weekend break and other tourism markets for Cardiff Airport this summer and in the future.
- 14:43 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am currently looking at the operations of all bus operators that enjoy an element of subsidy from us. I am looking for greater transparency around the way that they run their routes—whether they are profitable, whether they would be without help et cetera. That transparency will allow us to make other decisions around the discussions with the companies. I, like you, am concerned; it is important that we run bus routes for the public good in some areas, because at the end of the day, nobody would do them without subsidy. We need them for people to get into employment, and for the tourism potential. I will certainly be taking up the issues that you have raised in the context of the wider discussion.

## Gwasanaethau Bysiau

## Bus Services

- 14:44 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*10. A wnaiff y Gweinidog roi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf am reoleiddio gwasanaethau bysiau yng Nghymru? OAQ(4)0268(EST)*
- 14:44 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*10. Will the Minister provide an update on the regulation of bus services in Wales? OAQ(4)0268(EST)*  
This matter is being considered as part of the commission on devolution in Wales.



- 14:44 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Thank you for that answer, Minister. As I have said before in this Chamber, it is getting increasingly difficult to run effective and efficient bus services, especially in our rural areas, given that so many different bus companies or local councils are deciding to cut those services on Sundays and bank holidays, as has already been exemplified today. This makes people who are currently isolated even more isolated. With the clause written into bus regulations—which is supposed to be anti-monopolist—that bars bus routes being run at a loss, we end up with fewer and fewer services. Would it be better if we had powers over regulation in Wales, so that we could alleviate some of those problems? What efforts are you personally putting in to seek the devolution of the regulation of bus services?
- 14:45 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- We all know where we are in terms of the evidence to Silk and where we are going forward with these issues. However, it is important that I look at what measures I can deal with now and what pressure I can bring to bear on organisations that run these services to realise that they have a responsibility to the citizens of Wales to get them to work, to get them to leisure and to allow them to go out and about. It is particularly important that people in rural communities and other places should not feel absolutely isolated by the way that the services are. We need to encourage more, not fewer, people onto buses. Personally, when I think of young people, I have grave reservations about what is going on in some areas of Wales.
- 14:45 **Byron Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, leading on from that, we are all aware that changes are going on within the public transport network at the moment, particularly with bus operators. There is a lot of unease and very little information across the industry currently. I would suggest that there is confusion among those operators that I have spoken to. Can you outline what specific measures you have taken to inform the industry of what exactly it can expect in terms of grants, regulation and direction from the Welsh Government?
- 14:46 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I am surprised to hear that because I have started to meet operators and I do not think that they are under any illusions about what they are expected to deliver at all. They might require reinforcement through other mechanisms, but I can assure you that they are not under any illusions whatsoever about what they are expected to do.
- 14:46 **Aled Roberts** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Minister, may I ask whether you have had any discussions with local authorities, some of which are taking decisions with regard to discretionary bus services—post-16 school transport, et cetera—that place a burden on commercial services during commuting times? It would appear, given the financial constraints on local authorities, that those decisions are likely to increase in the near future.
- 14:47 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- I have not had direct discussions with local authorities on the issues that you have raised, but I am aware of them. I am particularly concerned about transport issues for young people and the ability to commute to work. Those are issues that will be discussed in the next few months. If Members have any information or concerns, particularly about specifics, I would be grateful to receive them before I undertake some of those meetings.

## Ffordd Osgoi Bontnewydd a Chaernarfon

## Bontnewydd and Caernarfon Bypass

- 14:47 **Alun Ffred Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- 11. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am gynllun ffordd osgoi Bontnewydd a Chaernarfon? OAQ(4)0266(EST)*
- 11. Will the Minister make a statement on the plans for the Bontnewydd-Caernarfon bypass? OAQ(4)0266(EST)*
- 14:47 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)
- Following my recent review of the options for the scheme, I announced the yellow option as the most desirable. The next stage will be to appoint an employer's agent and contractor to take the scheme forward to the publication of draft orders.

14:47 **Alun Ffred Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Rwy'n diolch i'r Gweinidog am y diddordeb a'r sylw mae hi wedi'i roi i'r cynllun hwn. Yn naturiol, mae hwn wedi codi diddordeb ymysg pobl yr ardal. Y cwestiwn sydd gen i yw: a yw'r Llywodraeth yn bwriadu glynu at yr amserlen sydd wedi'i chyhoeddi ar gyfer cam nesaf y cynllun a chyflawni'r gwaith maes o law?

I thank the Minister for the interest and attention that she has paid to this scheme. Naturally, this has raised interest among the people of the area. My question is: does the Government intend to adhere to the timetable that has been published as regards the next phase of the scheme and complete the work in due course?

14:48 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I confirm, for the purposes of the record, if it would be helpful, that we will appoint advisors in the autumn of 2013 and we will appoint a design and building contractor team in the summer of 2014. There will be an issuing of draft orders and a possible public inquiry in 2015-16. So, construction will commence in the autumn of 2016.

14:48 **Mark Isherwood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Further to your announcement to move from the purple to the yellow route, you will be aware that local businesses employing 120 local people have contacted me and you, among others, expressing concern that this will severely impact their businesses and local employment. Given that their preferred route—the orange route—would encompass the yellow route, would address the concerns of local businesses and the residents of Bethlehem and Felinheli, would assist local tourism access and, they argue, save further construction costs of at least £5 million, will you give consideration to their concerns to ensure that those businesses and those jobs will not be impacted adversely?

14:49 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I give consideration to all concerns and matters that are raised with me. I have made my decision on the route and it will stand. The route has given me significant cost savings with regard to delivery, which will allow me to reinvest the cost savings into other transport projects.

## Technolegau sy'n dod i'r amlwg

## Emergent Technologies

14:49 **Julie James** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

*12. Pa bolisiau sydd gan y Gweinidog yn eu lle i feithrin technolegau sy'n dod i'r amlwg er mwyn cynorthwyo gyda'u defnydd cywir yng Nghymru? OAQ(4)0267(EST)*

*12. What policies does the Minister have in place to nurture emergent technologies in order to assist their proper utilisation in Wales? OAQ(4)0267(EST)*

14:49 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

The Government's strategies and priorities to encourage emergent technologies and innovation are contained in 'Science for Wales' and 'Innovation Wales', published in March of this year.

14:50 **Julie James** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Following your earlier answer, and your well-known support for Welsh scientific advances, particularly those nurtured by our universities, I am sure that you are aware that the ASTUTE project at Swansea University has been working with Welsh companies for some time to develop three-dimensional printing. Minister, what has your department been doing to encourage and support such businesses, which are involved in arguably the most significant innovations since the internet, to develop this technology for us here in Wales?

14:50 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I think that the most significant thing that we do, in some ways, is to collaborate with the university and put in the necessary funding. In that way, we have assisted about 200 companies in particular areas. We have a very flexible business innovation academia for business scheme. We have major Welsh companies and universities being assisted in terms of what bids they might put in to the technology strategy board. In terms of that we have quite high-level officials engaged in discussions on this, because, at the end of the day, we need to harness what they are doing in the higher education sector and turn projects from their dreams into the reality of production.

14:51 **Angela Burns** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Minister, it is not just about harnessing what happens in the higher education sector, but harnessing companies that are coming up with new technologies, such as the tidal energy project in Ramsey sound, which I want to talk about in particular. It is an excellent project; it has had the go-ahead and now has funding from the Government. However, it was stalled for a number of years, because there was a question about whether it was a business or whether it had to approach the Government through the environmental side of things. I wonder whether you can identify a clear route for organisations such as that one to be able to bring such things forward, because if that project works, and Wales can help to promote it, it will be a real win for our green economy.

14:51 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Angela Burns must be reading my diary, because I met representatives of that project this morning to discuss some of the issues that had arisen. She is absolutely correct that we have to give a focus; this project is a business, as far as I am concerned, and we should help it in terms of developing technology and innovation. I have to say that the project is going from strength to strength, and it is wonderful to see the amount of interest that is now being taken in it, and how people are seeing that this is a very real thing that can deliver in terms of jobs, manufacturing and, of course, energy.

14:52 **William Powell** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Minister, I recently had the opportunity to meet Guto Owen of Ynni Glan to discuss the roll-out of hydrogen fuel cells and hydrogen refuelling stations across Wales as part of a wider UK strategy. Given that I understand that your officials are currently engaging with the hydrogen sector, could you please outline what future vision you have for this sector's role in transport in Wales? If a suitable date could be found, would you consider taking a test drive in a hydrogen-driven vehicle?

14:52 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I am not sure that the roads would like me taking a test drive on them in a hydrogen vehicle, so I think that we would have to take it off-road. [Laughter.] I would be delighted to do that. We are working through some of the issues on this, in terms of what we need to do. It would be premature of me to indicate the direction of travel. However, I think that it is fairly positive, from what I am seeing.

## Sector Twristiaeth

## Tourism Sector

14:53 **Janet Finch-Saunders** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

*13. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am y sector twristiaeth yng Ngogledd Cymru? OAQ(4)0276(EST)*

*13. Will the Minister make a statement on the tourism sector in North Wales? OAQ(4)0276(EST)*

14:53 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Tourism is a key economic driver for Wales, and it is particularly important to the north Wales economy. I shall be launching a new tourism strategy on 17 June to help to drive forward sustainable growth in tourism and ensure that we deliver jobs and wealth for the Welsh economy.

14:53 **Janet Finch-Saunders** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Thank you for that, Minister, and I am glad that you have acknowledged the importance of the tourism industry. However, concerns have been raised regarding self-catering tourism operators who are unable to rent out their properties for the 70-day rule. That now means that the businesses face huge implications in terms of the switch from rates to council tax. We have seen only recently that this cost can run into thousands of pounds. I know that, as of Monday, you have set up an independent commission to look at this. Would you pledge some assurance here today that you will adopt a policy of support for these vital tourism operators, so that this does not become yet another burden for this industry?

14:54 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

We have to look very carefully at burdens that are on industry all of the time. I have an open mind on this particular issue, and I am quite happy to look at the issues that you raise with me. When I have something more substantial to report I will advise Members, because we have to recognise that tourism is key to the development of the economy in certain areas in Wales. We need to ensure that the proper resource goes into this sector.

14:54 **Antoinette Sandbach** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Minister, I am very pleased to hear you recognise how key the tourism business is in north Wales. There are concerns about the amount of money that your Government spends on marketing through Visit Wales when compared with competition in Scotland and Ireland, and regions in the UK like Yorkshire. Can you confirm, during your forthcoming tourism strategy announcement on 17 June, that that will be backed by an appropriate level of funding for marketing?

14:55 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I am in a very difficult position because we have very difficult funding decisions to make. We do not know the outcome of the comprehensive spending review, but when I hear the Chancellor talking about it, it does not fill me with any great hope that there will be more money available. I can certainly prioritise what I do in terms of advertising, but there is a limit to the pot that we have available.

## Gwyddoniaeth

## Science

14:55 **Nick Ramsay** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*14. A wnaiff y Gweinidog amlinellu pa gyfran o gyllideb ei hadran a ddyrennir i'r agwedd ar ei phortffolio sy'n ymwneud â gwyddoniaeth? OAQ(4)0278(EST)* *14. Will the Minister outline what proportion of her department budget is allocated to the science aspect of her portfolio? OAQ(4)0278(EST)*

14:55 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
The published budget figures for science are £2.882 million in revenue and £3.113 million in capital, but that does not include the technology programmes or the promotion of science careers.

14:55 **Nick Ramsay** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you, Minister, for that answer. I recently co-hosted an event, along with AMs from all parties—Eluned Parrott, Simon Thomas and David Rees—for the Royal Society of Chemistry, and you passed through that event as well, highlighting the importance of science to the Welsh economy. As we are all aware now, if we want to access further structural funds from Europe in the future, it is becoming more important that Wales makes a far better case regarding how we will link science with other aspects of the economy, such as engineering, et cetera. How are you doing this? How are you safeguarding that science aspect of your budget in difficult times, and how are you working with the Minister for education in particular to make sure that science is given the priority that it deserves in our schools?

14:56 **Edwina Hart** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I have to say that it is not only the Minister for education; there is enormous sign-up across the Government in terms of other Cabinet members, such as the Minister for health and other colleagues, to the science agenda. There is enormous sign-up across the Assembly, across all parties, to the science strategy that was developed by the Chief Scientific Officer for Wales at that time. Therefore, we are looking at the money. I accept that it looks like a very small amount of money when I look at my overall budget, because it is used for pump-priming, but we are trying to bring all of the strands together so that there is money available for science. We have to develop that world-class capacity, which Julie Morgan illustrated that we already have, and we have to build it more. That is why I think that our Sêr Cymru programme will be so essential. You can be assured that science is very much at the heart of the Government, across portfolios.

## Darpariaeth Band Eang

## Broadband Provision

14:57 **Lynne Neagle** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
*15. A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad am sut y mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn bwriadu gwella darpariaeth band eang yng Nghymru? OAQ(4)0280(EST)* *15. Will the Minister make a statement on how the Welsh Government intends to improve broadband provision in Wales? OAQ(4)0280(EST)*

14:57 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
We are committed to working with BT, under the Superfast Cymru programme, to bring the benefits of fibre broadband to those businesses and homes outside the planned commercial footprint in Wales by 2016.

14:57 **Lynne Neagle** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for that answer, Deputy Minister. I have been contacted by a number of constituents who are very frustrated at slow broadband speeds and who feel that companies like BT are cherry-picking more densely populated areas that require relatively low-cost investment to boost broadband provision at the expense of more remote or outlying parts of my constituency. Given the huge investment in broadband being supported by the Welsh Government through schemes like the one you mentioned, what more can we do to ensure that BT is not simply able to cherry-pick areas in this way?

14:58 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you very much for that question. Of course, I am not really able to comment on the commercial decisions made by BT, but I understand that the commercial roll-out in Torfaen is now complete and a considerable number of residents—but by no means all—living in your constituency are now able to get superfast broadband. However, I also know that not all cabinets have been enabled under that commercial roll-out. Nevertheless, the Welsh Government, as you have indicated, and BT are working in partnership through the Superfast Cymru programme to bring the benefits across Wales by 2016.

14:59 **Paul Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
As a Government, I believe that you have given reassurances in the past that the superfast broadband scheme will not be funded at the expense of notspot areas or areas that receive a poor broadband service. Will you therefore, Deputy Minister, outline what the Welsh Government is specifically doing to support notspot areas in my constituency, for example?

14:59 **Jeff Cuthbert** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
If you want to write to me with specific details of the notspots in your constituency, then I will give you a detailed response. However, I can say that the task that BT has undertaken, in contract with us, means that 96% of Wales will be covered by the Superfast Cymru broadband programme by 2016. That means, of course—looking at the simple maths—that 4% of Wales will not be covered for a variety of reasons, not just to do with remoteness. We are looking at ways of trying to ensure that the 4% can access broadband by whatever is the most viable means.

15:00 **Dadl Cyfnod 3 o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 26.44 ar y Bil Adennill Costau Meddygol ar gyfer Clefydau Asbestos (Cymru)** **Stage 3 Standing Order No. 26.44 Y Debate on the Recovery of Medical Costs for Asbestos Diseases (Wales) Bill** Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
**Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)  
This item has been postponed.

15:00 **Cynnig Cyfnod 4 o dan Reol Sefydlog Rhif 26.47 i Gymeradwyo'r Bil Adennill Costau Meddygol ar gyfer Clefydau Asbestos (Cymru)** **Stage 4 Standing Order No. 26.47 Y Motion to Approve the Recovery of Medical Costs for Asbestos Diseases (Wales) Bill** Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
**Llywydd / The Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)  
This item has also been postponed.

**Dadl y Ceidwadwyr Cymreig: Y Lluoedd Arfog**  
*Detholwyd y gwelliannau canlynol: gwelliannau 1, 2 a 3 yn enw Elin Jones a gwelliannau 4, 5 a 6 yn enw Aled Roberts. Os derbynnir gwelliant 3, caiff gwelliant 4 ei ddad-dethol.*

Cynnig NDM5257 William Graham

Cynnig bod Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru:

**Welsh Conservatives Debate: The Armed Forces**

*The following amendments have been selected: amendments 1, 2 and 3 in the name of Elin Jones, and amendments 4, 5 and 6 in the name of Aled Roberts. If amendment 3 is agreed, amendment 4 will be deselected.*

Motion NDM5257 William Graham

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

1. Yn croesawu'r cyfle a roddir gan Ddiwrnod y Lluoedd Arfog i ddiolch i bawb sydd wedi gwasanaethu yn ein lluoedd a'r cymorth a roddwyd iddynt gan bobl Cymru.

2. Yn cydnabod cyfraniad gweithwyr nad ydynt yn rhai milwrol i ymdrechion rhyfel olynol.

3. Yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i gynorthwyo gwasanaethau sydd wedi'u cyfeirio at gyn-filwyr ac ystyried cyflwyno Cynllun Cerdyn y Lluoedd Arfog, i gyn-filwyr a'r rhai sy'n gwasanaethu yn y lluoedd arfog, i gyd-fynd â digwyddiadau sy'n coffáu canmlwyddiant y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf.

4. Yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i weithio gyda Chomisiwn y Cynulliad i ddatblygu a chyhoeddi rhaglen genedlaethol o ddigwyddiadau coffaol.

5. Yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i ystyried gweithio gyda'r lluoedd arfog a phartneriaid eraill i sefydlu Amgueddfa Filwrol Genedlaethol i Gymru i goffáu'r dreftadaeth gyfoethog o aberth, dewrder a gwasanaeth personél milwrol a sifiliaid o Gymru, a phawb sydd wedi gwasanaethu eu gwlad ar adegau o wrthdaro arfog.

1. Welcomes the opportunity provided by Armed Forces Day to thank all those that have served in our armed forces and the support provided to them by the people of Wales.

2. Recognises the contribution of non-military personnel to successive war efforts.

3. Calls on the Welsh Government to support veteran-directed services and consider the introduction of an Armed Forces Card Scheme, for veterans and those serving in the armed forces, to coincide with events commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

4. Calls on the Welsh Government to work with the Assembly Commission to develop and publish a national programme of commemorative events.

5. Calls on the Welsh Government to consider working with the armed forces and other partners to establish a National Military Museum for Wales to commemorate the rich heritage of sacrifice, courage and service of Welsh military personnel, civilians, and all those who have served their country in times of armed conflict.

15:00

**Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

I move the motion.

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I thank the Assembly for the opportunity to have what I hope will be an open and imaginative debate. The savage murder of Drummer Lee Rigby reminds us that people will always try to justify the violent defeat of others. We probably do not find it difficult to see the attack on this poor man as a sick response to an extreme and radicalised belief. We find it much harder to understand when some citizens in other countries see the presence of a foreign force, there in the name of a different belief, and even with the support of other states, as intolerable. Yet, that is the climate in which our modern military, including Welsh personnel, have to function every day.

*Daeth y Dirprwy Lywydd (David Melding) i'r Gadair am 3.00 p.m.*

*The Deputy Presiding Officer (David Melding) took the Chair at 3.00 p.m.*

**Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Later this month, Armed Forces Day gives us all a chance to thank all those who have served in our armed forces for their bravery and to acknowledge the support that they receive from the people of Wales. Our thanks can be practical. They can begin with this Assembly voting for point 3 of this motion and for amendments 5 and 6. Those proposals would be a far more useful thank you to ex-service personnel in my region than wearing a different poppy, as per amendment 2. It is also disappointing that Plaid feels that it cannot represent its constituents who support the idea of an armed forces card scheme and, therefore, we cannot support amendment 1 either. However, I hope that Plaid will consider in this debate another way of showing our thanks to all those people from Wales who have been asked to change or give up their lives due to warfare, and that is to improve our understanding of how and why those Welsh lives are changed or lost.

The motion draws attention to the forthcoming commemoration of the first world war and invites agreement that the contribution made by the political class be humble, inclusive and balanced. I am very pleased that the First Minister is taking an active role in the anniversary but it is this Assembly that represents the people of Wales, not the Government of the day. I hope that will be reflected appropriately. The first world war commemorations will, rightly, be devised by a host of people and organisations. The surviving Welsh combatants of the great war may now all have died, but they have left behind knowledge about their experiences that raises that broader question about how and why Welsh lives have been changed or lost. So, this commemoration may be an appropriate time for a commitment to a Welsh military museum. Scotland and Ireland honour their armed forces in this way. The idea has support from the organisations that we have spoken to so far, and that includes some of the independent regimental museums. I thank the Minister for his positive response on this subject yesterday. However, developing this idea does not have to be primarily a matter for Government.

We cannot support amendment 4, as it is more positive to discuss rather than dismiss what a museum may mean. Personally, I have no interest in a mini version of the imperial war museum. It does not even have to be under one roof. However, there are advantages to being able to present a national military history of Wales to help us examine and understand our own relationship with it. Central to that is the sacrifice of combatants. It does not matter what era you look at in history: living, breathing and loving individuals have stepped out in fear and courage to face the axe, the arrow, the cannonball, the bullet, the bomb and the button. However, that must go hand in hand with three things, and the first is a long look at Wales's part in domestic warfare—what Lindsay Whittle talked about in his question yesterday. A museum might explore the modern expression of those battles of the Middle Ages, of tribalism and feudalism, as part of our modern search for identity. The second aspect is the essential part played in war by non-combatants. In the modern era these were such people as Welsh farmers and miners and, particularly, Welsh women. In the week that we remember the hundredth anniversary of the death of Emily Davison, we might also consider how a museum could explore the link between war and human rights and how that has affected the people of Wales. The third aspect is peace. I do not see this idea as anything but complementary to the proposal for a peace institute for Wales. Welsh personnel have saved lives as part of international peacekeeping forces.

Above the entrance to the Military History Museum of the Bundeswehr in Dresden you will read the words 'war is an act of violence', and it is no less violent when you are part of that conflict as a result of that ultimate contradiction in terms, fighting for peace. Therefore, that is my starting point, Members, and I look forward to hearing from the rest of you with your thoughts today.

15:05 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I have selected the six amendments to the motion. If amendment 3 is agreed, amendment 4 will be deselected. I call on Bethan Jenkins to move amendments 1, 2 and 3 tabled in the name of Elin Jones.

*Gwelliant 1—Elin Jones*

*Amendment 1—Elin Jones*

*Ym mhwynt 3, dileu popeth ar ôl 'gwasanaethau sydd wedi'u cyfeirio at gyn-filwyr'.*

*In point 3, delete all after 'veteran-directed services'.*

*Gwelliant 2—Elin Jones*

*Amendment 2—Elin Jones*

*Cynnwys ar ddiwedd pwynt 4:*

*Insert at the end of point 4:*

*'ac i gydweithio â phartïon cyfrannog i lunio pabi coch Cymreig i goffáu yn benodol y nifer fawr o filwyr o Gymru a fu farw rhwng 1914 a 1918'.*

*'and to work with interested parties to develop a Welsh red poppy to specifically commemorate the death of so many Welsh soldiers from 1914-1918'.*

*Gwelliant 3—Elin Jones*

*Amendment 3—Elin Jones*

*Dileu pwynt 5.*

*Delete point 5.*

15:05 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I move amendments 1, 2 and 3 in the name of Elin Jones.

I wanted to start off in a conciliatory fashion, but I fear that what Suzy Davies has said does not concur with that type of strategy. I wanted to thank the Conservatives for bringing the debate forward, because it is something that we should debate, but I also think that it is important that you have included the role that civilians play in a time of conflict in the motion, because they are often forgotten in such debates. How bad would it have been, for example, for those people who lived through the blitz without the sacrifices of the fire service and hospital staff during that time, not to mention the women who found themselves in proper jobs, as opposed to perhaps doing other things?

As you will see from our amendments—

15:06 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Will you take an intervention?

15:06 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes.

- 15:06 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Do you not recognise that point 2 of the motion recognises non-military personnel? It clearly states—
- 15:06 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
That is what I am saying is a good thing.
- 15:06 **Andrew R.T. Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
But you said that it did not.
- 15:06 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
No, I did not. I said that I welcome the fact that you mentioned civilians. I do not have to be controversial all the time, Andrew. [Laughter.] Shock, horror.

As you will see from our amendments—we will see how we go now—Plaid Cymru essentially agrees with much of what has been proposed, with some small changes. Amendment 1 calls on the Welsh Government to support veteran-directed services. This is something that Plaid will want to return to at a later date, but it is important to recognise that the issues facing veterans today cut across a variety of services. It is not just the health services that are dealing with veterans, although within the health service the range of issues involving veterans can vary greatly, from disablement to mental health issues, something I have personally been interested in through the work that I have been doing with Healing the Wounds, a charity based in Porthcawl and Bridgend. Ex-forces personnel returning home to Wales face problems in finding work and housing, for example, and in relation to non-devolved areas such as welfare reform and entering the criminal justice system.

I do not think that it is enough for Ministers here to say that certain things are non-devolved and therefore they cannot do anything about them. These are real problems that are being faced now by Welsh people. In reserved areas, the Welsh Government must work more closely with counterparts in Whitehall. That, in turn, is something that the UK Government must also pay attention to, particularly as we all know that we are providing a greater proportion of soldiers as a percentage of population than anywhere else in the British isles. I think that most of us here know the reasons for that.

That brings me on to amendment 2. I think that it is time for us to recognise specifically the sacrifice of Welsh soldiers during the great war as we approach its hundredth anniversary. That is not unprecedented; there is a big monument to Scottish soldiers in the Somme, for example, and I know that there is a campaign in Wales to have something similar constructed in Flanders to commemorate Welsh soldiers, a campaign that this Assembly should be interested in. That is why we are calling for a Welsh version of the poppy. In Scotland, there is already a distinctive poppy, and we would be happy to talk to other parties about how we could look into funding new emerging charities such as Healing the Wounds with this Welsh poppy, so that we can show our unique satisfaction with the work that these types of charities carry out. It is not an effort, as the Conservatives may think, to undermine the current system—it is just to add our Welsh heritage.

We thought long and hard about point 5 of the motion, and I personally see merit in amendment 4 in the name of Aled Roberts. The issue here is that we already have museums around Wales, such as the South Wales Borderers museum in Brecon, and we mentioned the museum in Caernarfon yesterday during questions to the Minister, John Griffiths. I fear that if we were to establish a national military museum, it would take the focus off what is already in existence, especially given that we are a party that wants to decentralise and focus on the grass roots. Therefore, we need to look at where these museums are placed with regard to where the history lies for local people.

- 15:09 **Suzy Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Just to reassure you, we have asked the independent regimental museums about this, and they are broadly supportive of the idea, particularly as we would have no intention of overshadowing the work that they do in any proposals that we would put forward.
- 15:10 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Okay, that is fine. I just wanted to say that perhaps we would look to have a multi-site application, so that somewhere would be the host for it. These are all new concepts that we can talk about. If we had something like that in Wales, we could look at how we would do it in a different way. The Imperial War Museums, for example, focus far more on the cost and the horror of war than on the machines of war. So, we could look at alternatives, such as how a family growing up in the first world war or in a war-torn area was affected, as opposed to the more technical aspects of war.



We propose to delete point 5. However, as I said, we can talk about this further. If we are going to have a military history museum in Wales, we need to talk about the history in the mix. There are people who conscientiously objected to taking part in war. Suzy Davies mentioned the peace academy; perhaps we could engage with the peace academy around how we would truly reflect the people who took part in service and those who chose to opt out of that system too.

15:11

## **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I call on Peter Black to move amendments 4, 5 and 6 tabled in the name of Aled Roberts.

*Gwelliant 4—Aled Roberts*

*Amendment 4—Aled Roberts*

*Ym mhwynt 5 dileu 'sefydlu Amgueddfa Filwrol Genedlaethol i Gymru i' a rhoi yn ei le 'ystyried y ffyrdd mwyaf priodol o'.*

*In point 5 delete 'establish a National Military Museum for Wales' and replace with 'consider the most appropriate ways'.*

*Gwelliant 5—Aled Roberts*

*Amendment 5—Aled Roberts*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i weithredu ar y cyd i wella'r driniaeth ar gyfer Anhwylder Straen Wedi Trawma ymhlith cyn-aelodau'r Lluoedd Arfog drwy ystyried y potensial i sefydlu Canolfan Driniaeth ar gyfer Anhwylder Straen Wedi Trawma yng Nghymru.*

*Calls on the Welsh Government to make concerted action in improving treatment for PTSD amongst veterans of the Armed Forces by examining the potential for a PTSD Treatment Centre in Wales.*

*Gwelliant 6—Aled Roberts*

*Amendment 6—Aled Roberts*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn nodi Adroddiad Murrison sydd wedi arwain at gyllid ychwanegol ar gyfer aelodau prosthetig i gyn-aelodau'r Lluoedd Arfog yn Lloegr, yn nodi hefyd y gweithgor sydd wedi'i sefydlu ar y pwnc yng Nghymru, ac yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i sicrhau bod y ddarpariaeth yn gydradd yng Nghymru.*

*Notes the Murrison Report which has resulted in additional funding for prosthetic limbs for veteran of the Armed Forces in England, further notes the establishment of a working group on the subject in Wales and calls for the Welsh Government to pursue parity of provision in Wales.*

15:11

## **Peter Black** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I move amendments 4, 5 and 6 in the name of Aled Roberts.

I thank the Welsh Conservatives for bringing this motion forward. I am going to talk specifically about the amendments that we have tabled. I am grateful to Suzy Davies for indicating that she would be prepared to support amendments 5 and 6, which will, hopefully, add to the motion and what has gone before.

We had a debate on this on 9 November 2011, tabled by the Welsh Conservatives. That debate touched quite substantially on post-traumatic stress disorder, which is the subject of amendment 5. Some 18,000 people leave the armed forces each year, some of whom have significant physical or mental health problems. Up to 30% of people exposed to a stressful event or situation of an exceptionally threatening or catastrophic nature will go on to develop PTSD. So, it is an issue that needs quite a lot of attention and investment in terms of trying to help those who suffer from that. It does not just apply to the armed forces, of course; it also applies to members of the emergency services.

GPs and veterans are not aware of the priority care available to them in the NHS. There have been surveys indicating that that is the case. That is a concern, because, if priority care is available, then both the veterans and the GPs need to know about that so that they can signpost it and ensure that it is delivered. I am aware that some work has been done to improve knowledge and understanding among primary care NHS staff through the Welsh Government's package of support for the armed forces community in Wales, but I need to know how the Government can be sure that the e-training module is being used by staff and that the benefits are reaching veterans. It would be useful to have some feedback on the extent of the use of that module, what the outcomes from it are and whether any monitoring work is ongoing to determine what impact it is having when it is being used.

Provision for treating people with PTSD in Wales is not adequate to meet the levels of demand. Wales has no specialist residential treatment centre for PTSD. Similar establishments in England are heavily oversubscribed and waiting lists are long. Bethan Jenkins referred to Healing the Wounds in Porthcawl, which I also visited and is an exceptionally good facility. I am not quite sure what impact the potential closure of the Rest Bay hotel will have on that particular service, but I hope to find that out in the next few weeks, as I have some meetings around that.

In the 2011 motion, or the motion that was passed, which I think that the Welsh Government supported, the Welsh Government agreed to

‘do everything it can to address the needs of our armed forces and ex-forces personnel with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, recognising that this will require direct engagement with them’.

I hope that the Minister is able to give us an update on what has happened over the last 18 months with regard to that particular commitment and effective request from the Assembly by passing that motion. I am sure that, when the Minister responds to the debate, she will be able to address that particular issue.

Amendment 6 relates to the Murrison report and the additional funding for prosthetic limbs for veterans of armed forces in England. We have not spoken a great deal about the increasing number of amputees who are leaving and will continue to leave the armed forces, but prosthetics are essential for many of our leaving servicemen and women. As part of the armed forces covenant, the Westminster Government commissioned the Murrison report to make recommendations on future provision for amputees. The UK Government has implemented the report’s recommendations by providing new funding amounting to £15 million over three years; £6.7 million was used to establish nine NHS centres and a further £1 million was designated to improving all prosthetic services. That improvement in prosthetic provision will improve lives, not only for veterans, but also for civilians. In the Welsh Government’s package of support for the armed forces in Wales in 2011, it committed itself at a minimum to match the quality of the prosthetic limb provision to service personnel by the defence medical service. Unfortunately, in the annual report of November 2012, that commitment has not really been reported upon and maybe the Minister will be able to update us on the Welsh Government’s contribution to meeting the commitment that it made with regard to matching that provision on prosthetics.

On amendment 4 in relation to a national military museum for Wales, we are not opposed to that, but rather than going ahead and doing it, we would like to see proper consideration of that museum. That is why we are seeking to amend the motion in this way. It is important that we commemorate the work done by the armed forces in Wales and the museum is possibly an appropriate way to do that, but that will cost money and requires proper scoping. Therefore, we need the Government to look at that and come back to us.

15:16 **Mark Isherwood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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We need veteran-directed services because serving and ex-forces personnel tell us that services for them must be designed and delivered with them if they are to be effective. I regret that Plaid Cymru’s amendment 1 does not support the introduction of an armed forces card scheme for current and ex-forces personnel—a card that would support ex-services personnel who struggle to reintegrate into society, emphasise NHS priority care and offer a range of free services.

15:16 **Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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In the whole debate that we are having about the reorganisation of the health system, where would the money come from for that particular card?

15:17 **Mark Isherwood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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It would come from within the system and, of course, we have costed it.

Last Friday, I spoke at the Wrexham launch of the ChangeStep service by north Wales-based drug and alcohol charity CAIS, recognising the need for veterans to support veterans in a peer-mentoring support and advisory service. I spoke after my friend Elfyn Llwyd and it was attended by Aled Roberts. It was great to see the cross-party agreement and support there on this issue. The programme of support for veterans in Wales provided by Porthcawl-based charity Healing the Wounds, which Suzy Davies and I visited in January, complements the support being provided by CAIS in north Wales. Comprehensive services for veterans require the joining up of veteran-directed programmes such as these with public sector provision.

Too many ex-forces personnel drop out of the welfare support system, become homeless or cut off from mainstream services and become socially isolated. Among combat veterans, there is a common pattern of complex post-traumatic stress disorder, with attempted symptom suppression by alcohol or drug abuse, a downward spiral of employment difficulties, relationship problems, confrontation with the law and even suicide. Although I campaigned with CAIS against the closure of the only independent respite and treatment centre in the UK for traumatised ex-forces personnel, Tŷ Gwyn in Llandudno, on behalf of those who had come to rely on it and who had told me that their complex needs were not being met by the NHS or other providers, Tŷ Gwyn was closed in late 2005.

The Pathways residential PTSD centre also came and went in Bangor. Steven Hughes, regimental medical officer at 2 Para in the Falklands war, who had co-founded Pathways, stated that combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder correlated

‘poorly with the usual spectrum of “civilian” mental health disorders.’

He added that

‘If conventional Mental Health Services were so comprehensive there would not be such a high veteran rate of suicide, high prison population, and large number of veterans sleeping rough.’

Of approximately 220,000 armed forces veterans living in Wales, with over 50,000 or more in north Wales, an estimated 4%, or almost 9,000, need mental health support. Although welcomed, the NHS all-Wales veterans health and wellbeing service cannot meet the full spectrum or scale of need. Of the 158 veterans referred, only 100 were treated over a 12-month period, only 24 service-user feedback forms were completed and only 39 veterans were discharged. The 2012 Healthcare Inspectorate Wales report ‘Healthcare and the Armed Forces Community in Wales’ recommended that

‘The Welsh Government should consider the utility of establishing a form of residential facility within Wales.’

This is something that I have campaigned for since Tŷ Gwyn closed. Many members of the armed forces community had commented on the desirability of having a residential centre for veterans in Wales as something that you can see, touch and feel. In consequence, the then Minister for health appointed Professor Rosemary Kennedy to chair a group examining the need for this. We therefore hope for a positive outcome and will be supporting amendment 5 accordingly.

The universities of Chester and Salford are providing personalised education and employment support for medically discharged ex-services personnel, and 90% of the veterans involved have successfully improved their prospects for engagement with education and employment opportunities. They state that this will be a great practical support for the Welsh veteran community. The University of Chester is also working closely with the all-Wales veterans health and wellbeing service and CAIS’s new veteran advice service. The senior lecturer in mental health, himself ex-forces and a practitioner with the all-Wales veterans health and wellbeing service, has set up a project with NatWest bank to provide veterans and armed forces personnel with financial advice and employment opportunities.

Last month, in the Assembly, thanks to Eluned Parrott, I watched the film performance of ‘Abandoned Brothers’, in which Welsh veterans described their struggles living with PTSD and the challenges that they face. These men were haunted by the images, sounds and smells of war, and their wives, children, aunties and mothers were picking up the pieces. Support for veterans in Wales must be improved dramatically.

The integrated role of the public, voluntary and private sectors in providing services for veterans’ needs needs to be strengthened and expanded working with—

15:21 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

I call Mohammad Asghar.

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15:21 **Mohammad Asghar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak in this debate and to welcome the upcoming Armed Forces Day. Armed Forces Day raises public awareness of the contribution made to the nation by those who serve, and have served, in our armed forces. It also gives the public a chance to show their support for our servicemen and servicewomen and their families by holding local events. It is only fair, right and just that we should be reminded of the debt that we owe.

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The terrible event that took place in Woolwich with the murder of Lee Rigby, for no reason other than him being a soldier, demonstrated our debt. We owe it to our service personnel to provide them with the care and support that they so rightly deserve.

It is estimated that there are currently more armed forces veterans in the United Kingdom than at any time since the second world war. It is estimated that approximately 0.25 million are living in Wales. A recent report by the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee called for public bodies in Wales to do more to support armed forces veterans in Wales, particularly in the key areas of housing and health, which my colleague has already mentioned. The committee found that veterans can struggle to obtain information about the services available to them when they return to civilian life. In November 2011, the Welsh Government launched a package of support for the armed forces community. This included a commitment to remind health service bodies of their obligation to offer priority treatment and care for veterans whose health problems result from their service. I would like to go further and see the establishment of a network of one-stop shops for veterans, as they have in Scotland, to ensure that they are aware of the advice and support available to them after their gallant service.

The Welsh Conservatives have also campaigned for the introduction of an armed forces card, which would be available to veterans and existing service personnel. This would offer a wide range of benefits, including free bus travel, free entry to council-run swimming pools and Cadw heritage sites. Furthermore, it would meet the Welsh Government's own objective of emphasising the priority care available from the national health service to those with service-related conditions.

A Royal British Legion survey in 2010 suggested that 81% of general practitioners knew little or nothing of the right of veterans to priority care. It is estimated that 4% of veterans suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, while 13% have drink problems. Homelessness is also common among veterans. I believe that an armed forces card would reinforce the rights of veterans and help them to reintegrate and to play a full role in society. I regret that the previous Welsh Government voted against the implementation of such a card in February 2011, when the proposal was last debated. I call on the Minister today to confirm that the Government will reconsider this matter.

When armed forces personnel leave the services, they come into civil society. The legal system also needs to be adjusted to their beliefs, feelings and understanding while they were serving abroad in the armed forces, along with the prison service, and their behaviour and their attitude in society, the community and with their own families should also be considered. There are problems—we all know this—and we owe them. It is because of their sacrifices that we are here in freedom, liberty and democracy around the world. We owe them gratitude; it is through their help that we are here enjoying freedom in all walks of life. Wales has a long and proud relationship with the armed forces. I believe that we have a duty to recognise the long history of courage, sacrifice and service of our servicemen and women, past and present. I hope that the National Assembly will acknowledge this debt of gratitude today by supporting this motion. Thank you.

15:26

## **Kenneth Skates** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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It is a pleasure to follow that impassioned contribution. May I begin by thanking the Welsh Conservatives for bringing forward this important and timely motion for debate? We all know people serving, or who have served, in the armed forces. Today, my thoughts are with my very young nephew, Lance Corporal Simon Skates, my brave cousin, Andrew Skates, who served with the territorial army in Iraq, and with the many friends I made when I served in the officer training corps—friends who subsequently went on to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I will concentrate my remarks today on the mental health and wellbeing assistance that veterans need to make a smooth transition back into civilian life, echoing what Bethan Jenkins eloquently spoken about. As Mohammad Asghar has already mentioned, we have today more people living in Wales who have served in the UK armed forces than at any other time since the second world war. We have a long and very proud relationship with our armed forces, with Welsh military personnel having made an enormous contribution to the defence of the United Kingdom, both in conflict and in peacekeeping around the world. That is why, as part of the military covenant that we have with our armed forces, and, as we approach Armed Forces Day, it is important that we stop and take stock of the level of support that we provide to veterans and to check whether it is of the highest possible standard.

I appreciate that serving in the armed forces can be a hugely rewarding period, but it can also be a terribly stressful and traumatic experience. Indeed, we know that 4% of service veterans will suffer some kind of mental health crisis, often as a direct or indirect result of stressful combat experiences. When staff leave the forces, their healthcare transfers from the military to the NHS. For most, the transition to civilian life is made without difficulty, but I have met many veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as other mental health issues, who do not get the support that they need. In some cases, they do not recognise that they have a treatable condition. Many of their problems go hand in hand with other issues, such as alcoholism, drug addiction and homelessness. While support for veterans is often very good across Wales, we need to develop more one-stop shop centres for ex-service personnel, because often it is a lack of awareness about support that prevents from taking up the help that already exists. I know that the Welsh Government is aware of many of the problems faced by veterans and the new cross-Government mental health strategy, 'Together for Mental Health', is designed to make a real difference in this area.

It is perhaps fitting, therefore, that the chief architect of that groundbreaking policy is today responding to the debate. I would like to pay tribute to Lesley Griffiths for the work that she has done in improving the mental health of veterans. Local authorities have an important role here, too, especially in terms of housing provision for veterans. To raise awareness of veterans' issues, Denbighshire County Council, in partnership with local charities, has developed and signed a community covenant, which encourages local communities to support the armed forces and veterans.

I was also particularly pleased by the launch of ChangeStep, which was mentioned by Mark Isherwood. This new support service will help about 50,000 former service personnel who suffer from mental health issues, as well as helping with loneliness, welfare benefit problems, or addiction. Again, it is fitting that this programme was launched at Hightown barracks, in Lesley Griffiths's constituency, where the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers are based.

As I have said, many of the problems faced by veterans are a legacy of combat stress. I would therefore urge the Government to look at the call by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales for a veterans mental health clinical network to be established. Our armed forces veterans have given loyal service to their country, putting their lives on the line to keep us safe and to win peace in war-torn regions. That is why I am pleased to support the motion, as well as the Liberal Democrats' amendments. However, I cannot support the nationalists' amendment, which seeks to segregate our war dead from the brave men and women who they fought and died alongside 100 years ago. The red poppy is a symbol of universal loss, and wearing one should indicate respect for all who fell. It is only right and proper that our armed forces are supported in return for their service. I look forward to hearing how the Welsh Government intends to support our veterans in the coming years.

15:31

**Byron Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I very much welcome the opportunity to contribute to today's debate and to celebrate the commitment and sacrifice of our armed forces and their families, alongside the communities who support them and their families. This debate is extremely pertinent, as has already been highlighted, because of the hundredth anniversary of the great war falling in 2014. We need to ensure that we recognise the importance of that milestone.

I also feel that it is important for future generations that we remember the sacrifice, courage and service of Welsh military personnel. Civilians, as has rightly been pointed out, are very important, as are all those who have served their country in times of armed conflict. Civilians certainly took a rough ride during the second world war, and my elderly mother still talks about the four nights of horror that she witnessed when Swansea was blitzed in February 1941.

On the museum front, we have some excellent examples across Wales, and I have visited many of them. However, I feel that we need to ensure that we draw them all together and that we share collections, stories and best practice. I support a national military museum for Wales as a focal point. It is an interesting concept to explore with the armed forces and our partners across Wales. It is crucial that we preserve and raise awareness, particularly among our young people, of the dedication and the sacrifice of Welsh combatants.

I have already mentioned the fact that this debate, and our recognition of the commitment of our armed forces, is not just about serving or retired personnel—it is also about their families, as well as the communities who support them. We have a rich heritage of supporting our armed forces in Wales, and it is an essential ingredient of our national culture. As the parent of a serving army officer, I know only too well how important it is that support is given to the young men who risk their lives in areas of conflict, not in conventional battle areas, but where it is difficult to recognise the enemy.

The particular part of the motion on which I wish to dwell is the least controversial, I suppose, and probably the one that is the most easily delivered. I would very much like to see the Welsh Government work with the Assembly Commission to develop and publish a national programme for commemorative events. This is extremely important, but is easily overlooked, as commemorative events are the backbone of our remembering as a nation. In Wales, we have a well-established cadet corps—navy, army and air cadets. These events give them an opportunity to showcase their commitment and professionalism. Again, this builds on the concept of a community that is proud of its boys and girls, many of whom aspire to serve in the military. I am proud to say that I have been associated with the cadet movement during my youth and during my adult life.

I hope that this motion will warrant support from across the Chamber. We have a duty to co-ordinate the legacy of our armed forces in Wales, and we must carry it out. The military covenants being adopted by local authorities are a great start. I commend those authorities that have already done so, and I look forward to others joining. We must now do our bit and ensure that it becomes a reality.

Wales owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the men and women who have served in our armed forces, and I am grateful for the opportunity to make a contribution to this debate. My father was in the Welsh Guards, and my grandfather was in the army, as were two of my great-grandfathers. So, we have a long history of service in the family. From my point of view, my mother has a very special debt of gratitude to Wales—she was brought up from the age of five under Nazi occupation in Holland, and 's-Hertogenbosch—the town that she comes from—was liberated by the Welsh Guards. She has imprinted on me from a very young age the importance and significance of that moment to her and to my family, which occurred in an era when my grandmother had to hide my uncle, who was 16 at the time, to avoid him being pressed by the Germans into a forced labour camp. So, the significance of the sacrifice made by British armed forces, and Welsh armed forces in particular, is commemorated in the town of 's-Hertogenbosch, where they have a very special link with the Welsh Guards. I am sure that there are many other towns and many other people that would want to say 'thank you' to the armed forces that play such an important part all over the world in ensuring that people get to enjoy the freedoms that we take so much for granted in this country.

Minister, on 7 November 2012, Carl Sargeant said this to the Assembly:

'Part of the issue, which I know that Members have raised, is the recognition of former service personnel who may be suffering from PTSD, so that when they present through the voluntary sector or NHS services, they are recognised as veterans. The Member raised the all-Wales veterans card. In the last meeting of the ministerial advisory group on the armed forces, I asked for this to be taken forward because of the benefits of it. It may not be exactly what opposition members requested during their debate, but I have asked the group to consider the opportunities that it would give ex-service personnel in Wales to present without question and say, 'We are ex-service personnel and we should either be prioritised or get access to these services'. That is something that we will be presenting in the near future.'

Well, Minister, I suggest that the near future is now, and I would like you to echo the commitment that Carl Sargeant gave, to bring forward that card. I know that Bethan Jenkins has raised the expense of it, but it need not be an expensive thing, and it is very much needed. It is needed precisely because of the fact that 80% of doctors do not know the priority services that veterans can access. A simple, single, unified, recognised card that could be introduced across the NHS in Wales would provide a huge and valuable signpost for councils, for doctors and for all the other support services that are there for veterans.

I also want to mention the role of Blind Veterans UK—the rehabilitation centre in Llandudno. It is a £12 million centre that was opened fully in May this year. It provides 40 en suite bedrooms, two training kitchens, IT training rooms and an arts and crafts workshop, and it is open to any veteran who is blind or has impaired vision, regardless of whether their sight was affected by their service. All of that has been provided without support from the Welsh Government, and I would urge the Minister to look again at what the Welsh Government can do, to encourage people to be referred to that facility and to support it.

Finally, on 25 August, there will be a walk, called Walk On Wales, to support and raise funds for Combat Stress, which deals with the PTSD issues, and on behalf of the Afghanistan Appeal for the Welsh Guards. That walk will set out from this Assembly building on 25 August. There will be teams of veterans walking, and I would ask you all to support what they are doing, to publicise this in your constituencies and to make sure that they get the support they need.

*Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth / The Minister for Local Government and Government Business*

I very much welcome this debate today and the opportunity to outline the suite of actions that the Welsh Government is taking to support our armed forces personnel, and to emphasise how much we value and appreciate the work that they do. We all recognise the tremendous sacrifices that our servicemen and servicewomen make on our behalf.

I thank Members for their contributions. Suzy Davies, in her opening remarks, mentioned the tragic events in Woolwich last month, which shocked us all deeply. Our thoughts are with the family of Drummer Lee Rigby.

The Welsh Government supports the motion put forward by the Welsh Conservatives. I will focus on what the Welsh Government is doing to provide meaningful support for our serving personnel and veterans. This support is cross-cutting, and the actions I will outline span a number of Government portfolios, which I think demonstrates how seriously we take this area of work. On Monday, I attended a royal salute at Cardiff castle to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the coronation of the Queen. I took the opportunity to listen to and talk to a wide range of forces personnel, who were extremely impressed with the range of support provided by the Welsh Government.

On point 1, we welcome the opportunity to show our support and gratitude for those men and women who have served in the armed forces. Armed Forces Day is a core opportunity to celebrate the service and sacrifice of the armed forces community. As outlined in the programme for government, we provide funding each year to support Welsh Armed Forces Day parades across Wales, and, this year, flagship events will be held in both Flintshire in north Wales and Cardiff in south Wales. We have provided £20,000 of funding to these events.

Welsh Government is working hard to implement a package of support for the armed forces community in Wales. We are currently refreshing this package, and I intend to publish the revised package during Armed Forces Week later this month. We have already delivered on many of the commitments in the package of support as set out in our annual report published last November. The first Welsh package of support was unique in recognising the importance of heritage to our armed forces and local communities. In years to come, the artefacts, documents and monuments we have inherited may be our only tangible link with the sacrifices and contributions made by the people of Wales in times of conflict.

Taking points 2 and 4 together, again, the Welsh Government supports the proposal. We fully recognise the contribution of both military personnel and civilians to successive war efforts. The Government's 2010 'A Museums Strategy for Wales' promotes the concept of a distributed national collection, and artefacts that tell the story of those who have served their country in times of conflict are commemorated in museums across Wales. The People's Collection Wales website enables organisations and individuals to share their collections and stories. It already hosts a fascinating exhibition about Wales at war, including the story of the Bevin boys. We are committed to creating a lasting digital legacy of the commemorations in Wales, which will help us to reflect on the lessons for our own time.

The First Minister has appointed Professor Sir Deian Hopkin, president of the national library, as expert adviser on the first world war. Extensive discussions with a wide range of partners and consultation events have already been held across Wales to inform the development of a programme to commemorate the first world war in Wales between 2014 and 2018. This will be presented to the First Minister in the coming months, and the programme will encourage everyone to participate in events and activities, both in their local communities and nationally, to commemorate this landmark period in Welsh history. We are working hard to develop a rich programme of commemoration events in Wales for the centenary of the first world war.

Point 3 asks us to consider the introduction of an armed forces card scheme. I support that, and I have established a group to review the case for the introduction of an identity card for members of the armed forces and veterans in Wales. The group includes representatives of both the armed forces and key charities in Wales. They will be identifying which services would be easier to access with an identity card, and the cost and benefits of such a scheme. Members will be aware that the Ministry of Defence has already launched a UK-wide scheme that enables our businesses to offer discounts to this community.

On point 5, Welsh Government's view is that a museum collection already exists, but at sites across Wales that Bethan Jenkins referred to—in Brecon, Cardiff and Carmarthen. Scarce resources are best placed supporting the excellent work already carried out by staff and volunteers in our existing museums and archives—collections that are accessible to people right across Wales.

Byron Davies referred to community covenants. Just this morning, I met with members of the Royal British Legion. Fifteen out of the 22 local authorities are now signed up to the community covenant. I believe that the other seven, making all 22, will be signed up by the end of the summer. That is an important message to get out. I attended one in my own constituency in Wrexham before I took up this portfolio and it was a very moving occasion.

Ken Skates referred to health issues and the mental health issues faced by so many of our veterans. Since 2010, the Welsh Government has invested £0.5 million annually in the all-Wales veterans health and wellbeing service, which provides support, advice and treatment for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. We have dedicated veterans' therapists working in communities across Wales alongside third sector and other colleagues.

We should not allow ourselves to get distracted. Our focus as a Government needs to be, and will be, to continue to support our armed forces communities in the most appropriate and effective way possible.

15:46 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I call on Darren Millar to reply to the debate.

15:46 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Thank you, Deputy Presiding Officer, and thank you, Minister, for your generous response to today's debate. There is no doubt that, in you, we have a champion for the armed forces. I welcome your appointment to this specific part of your portfolio, because I know about your passion for and commitment to the armed forces—you have a good history on that. I am pleased to hear you confirm the previous Minister's commitment to the introduction of an armed forces identification card. It is something that we look forward to working on with the Government, because we feel that it would be of huge benefit to veterans and other military personnel, whether serving or not serving any longer, who might be able to improve their access to public services and other things in the future.

I also welcome the appointment of Sir Deian Hopkin to take a lead on the commemorative events. He will be presenting to the cross-party group on the armed forces and cadets on his work in the near future. I very much look forward to introducing the thoughts of that cross-party group, which I chair, into the mix. It is important that we have a suite and a programme of commemorative events throughout 2014 right through to 2018 that reflect on the great war. Suzy Davies is quite right that it must not just be seen as a Government commemorative event; it has to be something that the people of Wales own more widely and something on which the National Assembly is seen to be taking a lead.

We have discussed at some length the suggestion that we have put forward about the need for a national military museum for Wales. I take on board the points that have been made in terms of the wonderful collections that we have spread across the country at the moment. However, I think that there is an opportunity here to have one national curator for a museum. If it were to be a national museum, we know that there would be free entry to it, as is the case for other national museums, to support people in learning about that past and the very rich contribution and heritage that we have in Wales in terms of armed forces and civilian population contributions to the war efforts over many years.

I have been looking at the statistics for our civilian contribution to the second world war effort. The Minister made reference to the Bevin boys—some 25,000 miners were called up to service and somebody needed to go down the pit. In terms of the munitions factories alone, in Hirwaun, Glascoed and Bridgend, some 60,000 people, predominantly women, worked in those factories, dedicating themselves to the war effort. Without their hard work, without their grit and determination, the outcome could have been so different.

I have been touched listening to the personal contributions from people around the Chamber about the involvement of their families in various conflicts and war efforts. Ken Skates has family members in the field at the moment and Antoinette Sanbach mentioned the role of the Welsh Guards liberating towns in Germany—or rather in Holland. [Laughter.] We need to remember these things—better than I have done in the last few minutes—because they are an important part of our national heritage. We owe a debt of gratitude to those people who fought on the front lines, and to those people many thousands of miles, sometimes, behind the front lines who supported that war effort. It is really important that these stories are told more widely so that our young people, who are now generations removed from significant worldwide wars and conflicts, are able to learn from these experiences and reflect on them.

Peter Black, Mark Isherwood and others quite rightly made reference to support for veterans and to PTSD in particular. I know that Mark has been a champion of the need to improve services in this area in north Wales, and he referred to the recent launch of a service by CAIS in north Wales, at which he was able to be present. I recognise the hard work of the third sector, in particular, in supporting the delivery of services for ex-service personnel who have mental health problems. They do an awful lot of good, whether they are Healing the Wounds, CAIS or Blind Veterans UK. There is a patchwork of all of these services across Wales, and it is important that that information is gathered together. I think that one of the findings in the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales report that John Skipper prepared was that we have lots of services across Wales, but that not everybody knows what services are out there. We need a directory of the services that are available, if you like, so that we can avoid duplication and concentrate the resources that might be needed to develop services and fill the gaps that there currently are out there.

Turning to our proposal for a veterans card, I am very pleased that the Minister wants to take that forward. I think that it was you, Bethan, who referred to the potential cost of a veterans card scheme. The reality is that it is costing us not to introduce a scheme at the moment. It is costing us in terms of people not getting the support that they might need because they are inappropriately directed to services that do not meet their needs, or because their needs are less well understood because the fact that they are veterans is not available to the clinicians who are treating them. The Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee of the third Assembly—[Interruption.]

*Bethan Jenkins a gododd—*

*Bethan Jenkins rose—*

15:52

**Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I will take your intervention in a moment.

When that committee looked at support for veterans with PTSD in particular, it made the point in its report that there was a need for GPs, other clinicians and, indeed, the veterans themselves to flag up that they had served in the armed forces in the past, because this was a relevant factor in their treatment in future, particularly where mental health problems are concerned. I very much welcome the commitment that the Minister has made in that regard.

15:53

**Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I wish to put on record that it is not that we are not supportive of what is going to be done; it is just that we believe that veterans already have priority service at the moment. I think that it is for the Minister for Health and Social Services to make existing processes work so that veterans are not going to the wrong places, as they are at the moment.



15:53 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I take on board the point, and I am glad that you have reaffirmed the commitment of Plaid Cymru to the veterans card scheme, because I think that it is extremely important.

I have two more things to say before I close—I have been given plenty of time by the opening speaker, and I am pleased about that. [Laughter.] On the armed forces community covenant schemes—

*Mohammad Asghar a gododd—*

*Mohammad Asghar rose—*

15:53 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I will take your intervention in a moment.

On the armed forces community covenant schemes that we have running across Wales, I think that it is fantastic that Wales is likely to be the first nation with every single local authority signed up and subscribed to an armed forces community covenant scheme. I am delighted that it was Conservative-run Vale of Glamorgan Council that led the charge on that, with the support of the Welsh Government, it has to be said. An awful lot can be done with these community covenants to ensure that local authorities get their services into gear and pull their fingers out, whether it is with housing, access to education or anything else that is relevant to military families.

15:54 **Mohammad Asghar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Thank you for giving way, Darren. One area that we have not covered yet is that over 30 years ago, I employed a retired Major Morris, who is now 100 years old and living in Newport. He was one of my best office managers, which is what I want to say to the public in Wales. Our armed forces personnel are the best employees if you give them jobs.

15:54 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
That is absolutely true, and we have to find employment for those people who are being discharged from the forces at the moment. I employed a Falklands veteran, and he was second to none in terms of his contribution to my office.

Finally, the point that I want to refer to is the Plaid Cymru amendment on the development of a Welsh poppy scheme. Unfortunately, we will not be supporting that. We feel that Wales is well served by the current scheme, which operates across the country. People across Wales feel that they can get behind and support that scheme. The revenues that it has been generating in terms of the annual poppy appeal have been going up and up, and there is no suggestion that I have seen that the introduction of a distinctive Welsh poppy would make any difference or enhance that at all. Therefore, unfortunately, we will not be supporting that amendment.

15:55 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
The proposal is to agree the motion without amendment. Does any Member object? I see that there is objection. Therefore, I will defer voting until voting time.

*Gohiriwyd y pleidleisio tan y cyfnod pleidleisio.*

*Voting deferred until voting time.*

## **Dadl Plaid Cymru: Gwasanaethau mewn Ysbytai Cyffredinol Dosbarth Lleol Cymru**

*Detholwyd y gwelliannau canlynol: gwelliannau 1, 2, 3 a 4 yn enw William Graham a gwelliannau 5 a 6 yn enw Aled Roberts.*

Cynnig NDM5256 Elin Jones

Cynnig bod Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru:

## **Plaid Cymru Debate: Services in Welsh Local District General Hospitals**

*The following amendments have been selected: amendments 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the name of William Graham, and amendments 5 and 6 in the name of Aled Roberts.*

Motion NDM5256 Elin Jones

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Yn credu bod angen i gymunedau Cymru gael gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth wedi'u harwain gan ymgynghorwyr mewn ysbytai cyffredinol dosbarth lleol.

Believes that Welsh communities need consultant led A & E and maternity services in local district general hospitals.

15:56

**Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I move the motion.

Plaid Cymru's opposition motion before the Senedd this afternoon is that this National Assembly believes that Welsh communities need consultant-led A&E and maternity services in local district general hospitals. This debate is the first opportunity that the Senedd has had to fully discuss the implications of the south Wales programme proposals that were announced just before the Whitsun recess.

Hospital reconfiguration has been a major part of the Welsh health agenda for almost a decade. The One Wales Government implemented a moratorium on reconfiguration, agreed in the 'One Wales' programme for government, signed by both Plaid Cymru and Labour in 2007. In that agreement, there was a guarantee that no reconfiguration would occur until community services were put in place. When Plaid Cymru then warned in 2011 that services would change and that the 2007 plan would be brought back under a Labour Government, we were accused of scaremongering. Now, in 2013, we see that the south Wales programme is centralising some A&E and maternity services and that follows on from reconfiguration proposals in north Wales under Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board and in the west from Hywel Dda Local Health Board. These proposals are controversial, too. They are moving neonatal services in the north to a different country—a country whose direction in health policy has been criticised by the Welsh Government as it is characterised by privatisation and falling standards. Therefore, who is responsible for all of this? Who will accept responsibility?

The Welsh Government appoints health board members and provides the guidelines for their decisions. Why, then, I wonder, do Ministers here refuse to take responsibility for those decisions when scrutinised in the Senedd? Where is the clarity; where is the transparency and the honesty in this debate that will help people to make sense of it all? The changes proposed by the south Wales programme are estimated to affect 20% of those who currently attend A&E, and a third of those who require maternity services. Even accepting the arguments for the south Wales programme at their own logic, this will put additional pressure on the ambulance service. Despite the fantastic efforts of our ambulance service staff, there are not enough of them, so we have an ambulance service consistently missing its arrival targets. In March, only 43% of ambulances in the Rhondda Cynon Taf area arrived within the eight-minute category A arrival time. However, arrival time is not the only consideration. A study from the University of Sheffield shows the correlation between travel time to hospital and mortality rates. For every 10km further travelled, the mortality rate increases by 1%. We are all aware, are we not, about the arguments around the 'golden hour'?

The arguments and the logic of the changes have so far failed to convince. Plaid Cymru would accept that there are issues with training. That cannot be denied. However, not every A&E department needs to be a training facility. We are told that attracting and recruiting doctors to Wales is a problem. The response to a recent freedom of information request by Plaid Cymru showed that only three out of our seven health boards have made attempts to recruit within the European Union in the last five years. One of those, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Local Health Board, went to Spain and has apparently filled 14 posts, which shows what can be done or what could have been done with some planning.

Figures from the World Health Organization show that the UK has one of the worst ratios of physicians to population within the European Union. The statistics for Wales are worse than those for the UK average. In fact, compared with the 23 other EU countries included in the WHO survey, only Poland and Romania have worse ratios than Wales.

16:00

**David Rees** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Those figures from the WHO are from 2010 at best, if I remember rightly from the website. Also, the figures that you are quoting for Wales are your party's extrapolation of UK figures and are not in the WHO figures at all.

16:00

**Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

They are extrapolated figures that come from the census workforce. They may be a few years old, but if you have any more up-to-date figures I would be happy to look at them.

Doctor recruitment may be a UK-wide problem, but, once again, Wales is faring worse. Of course, we recognise that there are many problems with our Welsh national health service, but the Party of Wales has not called this debate just to find flaws with the proposals. Plaid Cymru has put forward alternative proposals to assist with workforce planning in future years. Financial incentives, such as those that are available for dentists, and as supported by BMA Cymru, could help with hard-to-fill posts. Attracting medical research teams, as the Scottish Government has done in Dundee, to conduct specialist research would bring in talent and grants too.

I will finish with a point about unity. There is a real danger that these reconfiguration proposals will pit community against community. We must be prepared to see the bigger picture. When Labour politicians— Ministers even—are saying that their local district general hospital is more worthy than other hospitals that serve other communities then something is very wrong. United we stand, divided we fall. Consultant-led A&E and maternity services are needed in our district general hospitals. These services should be classed as standard services. Centralisation cannot make sense while the costs of transport are going up and as long as community-based services have not been put in place. These proposals should be rejected and efforts put into improving our services and not spent on expensive PR that is designed to convince people of the need to centralise.

16:02

## **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Rwyf wedi dethol y chwe gwelliant i'r cynnig. Galwaf ar Darren Millar i gynnig gwelliannau 1, 2, 3 a 4 a gyflwynwyd yn enw William Graham.

I have selected the six amendments to the motion. I call on Darren Millar to move amendments 1, 2, 3 and 4, tabled in the name of William Graham.

*Gwelliant 1—William Graham*

*Amendment 1—William Graham*

*Rhoi pwynt newydd ar ddechrau'r cynnig:*

*Insert new point at start of motion:*

*Yn gresynu bod y toriadau cyllidebol y mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn bwriadu eu gwneud i gyllid y GIG, sef y toriadau dwysaf o blith gwledydd y DU, yn cael effaith niweidiol ar allu GIG Cymru i barhau i ddarparu cyfluniad presennol gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth wedi'u harwain gan ymgynghorwyr yn ysbytai Cymru.*

*Regrets that the Welsh Government's planned budget cuts to NHS finances, which are the deepest of the UK nations, are having a detrimental impact on the ability of the Welsh NHS to continue to provide the current configuration of consultant-led A&E and maternity services in Welsh hospitals.*

*Gwelliant 2—William Graham*

*Amendment 2—William Graham*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn gwrthod y cynigion sy'n cael eu hystyried ar hyn o bryd gan Raglen De Cymru i israddio gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth wedi'u harwain gan ymgynghorwyr yn Ysbyty Brenhinol Morgannwg yn Llantrisant.*

*Rejects proposals currently being considered by the South Wales Programme to downgrade consultant-led A&E and maternity services at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant.*

*Gwelliant 3—William Graham*

*Amendment 3—William Graham*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn galw ar Fwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Betsi Cadwaladr i gyflawni ei ymrwymiad i gadw'r gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys presennol yn Ysbyty Glan Clwyd ym Modelwyddan.*

*Calls upon the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to fulfil its commitment to retain existing A&E services at Glan Clwyd Hospital in Bodelwyddan.*

*Gwelliant 4—William Graham*

*Amendment 4—William Graham*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn galw ar Weinidog Iechyd Cymru i sicrhau dyfodol y gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys presennol yn Ysbyty'r Tywysog Philip yn Llanelli.*

*Calls upon the Welsh Health Minister to secure the future of existing A&E services at Prince Philip Hospital in Llanelli.*

16:03

## **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
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I move amendments 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the name of William Graham.

I have to say, in opening my speech, that I am surprised that the Minister around the Cabinet table who has been baulking the most about the changes that are being planned and proposed for the hospital that serves his own area is not here. It does not surprise me, frankly, that he has chosen to side-step this particular meeting. I do not know why he has done so—he may have a good and legitimate reason. However, I think that it smacks a little bit and will put a stench in the nostrils of his own constituents that he is not prepared to stand up for his local hospital here in this important debate this afternoon.

16:03 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

Order. May I remind you that you have a duty to be courteous in this Assembly? To refer to a Member who is not here in that manner is less than courteous in my view. Do not do it again, please.

16:03 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I will not. I am being as courteous as I possibly can be. There may be a legitimate reason for his absence. However, I think that some will find it extraordinary.

There is no doubt that we need to modernise our NHS. There is no doubt that we need some service modernisation to take place. Everybody knows that the performance of our NHS in Wales, unfortunately, is lagging behind some other parts of the United Kingdom. This is not in every respect, but in some respects. We know that performance as a whole in terms of longevity and outcomes is improving. However, we need to do more to close the gap with other parts of, yes, the United Kingdom, but also other parts of the European Union and beyond. We are not a party here on this side of the Chamber that does not believe that there ought to be changes. We recognise that as far as elective surgery and planned procedures are concerned, there are powerful cases to consolidate services at centres of excellence in some regions to obtain better outcomes and to ensure that there is appropriate clinical cover. However, what we cannot ever accept is that emergency life-saving treatment should be moved further away from people who might need to access it in order to have their lives saved. That is why, frankly, we too reject the proposals that have been coming forward in the south Wales programme board.

16:05 **David Rees** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I thank the Member for taking the intervention. You said that you cannot accept it, therefore are you refuting the doctors and clinicians' policies and ideas, who are saying that this is a requirement that they believe is essentially needed in Wales?

16:05 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

I think that you need to listen carefully to all arguments that clinicians make, and not just to the selective ones that you choose to listen to. You might want to support the downgrading of hospitals in south Wales. You might want to go back to the electorate in a few years' time, when you have stood there before on a platform saying that no hospital would be downgraded, and that no services would be taken out of our hospitals. I suggest that you think again about that policy, and that you consider the legitimacy of what you are saying in the light of the election platform on which you stood.

16:06 **David Rees** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

My hospital has lost services because of a shortage of doctors. We had to deal with the situation because it was unplanned, and people had to pay a price for it. Are you saying, therefore, that I did not do that?

16:06 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)

It is your party that has been at the helm of the health service since devolution in Wales. Your party is responsible for the poor workforce planning that has led to the demise of services in your own hospital. Frankly, you ought to be taking it up with your Minister. I am pleased that at least one Cabinet member is prepared to campaign for his local area, unlike perhaps some other Assembly Members in the Chamber.

We have three specific amendments on the table, in addition to one about NHS finances, because we see NHS finances as a big driver of these cuts in Wales. I challenge those Assembly Members who have campaigned on the streets of their constituencies for the retention of services to think carefully when they vote on the amendments that we have tabled today. I am looking across the Chamber at some of the Members who are here today, and I would encourage you to support the amendments that we have tabled. Do not play party politics with the national health service. Do not be duplicitous with your constituents, and on the one hand march with them at the weekend and then vote against something that you could prevent from happening by voting for our amendments today. You have an opportunity to stand by your constituents—I encourage you to do so.

*Gwelliant 5—Aled Roberts*

*Amendment 5—Aled Roberts*

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Yn cydnabod y bydd ysbytai cyffredinol dosbarth lleol yn darparu gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth sy'n gynaliadwy ac yn glinigol gadarn os bydd lefelau recriwtio meddygon yn gwella, ac yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i gyhoeddi canlyniadau ei Hymgyrch Recriwtio Meddygon, a lansiwyd ym mis Ebrill 2012.*

Gwelliant 6—Aled Roberts

*Ychwanegu pwynt newydd ar ddiwedd y cynnig:*

*Yn cydnabod y bydd ysbytai cyffredinol dosbarth lleol yn darparu gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth sy'n gynaliadwy ac yn glinigol gadarn os bydd lefelau staffio nyrsys yn gwella, ac yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i gyflwyno deddfwriaeth i hwyluso lefel sylfaenol.*

*Recognises that local district general hospitals will provide sustainable and clinically robust A & E and maternity services if doctor recruitment levels are improved and calls for the Welsh Government to publish the results of its Doctor Recruitment Campaign, launched in April 2012.*

Amendment 6—Aled Roberts

*Add as new point at end of motion:*

*Recognises that local district general hospitals will provide sustainable and clinically robust A & E and maternity services if nurse staffing levels are improved and calls for the Welsh Government to introduce legislation to facilitate a minimum level.*

16:08

**Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
[Fideo Video](#)

I move amendments 5 and 6 in the name of Aled Roberts.

I begin by thanking Plaid Cymru for tabling this debate, which rightly recognises concerns that people have about the location of A&E services and maternity services. Those departments treat our constituents when they are often at their most vulnerable.

I represent an area of Wales where people already travel some of the longest distances to district general hospitals to access those services, and they understand why they need to do so. They are not averse to change. I remember when local GPs used to carry out caesarean operations in Brecon hospital. We had to move away from that situation. However, my constituents, and others across Wales, find it counterintuitive that travelling further away to access emergency services will improve their outcomes. It goes without saying that what happens to you when you get to hospital is crucial. We need highly trained and highly motivated staff to treat patients when they are there. However, as one of my constituents said at the public meeting to discuss the south Wales plan at Gwernyfed High School on Monday night, 'But first, Kirsty, I've got to get to that hospital'.

The ambulance issues are well rehearsed in this Chamber. We all know the problems that constituents have had in getting an ambulance to them and getting to hospital in an appropriate timescale. At the public meeting on Monday night, we were told that we should not worry because retrieval services would be put in place. At the same time, they also acknowledged that the air ambulance cannot fly at night or in bad weather.

I have one issue on the south Wales plan in particular. We have been promised the specialist and critical care centre for seven years. We have been told by a variety of Ministers when that hospital would be open and that that hospital had been given the go-ahead. If their services are to be moved further away, my constituents would like to have a guarantee that the hospital that is going to deliver them will actually be built. Also, if the health board finds it difficult to staff both the Royal Gwent and Abergavenny hospitals at present, how is it going to staff three hospitals, when two out of three people will still be admitted to the Royal Gwent and Abergavenny hospitals?

Staff issues are crucial. We know that, at present, we have significant vacancy levels in particular specialties. What has the Government been doing to try to combat those things? The working time directive did not sneak up on us overnight. The immigration rules that this Government now blames were introduced by the previous Labour Westminster Government. They have not sneaked up on us overnight either. I have repeatedly stood up in the Chamber and asked the First Minister what steps his Government would take to recruit the doctors that this country needs. Eventually, we got an answer. Last year—

16:11

**Nick Ramsay** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Senedd.tv  
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I am grateful to Kirsty Williams for giving way. You have mentioned Nevill Hall Hospital. In south-east Wales, we have the Gwent Clinical Futures programme, which included an extensive consultation involving clinicians and the public and was widely accepted. Do you share my concern that there is now a suggestion that that consultation might be overturned and that the new critical care centre in Llanfrecfha in Cwmbran might not just include critical care, but other services that will be no longer in other local general hospitals?

**Kirsty Williams** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

That is a concern to constituents. What is also a concern to me is that the hospital that we have previously consulted on was a much bigger hospital than what is being put forward now to the Welsh Government. It is banking on much shorter lengths of stay and shipping people back to Abergavenny and the Royal Gwent out of that hospital, to try to make it more affordable.

Those staff issues have not sneaked up on this Government. The Government's answer last year was to launch a doctor recruitment programme. At the time, the Government could not tell us how many doctors it expected to recruit as a result of that investment. That programme has been running for a year and I would like to hear from the Minister for health this afternoon how many doctors the Welsh Government initiative has been successful in recruiting to the Welsh NHS.

Finally, on the issue of nurses, if we want clinically robust services, wherever they are located, we need appropriate nursing levels. I ask the Minister to once again consider the international evidence that suggests that having a legal minimum nursing staff ratio on wards improves outcomes for patients. It has worked in other parts of the world; will he consider introducing it in Wales?

**Elin Jones** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Rwyf am gychwyn fy nghyfraniad y prynhawn yma drwy ganolbwyntio ar yr angen i greu gweithlu digonol a phwrpasol ar gyfer yr NHS. Ar gyfer y ddadl heddiw, rwyf am ganolbwyntio'n benodol ar y gweithlu meddygol. Ai cyflunio'r gwasanaeth iechyd i gwrdd â ffurf y gweithlu presennol yw bwriad y Llywodraeth, neu a yw'n bwriadu cynllunio'r gweithlu i gynnal ein gwasanaeth iechyd? Dadl y Llywodraeth yw bod rhaid newid a chanoli gwasanaethau bant o rai ysbytai lleol, gan fod nifer y doctoriaid yn annigonol a chan fod problemau recriwtio difrifol gan rai byrddau iechyd. Ydy, mae nifer doctoriaid Cymru, yn ôl pen ein poblogaeth, yn isel. Mae Sefydliad Iechyd y Byd yn dangos mai lefel y Deyrnas Gyfunol yw'r isaf o blith gwledydd yr Undeb Ewropeaidd, a bod Cymru ar waelod y gynghrair o fewn gwledydd y Deyrnas Gyfunol. Felly, mae angen recriwtio meddygon i'r llefydd gwag a chynyddu'r nifer o feddygon yn gyffredinol.

I will start my contribution this afternoon by concentrating on the need to create a competent and appropriate workforce for the NHS. In today's debate, I will concentrate specifically on the medical workforce. Is it the Government's intention to reconfigure the health service to match the format of the current workforce, or is it its intention to plan the workforce to maintain our health service? The Government's argument is that we have to change and centralise services away from some local hospitals because the number of doctors is insufficient and some health boards have serious problems with recruitment problems. Yes, the number of doctors in Wales, per head of population, is small. The World Health Organization has demonstrated that the UK level is the lowest among the countries of the European Union, and that Wales is at the bottom of the league of the countries of the UK. Therefore, there is a need to recruit doctors to fill the vacancies and to increase the number of doctors generally.

Yn arferol ar bwynt fel hwn byddai'r cyn Weinidog iechyd, a'r Prif Weinidog hefyd yn ei amser, yn ein cyfeirio ni'n syth at bolisi mewnfudo Llywodraeth y Deyrnas Gyfunol ac anallu meddygon o'r dwyrain pell yn enwedig i gael fisa gwaith i'r Deyrnas Gyfunol. Fodd bynnag, fel y dywedodd Kirsty Williams, polisi a gychwynwyd gan Lywodraeth Lafur y Deyrnas Gyfunol yn 2008 yw hwn. Rhaid imi ddweud wrth Kirsty Williams, fodd bynnag, ei fod yn cael ei barhau a'i gryfhau, o bosibl, gan Lywodraeth y Deyrnas Gyfunol yn ei ffurf bresennol. Felly, yr hyn y byddwn i'n awgrymu i'r Llywodraeth yw y dylai ailgyfeirio ei hymgyrch recriwtio tymor byr i wledydd o fewn yr Undeb Ewropeaidd, lle mae rhyddid i'r gweithlu symud.

Usually on a point like this the former Minister for health, and the First Minister in his time, would refer us directly to the UK Government's immigration policy and the inability of doctors from the far east especially to obtain work visas for the UK. However, as Kirsty Williams said, this is a policy that was started by the Labour Government of the UK in 2008. I must tell Kirsty Williams, however, that it is being perpetuated and strengthened, possibly, by the UK Government in its current form. Therefore, I would suggest to the Government that it should redirect its short-term recruitment drive at countries within the European Union, where there is freedom of movement for the workforce.

Cyfeiriodd Leanne Wood at y ffaith bod un bwrdd iechyd eisoes wedi bod yn llwyddiannus yn gwneud hyn, wrth dargedu Sbaen; mae Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Prifysgol Abertawe Bro Morgannwg o bosibl wedi denu 14 o feddygon newydd o Sbaen i'r ardal honno. Hoffwn weld y Llywodraeth, felly, yn arwain ymgyrch genedlaethol ar ran bob bwrdd iechyd i recriwtio meddygon o fewn yr Undeb Ewropeaidd i lanw lleoedd gwag a lleoedd hyfforddiant gwag yng Nghymru.

Leanne Wood referred to the fact that one health board has already been successful in doing this, in targeting Spain; Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Local Health Board has possibly attracted 14 new doctors from Spain to that area. I would like to see the Government, therefore, lead a national campaign on behalf of all health boards to recruit doctors from within the European Union to fill vacant posts and training vacancies in Wales.

Yn y tymor hwy, rydym eisiau hyfforddi mwy o fyfyrwyr meddygol yn ein hysgolion meddygol yng Nghymru a defnyddio cymelliadau ariannol i raddedigion meddygol i hyfforddi yn yr ysbytai hynny sy'n anoddach denu graddedigion iddynt. Wrth gwrs, mae'r ddeoniaeth yn awyddus i ganoli hyfforddiant mewn nifer gyfyngedig o ysbytai. Rwy'n deall beirniadaeth y ddeoniaeth bod gormod o feddygon o dan hyfforddiant yn cael eu defnyddio i lanw rotas o fewn ein hysbytai yn hytrach na derbyn hyfforddiant strwythuredig o safon uchel. Felly, os yw'r ddeoniaeth, fel mae'n gwneud, yn penderfynu peidio â gosod doctoriaid dan hyfforddiant mewn ysbyty penodol, mae'n rhaid i ni gofio nad yw hynny o reidrwydd yn golygu bod yn rhaid symud y gwasanaethau NHS o'r ysbyty hwnnw hefyd. Gall unrhyw fwrdd iechyd neu unrhyw Lywodraeth ddewis staffio'r gwasanaeth yn llawn gan feddygon nad ydynt o dan hyfforddiant. Dyna'r union drafodaeth a ddatblygwyd rhwng y fforwm clinigol cenedlaethol a byrddau iechyd Hywel Dda a Betsi Cadwaladr yn ystod yr ymgynghoriadau diweddar.

Rydym yn tueddu i glywed gan y rhai sy'n cefnogi israddio gwasanaethau damweiniau ac achosion brys a mamolaeth bod y rhai ohonom sy'n gwrthwynebu israddio rywfodd yn erbyn unrhyw newid yn y NHS. Mae hynny ym mhell o fodd yn wir. Meddylwch am funud am y newid mwyaf radical a phellgyrhaeddol i'r gwasanaeth iechyd, y newid a fyddai'n lleihau blocio gwelyau yn ein wardiau, yn lleihau'r pwysau difrifol ar ein hunedau argyfwng ac yn cynyddu'r gofal i gleifion yn y gymuned. Y newid hwnnw yw integreiddio gwasanaethau iechyd a gwasanaethau gofal yn llawn a rhannu cyllidebau rhwng ein byrddau iechyd a'n hawdurdadu lleol, gan chwalu unwaith ac am byth y rhwystrau biwrocraidd sy'n tagu ein gwasanaethau iechyd a gofal. Mae Plaid Cymru yn barodi i gefnogi'r newid hwn ac i ddefnyddio Bil Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Llesiant (Cymru), sydd o'n blaen fel Cynulliad ar hyn o bryd, i orfodi'r newid hwn ar ein byrddau iechyd a llywodraeth leol. Mae llywodraeth leol hefyd eisiau gweld newid a diwygio yn y maes hwn. Y Llywodraeth Lafur sy'n llusgo ei thraed ar y newid mawr hwn a Phlaid Cymru sy'n galw amdano. Dyma'r newid a fyddai'n gweddnewid ein gwasanaethau iechyd a gofal ym mhob cwr o Gymru.

In the longer term, we want to train more medical students in our medical schools in Wales and use financial incentives for medical graduates to train in those hospitals that find it harder to attract graduates. Of course, the deanery is eager to centralise training in a limited number of hospitals. I understand the criticism that the deanery has that too many doctors in training are being used to fill rotas in our hospitals rather than being given structured, high-quality training. Therefore, if the deanery, as it is doing, decides not to place doctors in training in a specific hospital, we must bear in mind that that does not necessarily mean that those NHS services also have to be moved from that hospital. Any health board or any Government can choose to staff that service fully with doctors that are not in training. That is exactly the debate that was had by the national clinical forum and the Hywel Dda and Betsi Cadwaladr health boards during the recent consultations.

We tend to hear from those who support the downgrading of A&E and maternity services that those of us who are opposed to downgrading are somehow opposed to any change in the NHS. That is far from being true. Think for a moment about the most radical and far-reaching change to the health service, the change that would reduce bedblocking on our wards, that would reduce the serious pressures on our emergency departments and that would increase care for patients in the community. That change is integrating health and care services fully and having shared budgets between our health boards and our local authorities, demolishing once and for all the bureaucratic barriers that are throttling our health and care services. Plaid Cymru is willing to support this change and to use the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, which is before the Assembly at present, to enforce this change on our health boards and local government. Local government also wants to see change and reform in this area. It is the Labour Government that is dragging its feet on that major change and it is Plaid Cymru that it is demanding it. This is the change that would transform our health and care services in all parts of Wales.

16:18

## **Mick Antoniw** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

I am glad to have the opportunity to participate in this debate, which is coming at a time when the five south Wales health boards are commencing their consultation process after a three-month engagement process. I first put on record my recognition of the considerable amount of work that has been done by the health boards and their staff in this process. The number of contacts, meetings and discussions is truly impressive. I also put on record my thanks to the NHS trade unions in my constituency for the help that they have given me in understanding the issues and challenges in the health service, particularly as they affect staff and patients. Contrary to some of the reports that I have seen about NHS staff in the papers in past months, I have never come across a more committed and dedicated group of people: committed to the values of the NHS and dedicated to the patients and communities that they serve.

On Monday night, I went to a well-attended meeting in Pontypridd, organised as part of the consultation process. It was one of the best and most constructive conversations about the future of the health service that I have attended in recent years. It was attended by Cwm Taf senior trauma, neonatal and paediatrics consultants, GPs, health board and community health council representatives from across Cwm Taf, staff representatives, and many local residents, from Rhondda down to Llantrisant. We had one of the most open, frank and constructive discussions that I have been involved in.

I think that it is worth emphasising some of the key points that arose from that discussion, both from those organising and those participating. The first point that was made was that the consultation is genuine and open consultation, that no decision has been made, and that all of the evidence will be properly considered and subject to independent analysis. It was made very clear that the focus of the evidence will be on outcomes, and that the most important areas of evidence will be quality, safety, access and equality. Those are the areas that I will be focusing on in my own submission.

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It is clear from previous debates in this Chamber, and again today, that we are all agreed that change is essential and that standing still is not an option. That was emphasised time and again by the consultants and medical staff who spoke at the meeting in Pontypridd. Doing nothing would lead to increasingly unsafe services with deteriorating outcomes. As Dr Poulden, chair of the Welsh national board of the College of Emergency Medicine says in today's 'Western Mail', many departments are on the brink and could soon collapse if change does not take place.

An interesting paper has been submitted today by the Royal College of Physicians, which basically states something similar. It states that it is time to take action, and we cannot wait for unplanned chaos to force these decisions; our national health service is too important. It makes a number of other important comments and, of course, the question is precisely what the format of reconfiguration should be.

At the Pontypridd meeting it was also made very clear that this is not about cutting costs. In fact, the south Wales proposals, of which there are at least four at the moment, would cost between £10 million and £14 million to implement, and would require the recruitment of an additional 28 consultants and 17 middle-ranking staff. There is an issue there, but it was made clear by the doctors and the consultants during these discussions that they are convinced that the current structure will not enable them to make that recruitment, that, without reconfiguration, there is, effectively, no prospect of recruiting the doctors required, and that the current vacancy level will only increase. It was clear that other options being suggested were unsustainable.

As a constituency Assembly Member, I am engaged with my constituents and hospital staff to ensure that their voice is heard during the consultation and that the strongest possible case is made in support of their aspirations. There are important issues of access in relation to the ambulance service, which is key to reconfiguration, because I suppose that it does not really matter how you reconfigure if the ambulance service is not fit for purpose. That is an issue on which I spoken many times.

Therefore, I welcome the commitment and the work that is being done on this issue currently by the Minister for Health and Social Services. He knows my views—and, I think, the views of the Assembly overall—on this matter. What I am not prepared to compromise on, however, is quality and safety. The final decisions must be taken by the medical experts, as has been confirmed again today in the note by the Royal College of Physicians, which makes that absolutely clear. Our role is to ensure that the process is carried out with these as the guiding principles, and that the voice of the people is heard, listened to and understood.

16:23

## Llyr Gruffydd [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Rwy'n cytuno mai llais y clinigwyr yw un o'r pwysicaf yn y drafodaeth hon. Yr eironi, wrth gwrs, yn achos y gogledd, gyda Betsi Cadwaladr a chanoli gwasanaethau brys i fabanod newyddanedig, oedd bod y ddogfen ymgynghorol, hyd yn oed, yn cydnabod bod y farn glinigol yn erbyn canoli, ond roedd y rheolwyr a'r biwrocrataid yn teimlo mai dyna fyddai'r ateb mwyaf addas. Ar y wyneb, gall y model o ganoli gwasanaethau o gwmpas gofal meddygol ymgynghorol 24 awr y dydd, saith dydd yr wythnos, ymddangos yn ddeniadol iawn, ond mae gweithrediad ymarferol polisi a model o'r fath yn fater gwahanol iawn. Mae llu o broblemau ymarferol sy'n golygu, yn fy marn i, nad yw'r model hanner cystal pan fo'n cael ei weithredu gan bobl go iawn mewn sefyllfaoedd go iawn—cymunedau ac ysbytai go iawn—ac mewn amgylchedd, yn anffodus, sy'n un biwrocrataidd iawn hefyd.

Un o'r elfennau sy'n gyrru hyn—y cyfiawnhad cyfan, yn wir, dros ganoli—yw y bydd yn galluogi byrddau iechyd i ddarparu gwasanaeth meddygol ymgynghorol rownd y cloc, bob dydd o'r wythnos. Yn ymarferol, rydym yn gwybod bod heriau difrifol o ran cyflawni hynny. Ni fydd ymgynghorwyr a'u cyrff proffesiynol yn cytuno i weithio sifftiau nos heb godiadau cyflog sylweddol, nac ychwaith newidiadau arwyddocaol i amodau gwaith.

I agree that the voice of the clinicians is one of the most important in this debate. The irony, of course, is that, in the case of north Wales, with regard to Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board and the centralisation of emergency services for new-born babies, even the consultation document itself acknowledged that clinical opinion was opposed to the centralisation, but the managers and bureaucrats felt that that would be the most appropriate solution. On the face of it, the model of centralising services around consultant-led 24/7 medical care appears very attractive, but the practical implementation of such a model is a very different matter, because there is a whole host of practical problems, which means, in my opinion, that the model is nowhere near as effective when implemented by real people in real situations, real communities and real hospitals, and in an environment that is, unfortunately, also extremely bureaucratic.

One of the elements driving this—indeed, the entire justification behind centralisation—is that it will enable health boards to provide consultant-led medical services around the clock, every day of the week. Practically speaking, we know that there are significant challenges to achieving that. Consultants and their professional organisations will not agree to work night shifts or to significant changes to their working conditions without significant wage increases.

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Mae profiad y contractau gwasanaethau meddygol cyffredinol gyda meddygon teulu yn arwydd o'r anawsterau y mae Llywodraethau a chyrrff yn y gwasanaeth iechyd yn eu cael wrth negodi gwasanaethau y tu allan i oriau. Mae methiant Llywodraeth Cymru i ymestyn oriau agor meddygon teulu, ddwy flynedd i mewn i'r Llywodraeth hon, hefyd yn dangos yr anhawster sydd o ran gwneud hyn.

Gyda phellteroedd teithio hwy i gael mynediad at y gwasanaethau hyn, fel rydym wedi ei glywed, mae perfformiad y gwasanaeth ambiwlans yn llawer mwy allweddol, ac, yn wahanol i'r Alban, nid oes gennym yr un gwasanaeth ambiwlans awyr bob tywydd i Gymru, nid yw'n fflyd o ambiwlansys mor fodern, a nid oes gennym y lefel angenrheidiol o staff i allu darparu'r gwasanaeth y byddai'r gwasanaeth iechyd, o dan y trefniant newydd, yn fwy dibynnol byth arno nag yw ar hyn o bryd. Mae lefel y pwysau ar ein hysbytai presennol ni, a'r diffyg adnoddau yn y gwasanaethau cymdeithasol i dderbyn cleifion a'u rhyddhau o'r ysbytai, yn golygu bod ambiwlansys eisoes yn ciwio y tu allan i ysbytai. Ni fyddai hynny ond yn gwaethygu gyda chanoli.

Mae holl fodel gwasanaethau wedi'u canoli yn ei gwneud yn ofynnol rhoi gwasanaethau cefnogi a gwasanaethau ategol ar waith i sicrhau nad yw'r unedau sy'n weddill yn cael eu rhoi o dan bwysau difrifol. Er mwyn i 80% o bobl barhau i gael eu trin yn eu hysbyty lleol—mewn adrannau damwain a mân anafiadau, adrannau gofal brys, neu beth bynnag yr ydych yn eu galw—mae angen meddygon. Ni fydd unedau mân anafiadau dan arweiniad nyrs yn dod yn agos at y ffigur o drin 80%. Mae hefyd angen offer drud, megis periannau pelydr X, a gwasanaethau y tu allan i oriau sy'n llawer gwell.

Mae gofyn hefyd i staff ambiwlansys a'r cyhoedd fod llawer yn gliriach ynglŷn â'r lle y mae angen i gleifion fynd mewn gwahanol sefyllfaoedd, sy'n gofyn am lawer gwell cysondeb o ran brandio gwasanaethau. Mewn geiriau eraill, mae angen mwy o adnoddau a mwy o gymhwysedd. Ar hyn o bryd, mae'n deg i ni amau na fydd hynny'n digwydd. Ar ben hynny, mae'r bwriad i gau canolfannau gofal brys yn Lloegr yn dangos y bydd pryderon ariannol bob amser yn gwneud yr ysbytai hyn—a ystyrir yn aml, yn gam neu'n gymwys, yn ysbytai eilradd—yn dargedau hawdd ar gyfer toriadau.

Mae gwaith ymchwil diweddar yn y 'BMJ' yn dangos bod y risg o farw o ganlyniad i gymhlethdodau yn sgîl llawdriniaeth ddewisol yn fwy os yw'r driniaeth yn digwydd tua diwedd yr wythnos. Mae hyn oherwydd y diffyg yn y gwasanaeth ymgynghorol sydd ar gael ar benwythnosau. Mae'r risg o gymhlethdodau, megis 'infection' ac yn y blaen, ar ei mwyaf yn y 48 awr ar ôl llawdriniaeth.

The general medical services contract with GPs exemplifies some of the difficulties that Governments and health bodies have in negotiating out-of-hours services. The failure of the Welsh Government to extend GP opening hours, two years into this Government, also demonstrates the difficulties that exist in this regard.

With longer distances to travel to access these services, as we have heard, the performance of the ambulance service becomes far more important, and, unlike Scotland, we do not have the same all-weather air ambulance service in Wales, our fleet of ambulances is not as modern, and we do not have the necessary level of staff to be able to provide the service that the health service, under the new arrangements, would be even more dependent upon than at present. The levels of pressure on our current hospitals, and the lack of resources in social services to accept patients and release them from hospitals, means that ambulances are already queuing outside our hospitals. That will only get worse with centralisation.

The whole model of centralised services makes it essential that the support and ancillary services are in place to ensure that the remaining units are not placed under too significant pressure. In order for 80% of people to continue to be treated in their local hospital—in accident and minor injury units, emergency care units, or whatever you call them—you need doctors. Nurse-led minor injury units will not come anywhere near that figure of treating 80%. You also need expensive equipment, such as X-ray machines, and far better out-of-hours services.

You also need ambulance staff and the public to be far clear about where patients need to go in different situations, which calls for far more consistency in branding services. In other words, you need more resources and more competence. At present, it is fair that we doubt that that will happen. On top of that, the intention to close emergency care units in England shows that financial concerns will always make these hospitals—that are often considered, rightly or wrongly, second-rate—easy targets for cuts.

Recent research in the 'BMJ' shows that the risk of death as a result of complications following elective surgery is greater if the treatment happens towards the end of the week. This is because of the problems with the consultant service available on weekends. The risk of complications, such as infection and so on, is at its greatest in the 48 hours following surgery.

Mae'r boblogaeth yn heneiddio, gyda, wrth gwrs, nifer gynyddol o achosion o gyflyrau cronig, a hyn i gyd yn golygu bod unrhyw ostyngiad yng nghapasiti yn edrych ar y sefyllfa yn y tymor byr yn unig. Mae'n idealistig a dweud y lleiaf i gymryd yn ganiataol y gall gwella dewisiadau ffordd o fyw a mwy o driniaethau yn y gymuned wneud dim heblaw lliniaru rhywfaint ar y galw cynyddol am driniaethau sy'n dod yn sgîl y newidiadau demograffeg sydd o'n blaenau. Peidier felly â meddwl bod canoli yn ateb: mae problemau ymarferol a real o ran y model o ganoli. Mae'n codi mwy o gwestiynau nag y mae'n cynnig atebion iddynt, cymaint felly fel ei fod, yn fy marn i, yn symud y gwasanaeth i'r cyfeiriad anghywir, a dylem wrthwynebu'r symudiad hwnnw.

The population is ageing, with, of course, an increasing number of chronic diseases, and this all means that any reduction in capacity is looking at the situation in the short term only. It is idealistic, to say the least, to take it for granted that improving lifestyle choices and providing more treatments in the community could do anything other than alleviate somewhat the increasing demand for treatments that will come in the wake of the demographic changes facing us. Let us not think, therefore, that centralisation is the answer: there are practical and real problems with the centralisation model. It raises more question than it answers, so much so that, in my view, it is moving the service in the wrong direction, and we should oppose that move.

16:28 **Jenny Rathbone** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I am delighted to hear from Elin Jones that we are not opposed to change with regard to this motion. I note that the motion does not talk about all district general hospitals, but it is absolutely clear from everything that the experts are saying that it is not possible to go on providing services in the way that we currently provide them. 'No change' is absolutely not an option, and that is the conundrum that our doctors and nurses have spent 18 months working on in order to try to find a sustainable solution to the challenges that we face. We either manage the change required to deliver safety and quality, or we do nothing, as this motion, I think, proposes, and preside over the inevitable collapse and closure of services.

16:29 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Will you take an intervention?

16:29 **Jenny Rathbone** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I will come to you in a minute.

The Tories' first amendment is what I would call the King Canute option. It refers to continuing

'to provide the current configuration of consultant-led A&E and maternity services',

but read what Dr Mark Poulden, the chair of the Welsh national board of the College of Emergency Medicine, said in the newspaper today:

'Even if you give me a load of cash, I could not create a perfect system because the doctors are just not there.'

While Darren Millar says that it is all a problem of money, and that the Welsh Government is not giving the NHS enough, Plaid Cymru is saying that it is all about working harder at recruiting doctors. It is interesting to hear what Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Local Health Board did with recruiting doctors from Spain, but we know that there is a shortage of A&E consultants across the UK, and the reason that junior doctors will not come and fill vacancies that we have here is because there is simply not that critical mass to cover that 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service. At the moment in Cwm Taf, there is one junior doctor in an A&E department and the other nine vacancies are being covered by the consultants. That is an unsustainable situation, and we have to consolidate those 24-hour, seven-days-a-week emergency services. We have to do it in such a way that the people who really need that emergency service will be able to get the quality that will save their life.

One of the most striking things about the document produced around the south Wales plan is that 80% of the people who present at A&E do not require seeing an emergency doctor. One of the challenges that we face is to ensure that the people who are turning up at A&E who do not need that emergency doctor's service are served appropriately, but are not clogging up the system for the people who have strokes, heart attacks and serious injury. I read last weekend of a woman—

16:32 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Will you take an intervention?

16:32 **Jenny Rathbone** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Not at the moment, no. I read of a woman who described how she had gone to an A&E because she had a mouth ulcer. I appreciate that, being a former LibDem councillor, she had difficulty knowing which way to turn, but in my view it is unfortunate that she chose to go to A&E rather than her local pharmacist. Some people are now arguing that the role of the GP as gatekeeper to other services is no longer appropriate, and that is something that we may need to have further debate about. One of the reasons why there has been a 68% increase in A&E presentations in the last 10 years has to be about the success of a lot of the public health messages around people needing to check out their moles and lumps to make sure that these are not serious, and do not require further investigation. Of course, in most cases, these are not serious, but people obviously are worried and want to find out whether it is something that is serious.

I would like to just quickly talk about the ABMU out-of-hours service, which offers some solutions for possible ways forward. This service started life as a GP co-op and then, after 2004, became a social enterprise. It includes a co-located GP out-of-hours service in emergency departments, which diverts non-emergency demand from A&E, and then the new acute GP unit at Singleton, integrated with the Singleton minor injuries unit, which takes all GP acute medical referrals—

16:33 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Conclude quickly now, please.

16:33 **Jenny Rathbone** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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It has had a 40% reduction in in-patient additions, which freeze up those services for people who are medical emergencies.

16:33 **Simon Thomas** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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I am pleased to take part in this debate. At a time when we are coming up to the sixty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the NHS, this debate enables us to put on record our belief in some core principles that should underline any way that we go forward. Unlike David Cameron today, we in Plaid Cymru are not here to attack or denigrate the NHS in Wales, or even to say that everything the Welsh Government does is wrong. It is true that the way that ambulance times have been dealt with is shambolic. It is true that waiting times are growing unacceptably in Wales, feeding only, unfortunately, in the experience of my constituents, a growth in private medicine and private dealings on the side. That is unfortunate. There are at least two parties here that do not agree with that growth. Accident and emergency departments are already stretched in Wales, and are now increasingly stretched, which makes the suggested reconfiguration even more difficult to stomach. Something has gone seriously wrong over the years in planning the workforce for the NHS in Wales. Many of us would support a genuine national approach to reconfiguration, but what we have been served instead is a classic Machiavellian political charade, as a national task has been allocated to unelected, Government-appointed regional health boards. Starting off in the least important areas for the Welsh Government's concern, north and west Wales, vital services have been picked off, such as maternity and A&E services. I note what my colleague Llyr Huws Gruffydd said. That is absolutely true in Hywel Dda as well. Clinicians there did not support what was suggested for neonatal services in Haverfordwest. They did not support what was happening in Prince Philip Hospital. In fact, they all said 'no' and wrote that publicly. We have a situation where we have been invited to pick off, test and then downgrade individual services in individual parts of Wales.

By now, it has moved to south Wales. It has moved to the area that the Welsh Government really feels is its own area. It was interesting to see the tweets of Owen Smith's tweets today, which said that 86% of the NHS doctors in Wales want to work in Wales and do not want to work in England. This is at a time when this Government is supporting moving neonatal services out of north Wales and into Merseyside and the north-west of England. What sense is there in that? There were tweets that said that the Welsh Government is not downgrading A&E departments in Wales? If you think that a nurse-led, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., minor-injuries situation is somehow an A&E situation, then that is true. Otherwise, it is a load of cobblers.

Now that the focus has come to south Wales, the things that we were saying as a party all along, which we were told was scaremongering and shroud waving, are now being promulgated by Labour Cabinet Members, backbenchers and, as I just said, Westminster frontbenchers without any shame whatsoever.

On the day of the announcement of the south Wales programme, ready-made placards and websites went up. We know what is happening and we are seeing it happening now: hospital is being pitched against hospital, valley against valley, town against town. It is the old game of divide and rule. As Leanne Wood said in opening this debate, what we really want to see is a united approach on the health service in Wales—something we can agree on and come to a consensus on.

**Bethan Jenkins** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Do you agree that pitting communities against each other, especially those in the First Minister's area, by saying that the Princess of Wales Hospital should be the one that is downgraded, is unprofessional? Some Assembly Members are saying that in our communities. People are very scared about what will happen and that is making them even more concerned.

## Simon Thomas [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

Yes, I agree with Bethan Jenkins's point. What the First Minister said yesterday was wrong. He said that nobody on those benches had opposed reconfiguration in principle, yet we see photographs of Labour AMs with posters saying, 'Keep all services in our hospital'. It is misleading the national debate completely. The Minister for health, who I know has a genuine commitment to the NHS in Wales and a genuine desire to see it work properly, must read this and weep internally and quietly. He must be very upset, because this is not the way to run a reconfiguration. It really is not.

Our job is to take the clinicians' advice and the royal colleges' views, but we must marry that with the delivery of accessible public health services in Wales. We were elected to that. We fought for a Welsh Government that could do that. We did not fight for devolution to let the royal colleges decide what the NHS is in Wales. We fought for devolution to elect a Government to elect a Minister who would then deliver something that met the needs of the Welsh people. That is what we want to see.

Where do we go from here? We need to take the heat out of the situation—I agree with that—and we need to see less of the Cabinet fronting up these campaigns. That needs to be said. The public needs to have its say. The community health councils' views must be considered without the threat of legal action against them, as has happened in Hywel Dda. We want to see the Minister for health lead a strong national debate on a proper health service that is available 24/7, that strengthens medical training, that leads a national use of the proper resources, from the EU if necessary, and utilises the best resources that we have. We need to see a vision of what the NHS could look like in 10 or 20 years' time.

16:39

## Mark Drakeford [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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

I hope to use the time available to me this afternoon to set out three simple and undeniable facts that are well known, extensively rehearsed and easily available. Together, they demonstrate why the proposition before us this afternoon has to be rejected.

Even if that proposition were clinically advisable, which it is not, it is simply undeliverable. A great deal has been said this afternoon about problems with recruitment in the Welsh NHS, so let me begin by placing that in context. There has been a year-on-year increase in the number of medical and dental staff in the NHS in Wales. There has been a 45% increase in the 10 years to September 2011—some extra 3,000 posts. There has been a 37% increase in the number of NHS consultants in Wales between 2004 and 2011. Vacancies are declining, not growing, in the Welsh NHS. At 2.5%, staff turnover is at an all-time low. The result is that over 96% of all medical and dental posts are currently filled.

Yet, we continue to experience some very specific challenges in a small number of specialist areas, something that is neither unique to Wales nor susceptible to easy solutions. What we experience here is part of a UK-wide shortage of doctors in paediatrics and emergency medicine from which Wales is not immune in any way and that can certainly not be solved by the sort of wish-list policies that we have heard this afternoon. Let me be blunt—you can call for it in as many resolutions as you like, but there is simply not the number of consultants available to do what this motion proposes. While the Liberal Democrat amendments this afternoon make some proper points about recruitment and staffing—I am completely prepared to consider the specifics that they propose—I cannot commit to them by voting for them this afternoon.

Here is a second incontrovertible fact—even if we were to follow the advice of this motion and attempt to run hand-to-mouth services based around impossible-to-recruit consultants, the service itself would be neither safe nor sustainable. Just last week, Wales's postgraduate dean for medical education warned that providing the same services in so many hospitals across south Wales means that Wales's future doctors are not getting the training that they need for the future that we face. This motion would only make that problem worse. The future cannot be shaped, as it proposes, by a deeply reactionary attachment to a world that has moved on. Changing the way that some hospital services are provided is essential to help us to improve training and experience, which will attract doctors here to Wales.

Thirdly, and most important of all, the motion offers Welsh patients a service that clinicians themselves reject. Let us just for a moment imagine that we could recruit consultants to staff a maternity service in every district general hospital in Wales, which we cannot. Let us imagine, too, that we could sustain a service behind this thinly stretched consultant line, which we could not. Would that be good for patients? No, it would not, because the number of live births at many of these sites would simply not be sufficient to allow clinicians the opportunities—[Interruption.] I have enough mistakes to deal with this afternoon without adding to them by taking an intervention, Alun Ffred. This would simply not be sufficient to allow clinicians the opportunities that they would need to practise their skills and meet the accreditation requirements of the royal college and provide a quality service for patients. Here is the vicious circle into which this motion would plunge the NHS and its patients in Wales.

We know very well that in the competitive business of attracting shortage staff to work in Wales, the things that matter are the ability to work with students, participate in research and maintain clinical work at the forefront of professional practice. Spreading services across an unsustainable number of sites simply means that rotas cannot be filled and training disappears. Far from research being mainstreamed, which Plaid Cymru claims to be one of its policies for attracting more doctors, research opportunities evaporate, accreditation becomes more and more difficult, vacancy levels escalate and vacancies become more and more difficult to fill.

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There is no choice but change in the Welsh NHS. You can have it the way that this motion proposes, in which services fall over in an unplanned, unpredictable and unmanageable way, or you can try to plan for the future, to go on creating an NHS that can last and provides the best clinical care for its patients. Much has been made here this afternoon of the south Wales plan and, as you know, I have to be careful about what I say about the proposals in the plan because final decisions may end up with Ministers. That is why, on the Government side, we will not vote in relation to amendments 2, 3 and 4 this afternoon. To make a declaration here—[Interruption.]

16:45 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Order. I literally cannot hear the Minister. My region includes this hospital. I want to hear the Minister, as do members of the public.

16:45 **Mark Drakeford** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Diolch yn fawr, Ddirprwy Lywydd.

Thank you, Deputy Presiding Officer.

To make a declaration here in any direction on issues that might end up needing Ministers to exercise appellate functions would simply be to compromise that decision-making process, and we will not do it.

Let me remind Members of just some of the events that led to the publication of the plan—of the series of six clinical conferences held across south Wales, of the over 300 front-line clinicians involved in its production, from all health boards and the ambulance service, of the doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, physiotherapists and others working together in clinical groups to refine and develop the consultation document published on 23 May. Is it any surprise that there is cynicism and, frankly, dismay, at the sort of debate we have heard here this afternoon? Never mind what the clinicians say—never mind the doctors, never mind the nurses, never mind the consultants, never mind that there is a consultation exercise that has barely begun and which will run until 8 July with at least 43 public events taking place across the whole of south Wales. Instead, let us invent a fantasy plan. Let us propel it, evidence-free and clinically friendless, onto the floor of the Assembly and press it to a conclusion before that consultation is even two weeks old. This morning, the NHS Confederation in England, together with the royal colleges and patient groups, published a report that warns of a vicious spiral of botched changes, unless politicians make the case for change and explain why redesigning services is not an option, but a necessity. That is what we recognise on this side. That is why we will be voting to reject this motion.

16:47 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Galwaf ar Leanne Wood i ymateb i'r ddadl.

I call on Leanne Wood to respond to the debate.

16:47 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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In responding to this debate, I will take Darren Millar's contribution first. Darren opened his contribution by noting his disappointment at the absence of the Minister for Education and Skills, who has been—[Interruption.] Oh, there he is. I was about to note the Minister for education's absence, but he has just arrived in the Chamber. The Member for Aberavon intervened during Darren's contribution, pointing out the lack of workforce planning by the Government, which has caused this problem. We welcome that acknowledgement, but I am afraid that Darren did somewhat undermine his argument when he brought up the matter of cuts to NHS budgets. I cannot accept—and none of us in the Chamber or out there in the wider country should accept—that the Tories are the defenders against the cuts, when they lead the Government in London that has inflicted the cuts to this block grant that have resulted in the cuts to the health budget.

16:48 **Darren Millar** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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You do recognise, do you not, that the Welsh block grant can be determined in terms of how it is spent by the Welsh Government? Your party was a part of the previous Welsh Government that inflicted many of the cuts that we are now seeing. There were record-breaking cuts of £814 million. Do you accept that there would be a different suite of options on the table in south Wales and elsewhere if there was more money on the table?

16:49 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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What I accept, Darren, is that had your party had its way in those budget negotiations, then the education service would have been completely stripped, as would all other services provided by the National Assembly. Your Government in London has inflicted massive cuts on the block grant of the Assembly and you have to take some responsibility for that.

In Kirsty Williams's contribution, she helpfully pointed out the additional pressures and challenges facing people who live in rural areas. Kirsty referred to ambulance response times, too, and the use of the air ambulance in Powys and other areas. Of course, that cannot be relied upon at night and in bad weather. She rightly points out that it was the Labour Government that introduced the immigration rules that have led us to this situation. I was reading a press statement that I issued in 2009, in which I asked the then Minister for health to make representations to her party colleagues in London. In that press statement I predicted that there would be shortages of doctors in A&E, obstetrics and paediatrics. We have known about the effects for some time, yet the Government has failed to plan for that eventuality.

Elin Jones raised the matter of Labour's change to the immigration rules as well, which have since, of course, been tightened up even further. She has called for a national campaign to fill vacancies by recruiting from the EU. We are yet to hear the arguments against doing that. Elin also raised the matter of training, which I raised in my opening remarks. She has put forward some practical, concrete proposals to transform health and social services by using legislation to make them collaborate.

Mick Antoniw's contribution was different to the one he gave at the rally to save our Royal Glamorgan Hospital services in Pontypridd last weekend. I would say that there was a much more muted response from you here, Mick. I wonder why.

*Mick Antoniw a gododd—*

*Mick Antoniw rose—*

**Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

No, I will not take an intervention. [Laughter] Go on then; I will take the intervention, as long as you give me additional time, Deputy Presiding Officer.

- 16:51 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
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Order. We will follow the normal procedures by allowing a bit of injury time. Are you taking the intervention?
- 16:51 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Yes. Go on.
- 16:51 **Mick Antoniw** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
The comments that I made on Saturday are identical to those I made today about the ambulance service, which was the sole matter I spoke on. Do you agree or disagree with that? Will you apologise for the comments that you made?
- 16:51 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
I will not apologise. Your tone was very different. You may have uttered the same words but you certainly used a different tone in Pontypridd. [Laughter]. I would agree with you, Mick, on your remarks about the ambulance service. However, who do you think is responsible for the failures in the ambulance service. Are you taking any responsibility for that on the part of your party? I have been listening to handwringing in this Chamber over our ambulance service for 10 years now. Yet, nothing seems to change. So why on earth should people have any faith that ambulance services will improve before services are withdrawn?
- Llyr outlined the further difficulties that people can expect to face if standard services are further centralised. He pointed out the difficulties faced by patients depending on the time of week the operation takes place and how centralisation is unlikely to reduce the risks around this. Turning to Jenny Rathbone's contribution, I can see some of the arguments that she put forward. However, what she does not explain is how a pensioner without a car in Maerdy gets to visit her family in hospital, or how someone from Treherbert with a suspected heart problem gets treatment within the golden hour.
- 16:53 **Lynne Neagle** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
It is interesting that you should raise Maerdy and Treherbert. I wonder if you are concerned about anywhere else in your South Wales Central constituency.
- 16:53 **Leanne Wood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#) Senedd.tv  
[Fideo](#) [Video](#)  
Jenny Rathbone was talking about the impact of services in Cardiff after the closure of services in the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. I was referring to those specific hospital services. These issues must be looked at from a patient's and not just a clinician's perspective. That is not being done at the moment.

Simon Thomas talked about basic, core principles. He explained how poor services are pushing his constituents into private medicine. Whether you support or oppose the principle of private medicine, I am sure that no-one here would support people having no alternative choice. He also showed how there is not one united clinicians' view on reconfiguration. There is divided opinion on this among clinicians as there is among Labour politicians. It would be good to see some consistency at least from within the Cabinet on this.

Finally, the Minister says that the proposals in our motion are undeliverable. He outlined the number of vacancies in the NHS, which leads us to ask, 'Where has your Government been in planning?'. I have already referred to the debate on the immigration rules. Where were you then? We accept that the difficulties are much greater now, but we do not accept that this is an impossible task. You may, Minister, have outlined what you call three incontrovertible facts, but they are not supported by your ministerial colleagues, are they? If they do not support you, how on earth do you expect us, and, more importantly, the people of Wales to accept those proposals?

16:55

## **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Y cwestiwn yw y dylid derbyn y cynnig heb ei ddiwygio. A oes unrhyw wrthwynebiad? Gwelaf fod gwrthwynebiad, felly gohiriaf y bleidlais ar yr eitem hon tan y cyfnod pleidleisio.

The question is that the motion without amendment be agreed. Are there any objections? I see that there are, therefore I defer voting under this item until voting time.

We now move to voting time. Before I take the first vote on the Conservative debate, do three Members wish for the bell to be rung? I see not.

*Gohiriwyd y pleidleisio tan y cyfnod pleidleisio.*

*Voting deferred until voting time.*

### **Cyfnod Pleidleisio**

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar gynnis NDM5257.](#)

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig: O blaid 39, Yn erbyn 15, Ymatal 0.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Gwrthodwyd y cynnig: O blaid 10, Yn erbyn 44, Ymatal 0.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 1 i gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 12, Yn erbyn 28, Ymatal 14.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 2 i gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 0, Ymatal 0.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 3 i gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 0, Ymatal 0.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 4 i gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Derbyniwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 0, Ymatal 0.*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 5 i gynnis NDM5256.](#)

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 27, Ymatal 0.*

### **Voting Time**

[Result of the vote on motion NDM5257.](#)

*Motion agreed: For 39, Against 15, Abstain 0.*

[Result of the vote on motion NDM5256.](#)

*Motion not agreed: For 10, Against 44, Abstain 0.*

[Result of the vote on amendment 1 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Amendment not agreed: For 12, Against 28, Abstain 14.*

[Result of the vote on amendment 2 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Amendment agreed: For 27, Against 0, Abstain 0.*

[Result of the vote on amendment 3 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Amendment agreed: For 27, Against 0, Abstain 0.*

[Result of the vote on amendment 4 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Amendment agreed: For 27, Against 0, Abstain 0.*

[Result of the vote on amendment 5 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Amendment not agreed: For 27, Against 27, Abstain 0.*

*Gan fod nifer y pleidleisiau yn gyfartal, defnyddiodd y Dirprwy Lywydd ei bleidlais fwrw yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 6.20(ii).*

*As there was an equality of votes, the Deputy Presiding Officer used his casting vote in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.20(ii).*

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar welliant 6 i gynnig NDM5256.](#)

[Result of the vote on amendment 6 to motion NDM5256.](#)

*Gwrthodwyd y gwelliant: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 27, Ymatal 0.*

*Amendment not agreed: For 27, Against 27, Abstain 0.*

*Gan fod nifer y pleidleisiau yn gyfartal, defnyddiodd y Dirprwy Lywydd ei bleidlais fwrw yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 6.20(ii).*

*As there was an equality of votes, the Deputy Presiding Officer used his casting vote in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.20(ii).*

Cynnig NDM5256 fel y'i diwygiwyd:

Motion NDM5256 as amended:

Cynnig bod Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru:

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Yn credu bod angen i gymunedau Cymru gael gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth wedi'u harwain gan ymgynghorwyr mewn ysbytai cyffredinol dosbarth lleol.

Believes that Welsh communities need consultant led A & E and maternity services in local district general hospitals.

Yn gwrthod y cynigion sy'n cael eu hystyried ar hyn o bryd gan Raglen De Cymru i israddio gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys a mamolaeth wedi'u harwain gan ymgynghorwyr yn Ysbyty Brenhinol Morgannwg yn Llantrisant.

Rejects proposals currently being considered by the South Wales Programme to downgrade consultant-led A&E and maternity services at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Llantrisant.

Yn galw ar Fwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Betsi Cadwaladr i gyflawni ei ymrwymiad i gadw'r gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys presennol yn Ysbyty Glan Clwyd ym Modelwyddan.

Calls upon the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to fulfil its commitment to retain existing A&E services at Glan Clwyd Hospital in Bodelwyddan.

Yn galw ar Weinidog Iechyd Cymru i sicrhau dyfodol y gwasanaethau Damweiniau ac Achosion Brys presennol yn Ysbyty'r Tywysog Philip yn Llanelli.

Calls upon the Welsh Health Minister to secure the future of existing A&E services at Prince Phillip Hospital in Llanelli.

[Canlyniad y bleidlais ar gynnig NDM5256 fel y'i diwygiwyd.](#)

[Result of the vote on motion NDM5256 as amended.](#)

*Gwrthodwyd cynnig NDM5256 fel y'i diwygiwyd: O blaid 27, Yn erbyn 27, Ymatal 0.*

*Motion NDM5256 as amended not agreed: For 27, Against 27, Abstain 0.*

*Gan fod nifer y pleidleisiau yn gyfartal, defnyddiodd y Dirprwy Lywydd ei bleidlais fwrw yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog Rhif 6.20(ii).*

*As there was an equality of votes, the Deputy Presiding Officer used his casting vote in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.20(ii).*

17:01

## **Dadl Fer: A yw'r Ateb Wir yn Chwythu yn y Gwynt? Y Cymysgedd o Ynni Adnewyddadwy a'r Galw Cynyddol am Ynni Dŵr**

## **Short Debate: Is the Answer Really Blowing In The Wind? The Renewable Mix and the Growing Demand for Hydropower**

**Russell George** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present this short debate this afternoon. I would like to thank Mark Isherwood, William Powell and Mike Hedges for requesting a minute to make their personal contributions to this debate and I look forward to hearing those later.

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There is definitely a strong reference in the title of my debate to my predecessor Mick Bates, for two reasons—or, rather, two passions—namely renewable wind energy and Bob Dylan. I have to confess that I share neither of Mick's passions. While I respect what Mick did representing the people of Montgomeryshire as their AM, I think that our visions for the area and the part that it will play in this country's energy future are very different indeed. It would have been interesting to see how he would have managed the large campaign movement, not just from Montgomeryshire but from across mid Wales and Shropshire, which is greatly opposed to the industrialisation of our special and beautiful rural landscapes. The hundreds of people gathered in Welshpool yesterday morning at the opening of Britain's largest ever public inquiry into windfarms once again demonstrate the strength of local feeling against the horrendous proposals that have been placed on the region's table.

We are all realists and understand that, in the advancement and growth of our society, our landscape will, in part, have to change. I do not expect it to embody a David Bates painting and be unspoiled for evermore, but there are probably more wind turbines in Montgomeryshire, in one location, than in any other part of the UK. I think that the public in Montgomeryshire largely accepted that, but we are now being asked to have a further 800, with the associated infrastructure that comes with it. That is worth pointing out. This can only be hugely detrimental to the community in which I live and which I represent.

It is not just the scarring effect on the environment and landscape that the people of mid Wales are concerned about. They do not believe in community benefit, they do not believe that there will be any economic benefit from these developments and they do not have confidence in the technology. They have become increasingly aware of the operational challenges created by intermittent generation of electricity from wind technology. This has led to increased scrutiny of public policies that promote its growth and the regulatory system that asserts it. You would not believe the number of armchair experts to have emerged in my constituency in the past two years. I do not use that term in a negative sense at all. Many of these people are former engineers or have engineering backgrounds and have become intrigued with the technology. They are researching it constantly, ready to debunk the myths of what those in the renewable energy industry consider to be a progressive technology.

There is also an issue of long-term planning delays because of the legal challenges, and the issue of lots of legal challenges is something that the former head of the Independent Planning Commission, Sir Michael Pitt, made clear in the evidence that he gave to the Environment and Sustainability Committee during our energy policy inquiry. The inquiry that started yesterday will take about a year, at considerable cost to the taxpayer. We will probably not get a decision until the end of next year, which could be subject to judicial review.

As I said to those who were gathered in Welshpool yesterday, I believe that the leaders of tomorrow will look back and wonder what on earth the decision makers of the day were thinking if the proposals for mid Wales go ahead. There has to be a fresh approach to renewable energy, and that means adopting a policy that generates efficient, cost-effective energy and, most importantly, has community support, not just the support of politicians and developers. If the Welsh Government is willing to spend £10,000 to fund a report that supports its pro-wind agenda, as it did recently, it should also be prepared to broaden that out to other technologies.

What should the Welsh Government be concentrating its efforts on? The members of the environment committee will be well briefed on the rich potential that hydropower and microhydropower schemes have for renewable energy production. Hydropower is one of the most cost-effective means of producing clean, renewable electricity, generally with a higher efficiency, reliability and capacity factor than solar, wind and ocean energy technologies. It is also suggested that hydropower has a better energy-payback ratio than other power generation technologies. Wales has a long tradition of utilising hydropower. Its geography and climate make hydroelectric development an important renewable resource for Wales. As a result of changes in technology, better financial incentives, the rise in fuel costs and the need for comprehensive action to mitigate climate change, some small-scale hydro schemes previously regarded as unfeasible may now be able to be developed. A report commissioned by the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Welsh Government in 2010 suggest that there are over 300 high head run-off river schemes that have the potential to be developed—schemes that could generate anything from 27 MW to 63 MW.

Scotland is often seen as the benchmark for a range of renewable energies, and hydroelectric energy is no different, with the country generating 80% of the 1.5 GW of energy that is generated annually in the UK.

Small-scale hydro schemes in the past lasted well over 100 years. With more modern materials and electronic controls, that should now be equalled, if not bettered, if these small schemes are to have the greatest impact on our communities as they deliver direct investment to rural areas and keep money circulating through the economy at the grass-roots level. Hydro is unique among all renewables, because the vast majority of the investment happens on the ground. While the turbine may come from other parts of the UK, this only makes up about 20% to 30% of the investment. The rest is on the ground—employing the guy with the digger, the brickie making the turbine housing and the electrician connecting it up. It is the other way round, of course, with a wind turbine, with the majority of the investment focused on the turbine and the tower—the majority of the components for which, apart from those from Mabey Ridge in my colleague's constituency of Monmouthshire, come from abroad. That is why hydropower is a good opportunity for Wales not only to make a valuable contribution to the UK's electricity generation needs, but to generate more local jobs and to connect isolated areas to the grid. It is, therefore, important that we have a policy in place that is well placed to make sure that we make the best use of this resource.

A number of problems affect the viability of hydro projects in Wales. The first is the process of permits and consenting. Hydropower schemes are not subject to permitted development and, therefore, in most cases, planning permission from local planning authorities is required. These schemes also require a number of permits and consents, formerly issued by the Environment Agency Wales, which is now Natural Resources Wales. These cover abstraction, impoundment, flood risk and fish passage. However, from the evidence that the committee received, which has been backed up 100% by several cases that I am working on in my constituency—I know that other Members have the same experience—there is a damaging disconnect between the developer, the planning authority and the regulator, which is creating inconsistencies and unnecessary delays. There has to be a dovetailing of the planning and permitting process, whereby Natural Resources Wales and the planning authority talk to each other much earlier in the process to ensure that a holistic view is adopted, which will, in turn, avoid any misunderstanding or confusion in the process. It is also vital that there is a shift in thinking whereby the potential positives of such schemes are envisaged first, rather than potential negatives.

Another damaging issue is that of the flow-splitting. The process—put in simplest terms—is that schemes are only allowed to utilise half of the flowing river water because of differences in flow, and is split equally between the operator and the river, which some regulators perceive as keeping an element of naturalness through the flow range. However, Wales is the only place in the UK where this process takes place. In Scotland, a hands-off flow is used, which is basically a flow below which you never take water. The difference between the two systems is not just making Scottish schemes more profitable, but is making potential Welsh schemes completely unviable. Why we have adopted this approach in Wales is unclear; the evidence suggests that there is no detrimental impact on the environment.

This gives credence to the argument put forward by those in the industry that the original Environment Agency Wales policy was simply designed to protect the environment, to the detriment of the economic and social advantages that these schemes bring. I fail to understand why Environment Agency Wales adopted such a negative and precautionary approach regarding the development of hydropower on appropriate sites. I cannot see how the position can continue to be justified.

Natural Resources Wales has a huge role to play in revisiting this policy and ensuring that its core aims are properly balanced by changing the precautionary culture that was endemic under Environment Agency Wales. The Government says that it is committed to creating evidence-based policy, and I would expect that the new good practice guidance from Natural Resources Wales, when published, is fully supportive of hydropower and based on solid evidence rather than on principles. A common-sense approach has to be adopted, because the whole of Wales is losing out.

To conclude, it is important that we get this issue sorted now so that, during the period of general economic difficulty, we are helping to make individuals and communities more self-sufficient and building a long-term legacy for our rural and upland areas.

17:13 **Mark Isherwood** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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The decision by the Valuation Office Agency to move certain houses close to windfarms into lower council tax bands has provided official recognition that wind turbine noise, and visual intrusion, can lower the value of nearby houses. In the academic paper examining the long-term risks to UK energy supplies, Brigadier Allan McLeod, commandant of the Defence College of Logistics and Personnel Administration, has said that most renewables are most efficient when generated close to the point of use. More small-scale and domestic use should be encouraged. He also noted that the use of gas raises several risks for the UK. The UK currently has storage capacity of just 14 days' worth of supply, compared with 87 days in France, 69 days in Germany and 59 days in Italy. However, the only stations that could be powered up reasonably quickly to respond to fluctuating wind turbine power are gas stations. However, without fossil fuel back-up, the lights would literally go out.

17:14 **William Powell** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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The answer to Russell's question is, of course, complex. The current focus on onshore wind is overwhelming. It is the most developed technology and therefore currently one of the most competitive available. However, there is presently an intolerable pressure on the communities of mid Wales, and this cannot continue. That is why my party continues to campaign for a fundamental review of TAN 8, the impacts of which are felt far beyond the current devolved capacity limits. I hope that the Conservatives will join us in their next Assembly manifesto. [Interruption.] I refer you to your last Assembly manifesto, colleagues.

Hydro certainly needs to be supported, particularly microhydro, but it would be wrong to forget the unrivalled landscape impact that major hydro projects can have. That should not be forgotten. We urgently need a mixed basket of energy options to keep the lights on across this country.

17:15 **Mike Hedges** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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First of all, I thank Russell George for giving me a minute in this debate. I want to talk about the Swansea tidal lagoon, which has a huge amount of local support. The science is simple: it will work for 16 hours a day, and it will drive the turbines four hours in and four hours out, twice a day, creating electricity for well in excess of 100,000 houses. It will work for as long as the moon is there—if the moon moves, I think we will have a bigger problem than not having electricity. [Laughter.]

If it works off Swansea, I hope to see it developed elsewhere in Wales. It could have a significant effect on renewable energy production. The Crown Estates has a vital role to play in this development, and I hope that the Welsh Government can work closely with the Crown Estates to ensure that this project can commence as soon as possible. It is a very simple system and one that has proven technology in using water to drive turbines. As we know, the tide comes in and goes out twice a day.

17:16 **Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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I call the Minister for Natural Resources and Food, Alun Davies, to reply to the debate.

17:16 **Alun Davies** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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*Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol a Bwyd / The Minister for Natural Resources and Food*

Like others this afternoon, I congratulate Russell George on his choice of debate and on the way in which he introduced it. There is far more that unites us on the different sides of this Chamber on these matters than probably divides us, and I was delighted to hear Bill Powell expressing a strong opinion on these matters. [Laughter.] Certainly, Russell has succeeded where I have failed—that is something that we are all very pleased about.

First, I think that we all agree that diversity of energy technology lies at the heart of Welsh Government policy, and it should lie at the heart of all policy. That includes all forms of low-carbon generation, including hydropower. Wind power is certainly important as the most commercially exploitable renewable, as has been pointed out by Bill Powell, but it is far from being the only source of low-carbon energy. Members will also be aware that, in March last year, the First Minister launched 'Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition', which sets out what we will do as a Government to realise the tremendous opportunity that Wales has in respect of energy. Our overarching aim is to enhance the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities of Wales, to achieve a better quality of life for our own and future generations.

May I say, in making these remarks, that I agree very strongly with the points that you made about hydro? I have met representatives of the hydropower industry, and I have discussed these matters with NRW. I hope that we will be able to make progress in the way that you suggest. I agree very much with the points that you made about the potential for greater hydro schemes and projects across Wales; I would like to see many more of them. I certainly want us to move in the direction of being an enabling Government that seeks to remove barriers wherever possible in order to promote development—I am thinking particularly of small-scale renewables and schemes that might be on farms and in some of the smaller rural communities. Members will be aware, as I think it is something that I have made clear before, that I wrote to the ministerial advisory group that has been working on the rural development plan specifically to ask it to look at the role of energy renewables in the next rural development plan. It is something that I have discussed with the chair of the committee on a number of occasions, and I am looking forward to its report and the role that decentralised energy generation can play in its comments. Clearly, that is a debate and a conversation that we will have, probably in the next few months.

'Energy Wales', as a policy, was focused on the process of transition, to ensure that we lay the foundations for a better future and maximise the long-term benefits to Wales at every stage along the way. Anglesey energy island is an excellent example of how public sector bodies and developers are already collaborating to the benefit of investors in Wales, its businesses and its communities across a range of low-carbon technologies, including biomass, wind and, of course, nuclear power.

I hope that we all appreciate—again, it is something that unites us rather than divides us—that Wales has significant assets in virtually every energy source. It has significant offshore wind resources, significant wave and tidal energy potential, one of the best solar resources in the United Kingdom, scope for more biomass and hydro, and existing nuclear sites and expertise in the nuclear industry. We also possess the key infrastructure to make the most of energy opportunities in terms of our roads, railways, deep ports and electrical and gas grids. Our 1,200 km of coastline could potentially generate up to 6.2 GW of capacity, and over 10 GW if we were to include the Severn estuary. That is a resource that is ideally suited to the current phase of the industry. Some of the technologies available to us, such as wind, solar, nuclear and biomass, are mature, and are currently being developed and deployed. Others, such as wave and tidal, are at an earlier stage of development, but have the potential to contribute significantly over the medium to long term.

I hope that we are seizing the opportunity to enable future energy technologies to flourish in Wales. This ambition and vision is reflected in the diverse membership of the First Minister's strategic delivery group, which reflects the whole diversity of policy, and includes representatives from not only the nuclear industry, but also Tata Steel, with its enormous demand for clean, affordable energy, and the Low Carbon Research Institute, as well as major renewable developers.

As a Government, we believe that Wales should be at the forefront of the transition to a low-carbon economy, and we fully support the Low Carbon Research Institute's work in uniting and promoting a diverse range of research in order to deliver a platform for a low-carbon future.

Last month, when the First Minister announced that Tidal Energy Ltd's DeltaStream project had secured an additional £1.6 million of European funding, he demonstrated a real commitment to that project by the Welsh Government. We are looking to further drive investment. The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport has created three energy-focused enterprise zones in Anglesey, Snowdonia and the Haven waterway, and a programme to fill short-term skills gaps in the energy sector has been created for delivery by the end of 2014. Programmes to fill longer term skills shortages are now being developed.

I understand the points that were made by Russell in his opening remarks, but I will say to him that, while some decisions are devolved, others remain a matter for the United Kingdom Government. We believe that this does nothing to assist investors, adding extra time, cost and risk to what is already a potentially challenging project. We will continue to press for the devolution of energy consenting powers to this place, and I trust that Russell George and his colleagues on the Conservative benches will continue to support us in that drive.

The powers of the Department of Energy and Climate Change mean that it was able to call a conjoined inquiry into the cumulative impacts of mid Wales wind projects. The Welsh Government has no formal role in the inquiry and it is not appropriate for me to comment any further on that matter.

We know that there are a number of challenges and risks associated with developing renewable energy projects in Wales, and that has been set out in the recent Hyder report on the consenting of renewable energy schemes, as well as in the work of the independent planning advisory group. We are committed to addressing these issues and improving the planning consenting regimes in Wales. I am committed to achieving these ambitions, and we as a Government are committed to ensuring that we have a permissive regime in Wales that seeks to enable these projects, particularly the smaller ones, to move forward wherever possible.

I hope that people will appreciate that Natural Resources Wales, which brings together a wide range of environmental regulatory responsibilities into a single body, provides an opportunity to further streamline processes and improve delivery. I hope that the whole of the renewables industry will quickly see the benefit of this change. The reports by Hyder and the independent advisory group will form a part of the evidence base, which Russell George referred to, for the planning White Paper, which is scheduled for consultation later this year, and is scheduled to be introduced as a Bill during 2014. We understand that some of these matters will take time to resolve, but I hope that people appreciate the determination of this Government to resolve these issues.

A number of people have referred to hydropower, and I have already made reference to it. Since 2010, the Welsh Government's Ynni'r Fro programme, funded by the European regional development fund, has been the main source of support to community groups seeking to develop renewable energy schemes in their areas. I know that this has been something that Members have remarked upon in different debates. Through the Ynni'r Fro scheme, we have made available grants of up to £300,000 and loans of up to £250,000 to community groups to develop hydro projects. The programme also offers start-up grants of up to £30,000. Ynni'r Fro employs a network of technical development officers who will help to support and advise groups in the process of setting up a community renewable energy scheme. To date, nearly 200 community groups have applied to the Ynni'r Fro programme. It is currently providing intensive support and funding to at least 12 community-scale hydro groups. That is a real success story. It is a radical move and a radical programme and is delivering success. Anybody who has been involved in the development of any of these projects in almost any sector will understand the level of risk involved with these projects. We are delivering projects, delivering support and are seeing the results of that. I hope that people will value and appreciate that.

We are seeking to maximise the benefits available from the feed-in tariffs. We are aware of the concerns that the regulatory regime in Wales is too precautionary for hydro developers. As I have said, I have already met with the industry and have committed to meeting it again in the autumn to ensure that the commitments that I gave to streamline the process are realised in reality. I have already made that commitment to the industry and I will ensure that those commitments are met.

Bill Powell spoke in the debate earlier and he has spoken on a number of occasions about the Green Valleys initiative. That is an excellent example of a home-grown company benefiting from the growth of interest in renewable energy and hydro. The microhydro scheme in Llangattock is an exemplar of what we can achieve by working together with community support. That is the sort of scheme that we wish to see more of. I believe that there are significantly greater opportunities for hydropower schemes and I want to see them make a significant contribution to our energy mix in the future. I hope that we will move to a more distributed model of generation involving people in our communities in understanding more about energy. That will remain a key part of our energy agenda into the future.

I hope that this debate has demonstrated that the Government pursues an activist approach to the development of renewable energy generation projects across Wales. We have a determination to ensure that distributed, decentralised, small-scale projects are realised by communities and businesses up and down Wales. We will continue to work on the transition to a low-carbon energy generation economy. We will work in partnership with developers and seek to de-risk investment wherever that is possible. We will focus our efforts on the delivery of benefits to Wales, its businesses and its communities from every available technology. I know that, in doing so, we will have the support of the whole of this Chamber.

17:27

**Y Dirprwy Lywydd / The Deputy Presiding Officer** [Bywgraffiad](#) [Biography](#)

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Thank you, Minister. That brings today's proceedings to a close.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 5.27 p.m.*

*The meeting ended at 5.27 p.m.*