

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau  
Petitions Committee

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



Christine Chapman AM  
Chair  
Communities, Equality and Local  
Government Committee

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Our ref: CELGPET1

26 June 2013

Dear

*Chris*

I am writing to highlight a number of heritage related petitions, in advance of your expected consideration of the Heritage (Wales) Bill. These include:

- Save Ponty Paddling Pool;
- Protect Buildings of note – Mid Wales;
- Call to revise Cadw's hold on churches;
- List Stradey Park;
- Restoration for North Wales Hospital;
- Save Roath Steam House;
- Saving Plas Cwrt yn Dre / Old Parliament House for the Nation; and
- Save the Vulcan.

There have been a number of reoccurring issues which have cut across our consideration of these different petitions, which we feel may be of interest to you in advance of the Heritage (Wales) Bill.

*Local Listing*

The previous Petitions Committee, in relation to the Save the Vulcan petition, recommended '*strengthening the powers available to local authorities to prevent the demolition of buildings that meet the criteria for local listing*'. In responding, the previous Welsh Government stated that there was a commitment to introduce a joint bill with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to better control the demolition of locally important buildings. A later update from the then Minister for Heritage stated that such a Bill had not been included in the UK Government's legislative programme, but that further work on local listing was expected to be

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taken forward by the next Welsh Government following the Assembly elections in 2011.

During the current Assembly, we have continued to hear concerns about the strength of protection local listing provides, the inconsistencies across Wales in the use of local listing and the interaction between local and national listing.

*Buildings with social and cultural significance*

The previous Committee in their report into the Vulcan pub also called for the introduction of guidance or legislation to enable the protection of buildings that have social or cultural importance (this was accepted by the previous Government). However, it is not clear if this has been implemented.

*Protecting sporting heritage*

One of our longest standing petitions which started in the previous Assembly, calls for Stradey Park to be listed. We are aware that Cadw recently published a scoping report into the protection of sporting heritage. Additionally, we know that the Government is committed to developing selection guidance for the designation of historic building types and parks and gardens and that sporting heritage will feature in this. However, the petitioner remains concerned that the register primarily consists of historic parks and gardens, as opposed to sporting grounds, and that as the register has no statutory basis, it has no weight in the planning process.

*Bringing listed buildings into new use*

During the consideration of two petitions (Restoration for North Wales Hospital and Call to revise Cadw's hold on churches) we have heard about the difficulties of bringing old, listed buildings into contemporary use. We have been told that there needs to be better co-ordination between central and local government, and that there is difficulty in accessing funding for such projects.

We have also heard of the particular challenges facing independent churches when they try to diversify the use of their buildings. We were told this is because of the strictness of the current rules. In correspondence on this petition, the then responsible Minister, the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage stated that there would be 'a wide ranging debate' in advance of bringing forward legislation which would include 'church and chapel representatives' and that 'clearly will want to keep in view the points made by the petitioners'.

I trust that you find this information useful in advance of your consideration of the Heritage (Wales) Bill. If you need any further information on any of these petitions, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



**William Powell AC / AM**  
Cadeirydd / Chair