

John Griffiths AC /AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-381
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/06208/12

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

14 June 2012

Dear William,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding a petition concerning the bats at the Old Denbigh Hospital.

As you have already received a response on this matter from the Minister for Housing Regeneration and Heritage I will not reiterate the circumstances leading to the current situation.


At the time of the fire, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) advised that any bats that survived would be expected to desert the remains of the building, and would be unlikely to return while the structures remained unsuitable for them.

A bat specialist is working with the conservation engineers to monitor any remaining bat activity and assess the requirement to reinstate or provide new bat roosting spaces when the building is restored. He has confirmed that he has found no bats or evidence of post-fire bat use in or around the affected area, and in his expert opinion they are unlikely to show any interest in returning prior to restoration. If bats were to return prematurely this would hamper restoration work.

There are a large number of buildings on the site which are good quality bat habitat; the damaged part represented at most 5% of the roosting potential of the site as a whole. CCW and the site and county ecologists all advise that there are ample roosting opportunities across the site for any displaced bats, and there is very unlikely to be any detriment to the bat population of the area. The bulk of stabilisation work was done during last winter, when the bats hibernate elsewhere.

Officials are in communication with CCW and Denbighshire County Council regarding the bats at this site, and will continue to monitor the situation. At present there seems to be no need for additional intervention by the Welsh Government; furthermore, it would be inappropriate for the Welsh Government to intervene further owing to its role in present and possible future appeals under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

I thank the petitioners for their concern and can assure them that the present and long-term wellbeing of the bats is being well addressed by the current arrangements.

Yours,


John Griffiths AC / AM

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