

**P-04-486 Act now and Help save the High street shops –
Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair, 28.11.2013**

Mr William Powell AM.
Chair Petitions committee.

Your Ref: P-04-486

Dear Mr Powell,

I thank you for a copy of a letter sent to you from Edwina Hart dated 24th October 2013 which I have today received from Sian Giddins from Chamber and Committee services at The National Assembly for Wales.

I understand that this petition will again be considered at the meeting on 10th December 2013. which meeting I will be able to attend.

I am disappointed to note that Edwina Hart again states that the problems on the High Street would seem only to apply to Charity shops and Social Enterprises, for which she seeks additional relief. She also proposes to grant empty shops 50% rate relief, maybe if such shops had been granted the assistance I am now petitioning for, they might have been able to remain in business!

I believe that The Welsh Government can take a lead in supporting the Independent High Street trader. I appreciate that there are insufficient funds available to assist all sectors of businesses.

I strongly believe that the Welsh Government should consider the potential for a fund to save the Independent High Street shops. I believe that town centres have to suffer the joint problems of High Business Rates and High Parking Fees and numerous restrictions whilst trying to compete with purpose built out of town developments encouraged by successive governments and local authorities over the last 20 years. With the length and depth of this recession our High Streets are at crisis point and need immediate help if they are to survive. Every town in Wales is being affected and action is required urgently.

The current relief provides assistance to all small businesses with a rateable value up to £12,000 which includes the High Street Independent shops which I believe is far too low, a more realistic figure for the Independent High Street shops would be £18,000.

Yours sincerely

J T Keith Davies