

Royal Town Planning Institute  
Cymru (RTPI Cymru)

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Website: [www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi\\_cymru](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/rtpi_cymru)

20<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RTPI Cymru Response to: Wales Bill 2016-2017**

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the largest professional institute for planners in Europe, representing some 23,000 spatial planners. RTPI Cymru represents the RTPI in Wales, with 1,100 members. The Institute seeks to advance the science and art of spatial planning for the benefit of the public. As well as promoting spatial planning, the RTPI develops and shapes policy affecting the built environment, works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, training and development.

The response has been formed drawing on the expertise of the RTPI Cymru Policy and Research Forum which includes a cross section of planning practitioners from the private and public sectors and academia from across Wales.

We welcome this opportunity to comment on the latest provisions set out in the Wales Bill. There are many aspects of the Bill that are linked to spatial planning, however our comments below focus on RTPI Cymru's longstanding positions in relation to key aspects of the planning system in Wales.

The current version of the Wales Bill states that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) remains reserved and is therefore not devolved to Wales. RTPI Cymru believes that CIL should be fully devolved to the Welsh Government, particularly in the context of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015.

The planning system in Wales is undergoing significant changes to the way it operates, as changes set out in the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 are implemented. New Strategic Development Plans (SPDs) could provide an opportunity for CIL to be considered strategically as part of a Wales-specific funding mechanism. RTPI Cymru believes that CIL is a key planning tool and devolving it to Wales would allow it to become part of the new planning system. If it remains outside the control of the Welsh Ministers we believe it is not possible to develop it to work in harmony with the Wales planning system as a whole.

CIL by definition is a levy to fund infrastructure at the community level, not infrastructure of significance at a national or UK level. It is clearly inappropriate for powers over this to be retained at the UK level. Its role is to help fund the development proposals set out in Local Development Plans (LDPs). It is a key tool in implementing LDPs, and in particular bringing forward much needed housing sites. Decisions based around CIL need to rest with Welsh Ministers so that it can be fully integrated within the Welsh planning system to deliver benefits for communities, not with the UK.

The Welsh Government has a strong track record of implementing planning requirements such as planning conditions and Section 106 agreements in ways which reflect the particular development needs and opportunities of Wales, based on robust evidence and in consultation with all sectors. Devolving responsibility to the Welsh Government for CIL would therefore be likely to lead to its implementation in ways which support specific development interests in Wales, involving all sectors and stakeholders.

In relation to energy, RTPI Cymru supports the argument that decisions on nationally significant renewable energy projects should be devolved to Wales, as they are in Scotland and Northern Ireland. This will facilitate the ability to deliver a comprehensive renewable energy strategy in Wales. However it is important that the legislation and the devolved powers are workable and do not conflict or complicate the system. Discussions with Welsh Government are likely to highlight any such issues.

If you require further assistance, have any queries or require clarification of any points made, please contact RTPI Cymru [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Dr Roisin Willmott FRTPI

**Director**  
**RTPI Cymru**