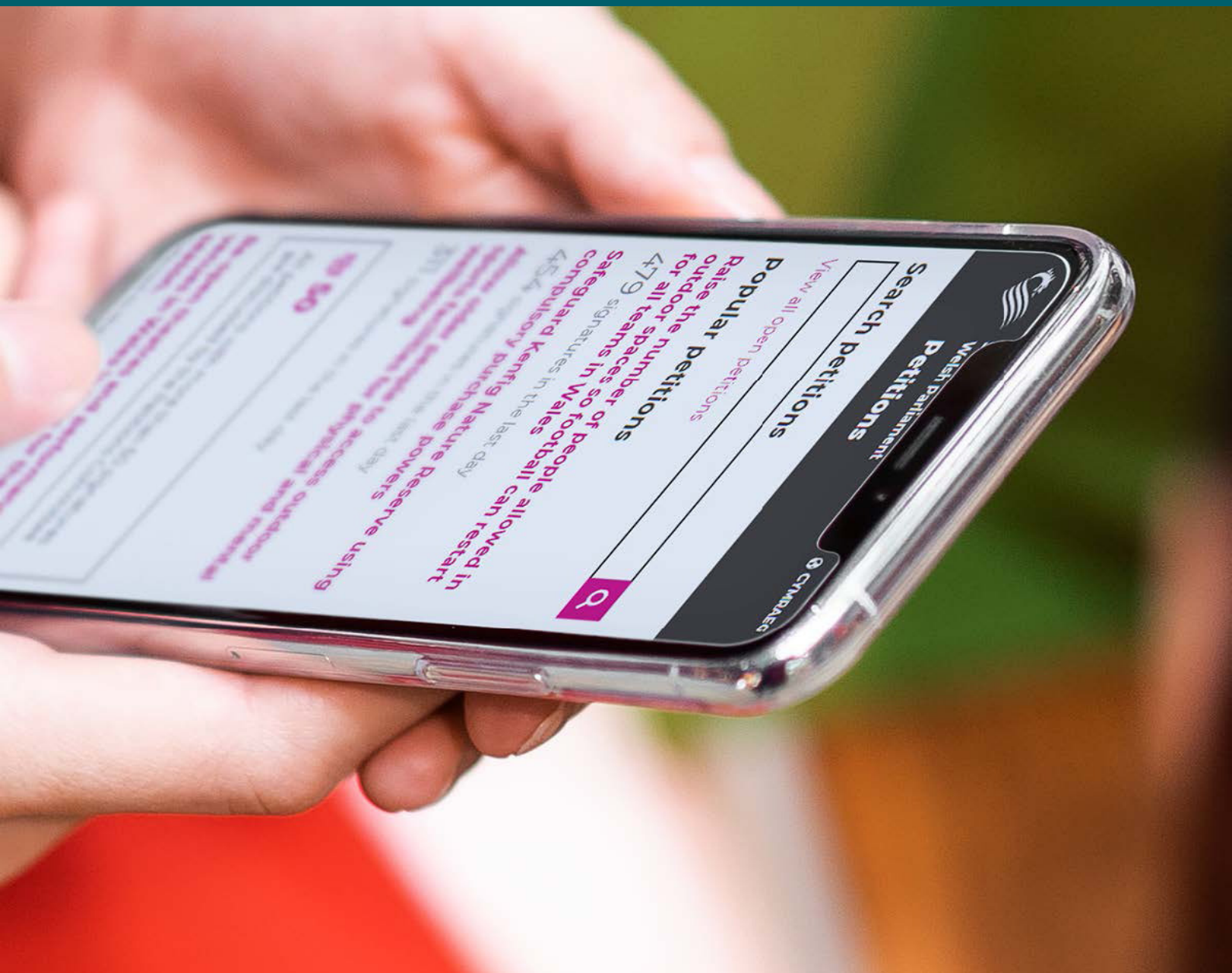


The People's Committee: Legacy Report

March 2026



The Welsh Parliament is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people. Commonly known as the Senedd, it makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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Petitions Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

Tel: **0300 200 6565**
Email: **Petitions@senedd.wales**
X: **[@SeneddPetitions](https://twitter.com/SeneddPetitions)**

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The People's Committee: Legacy Report

March 2026



About the Committee

The Committee was established on 23 June 2021. Its remit can be found at:
www.senedd.wales/SeneddPetitions

Current Committee membership:



**Committee Chair:
Carolyn Thomas MS**
Welsh Labour



Rhys ab Owen MS
Independent Member



Vaughan Gething MS
Welsh Labour



Joel James MS
Welsh Conservatives

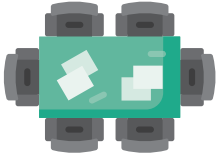


Lindsay Whittle MS
Plaid Cymru

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The Committee in the Sixth Senedd



HOW MANY FORMAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS WERE HELD?

75



HOW MANY WITNESSES GAVE EVIDENCE TO THE COMMITTEE?

86



HOW MANY STAKEHOLDER EVENTS/ VISITS WERE UNDERTAKEN?

7



HOW MANY REPORTS WERE PRODUCED?

14



HOW MANY DEBATES WERE HELD?

37



HOW MANY NEW PETITIONS WERE CONSIDERED?

411

Chair's foreword

The importance and influence of the Senedd's Petitions process has never been greater. This Senedd has seen the process come of age, reaching new heights of popularity, and giving the people of Wales new chances to have their voices heard.

The Work of the Petitions Committee during this Senedd term has given petitions a new profile. We have seen individual petitions gathering tens of thousands of signatures, that have set the agenda. We have seen quieter petitions that have made a difference, and driven changes in policy and new laws; and we have seen a wide variety of local issues being raised on the national stage.

Over the last five years, the people of Wales have set new records for petition creation, and smashed the previous record for the number of signatures. As a consequence we have held more petition-led debates than ever before. New Senedd, new era, new opportunities for the people of Wales to have their voices heard.

My predecessor Jack Sargeant liked to call petitions "The People's Committee". I hope the work that we have done in this Parliament has given people a sense of why. When we have been able to go out and visit petitioners, we have been able to hear the passion for improvement that exists in all corners of the nation.

As a former petitioner myself, I never doubted that petitions could make a difference. But as chair I've seen the range of things that can be achieved: petitions that have unlocked the funding needed to save an ancient monument; petitions that have forced public bodies to rethink or better explain their plans; petitions that have become shorthand for unpopular policy decisions; and petitions that have given us a platform to bring together the authorities, and those who have to live with their decisions, in order to reach better decisions. We've highlighted some examples and case studies in Chapter 4, showcasing different outcomes achieved by petitions.

Petitioners don't always get the answer they want. But the process helps hold decision makers to account for their decisions, and obliges them to explain why they believe the actions they have taken are the right ones.

During the five years we have also worked to regularly review our own processes, to ensure the focus is on those petitions where we can make a difference, and trying to avoid getting bogged down in endless letter writing ping-pong wherever we can.

I want to thank all the Members who have served on the Committee during the term, and particular thanks to Jack Sargeant for his work in establishing the new Committee in 2021 – and setting it on a new trajectory.

But most of all I want to thank the petitioners – the people of Wales who had a vision that things could be done differently, done better, and showed the courage to follow that dream. And thank you to everyone who signed the 400+ new petitions considered by the Committee over the last five years. At a time where there is a lot of cynicism about politics, you took the decision to participate, and raise your voice. I'm glad you did. And I hope you'll do it again.



Carolyn Thomas MS

Chair



Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Make a difference:

Senedd Committees have a limited amount of time, and an infinite list of things competing for their attention. We believe that committing to look in depth at a small number of petitions where there is potential to add real value has paid dividends in this Senedd. We would encourage Members of the Seventh Senedd to think about how they can develop this way of working, to ensure that the Committee can continue to ringfence time to look more deeply at petitions with the potential to make a big impact.Page 12

Recommendation 2. Prioritise visits:

It can be challenging to set aside time to undertake visits, and to spend time with petitioners, hearing their stories. But the results of doing this have in every case, been a much deeper understanding of what is going on, and a more thorough consideration of the petition. We would encourage Members of the Seventh Senedd to think about what mechanisms they wish to use to hear the voice of petitioners and share their experiences.....Page 13

Recommendation 3. Keep the thresholds under review:

We are content from our own review that the current thresholds work well, but we note that the number of petitions debates has slowly been creeping up year-on-year. It will be a matter for the next Senedd to decide the balance of time spent working in committee and plenary. Decisions made there could increase or decrease the time available to debate petitions, and Members may wish to review arrangements once the new timetable has bedded in.....Page 17

Recommendation 4. A dedicated committee:

This Committee has been struck by the benefits of having a committee dedicated to dealing with petitions. While there will be a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the policy issues in the subject committees, there have been numerous occasions where a committee that doesn’t have obligations to scrutinise budgets and legislation has been able to respond in a more agile manner to issues raised by petitioners. It will be a matter for Members of the next Senedd to decide how to allocate responsibilities to Committees – **we would encourage them to ensure that a Committee handling petitions is established at the earliest opportunity.**Page 17

Recommendation 5. Committee Membership:

This Committee originally comprised four Members but grew to five during this Parliament. The chair has shared the view with Chair's Forum and the Business Committee that a membership greater than four has greatly helped to ensure quoracy, and a better share of workload among the membership.....Page 17

1. Strategy and Engagement

This chapter reflects on the Committee's strategic approach to its work, the way it has addressed its strategic objectives, and lessons for future committees.

1. At the Committee's initial meetings, which set the pattern for this Senedd term, Members agreed the following aims:

- We will prioritise work that can bring real change to our communities.
- We will be a visible committee that gets out and about and engages with people across Wales.
- We will encourage higher quality petitions that can shape policy, and promote successful examples of petitions leading to policy change.

2. These aims set a framework for the Committee's work and have remained the guiding star of the work programme.

We will prioritise work that can bring real change to our communities

3. Members receive a list of petitions in the pipeline at the end of each meeting, allowing them to review what petitions would be coming, or were gathering signatures quickly. This means that Members could prioritise working on those petitions with the potential to bring real change, request papers looking at options for deep work, and invite wider evidence on at least one petition each term.

4. Over the course of this Senedd, the Committee has highlighted a number of petitions for detailed inquiry. This has resulted in 11 reports being published with recommendations for Government, and a couple of other pieces of work where the Committee's evidence gathering was overtaken by events and has been taken forward by other Senedd Committees, or external authorities¹.

¹ For example, the Committee contributed evidence it had gathered on [P-06-1291 Hold an enquiry into the corporate takeover of the veterinary profession in Wales](#) to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to inform their market investigation into veterinary services for household pets which is due to report in Spring 2026.

5. This way of working led to the Committee gathering evidence, publishing reports and making recommendations to the relevant authorities for real change. The most recent example is the committee's work looking at the lived experience of petitioners living near the Hafod Landfill Site, near Wrexham. This work brought together a range of stakeholders, and challenged all the agencies involved to look again at the day-to-day experiences of their neighbours. We hope that the recommendations we have made will result in improvements to the quality of life for people living close to landfill sites across Wales.

6. The full list of Committee reports can be found on our website - [Work Completed by the Committee](#)

7. This list includes our work on [P-06-1253 Ban greyhound racing in Wales](#). A Bill to deliver a ban is making its way through the final stages of Senedd scrutiny.

8. Our detailed work has also looked at preventing drowning, smartphones in schools, and the impact of an increasingly cashless society – particularly on the most vulnerable in our communities. It considered the benefits a four day work week, of universal basic income for care leavers, and of free public transport for teenagers – where the Welsh Government is currently piloting £1 bus fares for under 21 year olds.

Recommendation 1. Make a difference:

Senedd Committees have a limited amount of time, and an infinite list of things competing for their attention. We believe that committing to look in depth at a small number of petitions where there is potential to add real value has paid dividends in this Senedd. We would encourage Members of the Seventh Senedd to think about how they can develop this way of working, to ensure that the Committee can continue to ringfence time to look more deeply at petitions with the potential to make a big impact.

We will be a visible committee that gets out and about and engages with people across Wales.

9. The constraints of the COVID era meant it was not immediately possible to go out and engage with people too closely. For example, the tradition of meeting petitioners at a handover on the Senedd Steps had to be paused, but has since returned.

10. Over the course of this Senedd, Members have conducted a number of site visits. Sometimes these have been led by the chair alone, other times by groups of

Members. Sometimes this has meant bringing together stakeholders at the site (eg Sycharth Castle, Hafod landfill, The Mon and Brec Canal) so that different groups can get a better understanding of the issues, and barriers to action.

11. Members have frequently met with petitioners prior to discussing their petition – gaining real insight from the first-person stories, and the emotional reality of lived experience. This has meant hearing from people living with the physical and emotional impacts of life near an active quarry or in sub-standard housing, from animal welfare campaigners wanting to protect their pets, from campaigners seeking greater support for deaf children or people who are learning disabled. The stories can be harrowing, heartbreaking, frustrating, and sometimes inspiring. But they stay in the memory in ways that even the most thoroughly researched and beautifully written words on a page can struggle to achieve.

Recommendation 2. Prioritise visits:

It can be challenging to set aside time to undertake visits, and to spend time with petitioners, hearing their stories. But the results of doing this have in every case, been a much deeper understanding of what is going on, and a more thorough consideration of the petition. We would encourage Members of the Seventh Senedd to think about what mechanisms they wish to use to hear the voice of petitioners and share their experiences.

12. The Committee has also been able to benefit from the engagement work conducted by expert staff within the Senedd. Our work on mobile phones in school was enriched by focus groups conducted with pupils, teachers and staff at schools across Wales. This evidence base meant that when we spoke with stakeholders, we were able to draw on the experience of those schools where a ban was already in effect.

13. In addition to the regular information-sharing links we have with other Senedd Committees, we have also benefitted from strong links with the Welsh Youth Parliament. For example, evidence they gathered on free public transport for young people, including extensive surveys of pupils and parents, provided strong insights for our questioning of figures from the bus industry and government in Wales and Scotland, in response to petitions we had received.

14. We have also worked to promote petitions and petitioning, through our media work, and by seeking opportunities to showcase success – for example,

petitions featured prominently in the Senedd's 25th anniversary Your Voice exhibition.²

15. The Committee has sought to build links with the other Parliaments of the UK. Members met with counterparts from the UK Parliament's Petitions Committee in May 2024, to discuss their ways of working and share ideas. Petitions Committee staff from the four nations have developed an Inter-parliamentary network to share the latest information and innovations in public petitioning.



We will encourage higher quality petitions that can shape policy, and promote successful examples of petitions leading to policy change.

16. The Committee's clerking team works with petitioners where possible to ensure that petitions are as clear as they can be in what they are asking for. This

² <https://senedd.wales/senedd-now/news/celebrating-the-power-of-using-your-voice/>

approach can ensure that petitions are not easily dismissed when they arrive on the desk of those in power.

17. As part of our reflection on the work of the Committee for this report, we have made some suggestions to amend petition rules – including to tighten up the existing rule that while the petitions process can address issues of planning policy, it is not the appropriate way to address individual planning decisions, even when they relate to Developments of National Significance. We have also suggested some changes to the way the process is described, to promote clarity.

18. Academic research conducted by the University of Leeds, and supported by the Committee, has also inspired a number of changes in the way we do things. The work highlighted a need to improve understanding of petitions among the Senedd's public-facing employees – and the Committee staff have worked to strengthen links with those departments. We will continue to share updated lists of popular and/or successful petitions.

19. The work also highlighted the way that jargon, or unfamiliar language, can be a barrier to participation. There is more work to be done in this area, and a review of language in template letters to petitioners, and on the petitions website, is planned for this year.

20. During this term, the Senedd added a new mapping function to its petitions website, showing at-a-glance, where petitions are being signed. This function is being updated to reflect changes in constituency boundaries from May 2026.



2. Ways of working

Effective committees keep their ways of working under review to ensure they are making good use of their time.

21. The online petition system was introduced during the Fifth Senedd, and marked a step-change in the way petitions were started, and collected signatures. By making the system easier, it also enabled the huge increase we have seen in petition creation, and the overall number of signatures collected.

22. The Committee's process remains based on the system introduced at that time. Where necessary, there have been tweaks to the thresholds for consideration of a petition – but the current thresholds (250 for consideration by the Committee, 10,000 for consideration for a plenary debate) have proved to be effective. They ensuring focus on petitions demonstrating a meaningful level of community support, but without setting an impossible barrier for local petitions.

23. The 10,000 signature threshold for debate ensures that there is a substantial level of support for those petitions that get debated. The Committee has made it clear that requesting a debate is not an automatic decision, and on occasion decided a debate would not be the most appropriate way to take the petition forward. Similarly, there have been cases (e.g. breast cancer screening) where issues are of such public concern and urgency, that Members have sought to fast-track a debate at the earliest possible time.

24. Our work over the past five years has also highlighted the importance of collaboration with other Senedd committees, outside stakeholders, and the work of parliamentary cross-party groups and other expert working groups. In some cases other Senedd Committees have undertaken the detailed scrutiny work, or the Petitions Committee Chair has successfully highlighted issues in the Siambur. In other cases individual Members have helped petitioners gain more traction through their involvement in Senedd Cross-Party Groups. Our stakeholder event looking at whether smartphones should be banned in schools brought together practitioners from across Wales to interrogate a really complex societal challenge – children's access to social media. We held a similar session looking at the issues around free bus travel for teenagers. The Committee also undertook an important piece of work on unfair estate management charges, with invaluable input from

Hefin David MS, a long-time campaigner on this issue. The inquiry findings were shared with parliamentary colleagues in Westminster, and it's hoped that planned legislation will bring a fairer system for homeowners in England and Wales.

25. As part of our end-of-term review, the Committee wishes to make three further recommendations.

Recommendation 3. Keep the thresholds under review:

We are content from our own review that the current thresholds work well, but we note that the number of petitions debates has slowly been creeping up year-on-year. It will be a matter for the next Senedd to decide the balance of time spent working in committee and plenary. Decisions made there could increase or decrease the time available to debate petitions, and Members may wish to review arrangements once the new timetable has bedded in.

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3. The voice of petitioners

Petitioners and stakeholders are best placed to explain the value of the petitions process to them - some of their feedback is set out below.

"Whilst we are disappointed that the revocation of the permit has not been implemented, campaigners and local residents greatly appreciate the seriousness with which the Committee has examined the concerns raised and the recommendations that have been made. The Committee's work has been vital in ensuring that community voices are heard at a national level."

Steve Gittins, lead petitioner P-06-1510 Direct NRW to revoke the environmental permit and ensure the closure of Enover's, Hafod Landfill Site in Wrexham

"Thank you for hearing my petition on the 8 December and for keeping it open. Another sleepless night last night as yet again the culvert flooded, see attached videos and us and other residents were out putting sandbags on our properties. The council were called out in the early hours but could not do anything as 'the water was too deep!' We can't go on like this! Thank you for your continued support."

Sue Kerlake, lead petitioner P-06-1428 Stop the flooding in Caenant Terrace, Skewen NOW!

"I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the committee for your support and commitment to ensuring that families in Wales who lose their child or young person receive an immediate offer of support. We are absolutely thrilled that the discussion of the petition resulted in a commitment to ensure that support becomes a mandatory offer. I'd like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the Chair of the Committee, Jack Sargeant for supporting the petition and to the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing Lynne Neagle for declaring the actions for change. We are delighted at 2wish with the positive outcome and are very much looking forward to working in partnership with cross-party agencies to implement change across

Wales to ensure every family receives the mandatory offer of support at the darkest of times."

Rhian Manning MBE, CEO of 2Wish and lead petitioner P-05-912 Supporting Families with Sudden and Unexpected Death in Children and Young Adults

"...on behalf of the BMA Cymru Wales and RCN Wales. We thank you as Chair of the Petitions Committee for your Committee's scrutiny thus far of the issues raised by [the] Petition."

BMA Cymru Wales/RCN Wales joint petition P-06-1534 End corridor care in Wales

"...thank you and the Petitions Committee for the invaluable support during our campaign to secure the future of the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. We are very grateful for the Petitions Committee's attention to the issue and for your advocacy throughout the campaign. The canal's contribution of over £30 million annually to the Welsh economy and support for more than 1,000 jobs has been protected, and the Committee's support contributed greatly in achieving this success."

Paul Thomas, petitioner, P-06-1525 Preserve the unique character of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal for the future generations of Wales

"We strongly believe in the value of the petitions process in strengthening citizen's voice and influence over public policy"

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

"...the Petitions Committee fulfils an essential role in our country's democracy. It is important that all Welsh citizens have the opportunity to voice their concerns if they have issues with the actions of any public body."

Welsh NHS Confederation

"...the work of the Committee is an important and established plank of Welsh democratic life."

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

4. Priorities for the Seventh Senedd

Among the hundreds of petitions we considered there were a number of key themes that reoccurred throughout this parliament.

26. In certain policy areas the same concerns have kept arising, either because petitioners feel intractable issues are not being resolved, or because progress has been frustratingly slow. In other cases the lines of accountability have led petitioners to complain that they go round in circles seeking answers to their concerns. Below are some key issues from this Senedd, that the next Senedd will be expected to get to grips with.

27. In some cases we've chosen to keep a petition open and refer it to the Seventh Senedd for further consideration. It has also been suggested there is scope for a future Petitions Committee to consider more 'thematic' scrutiny sessions focused around a number of petitions that reflect similar issues (as happens in Scotland). This could be particularly valuable if the relevant specialist policy committee is not in a position to undertake its own scrutiny (e.g. because it is scrutinising legislation).

Additional Learning needs (ALN) and neurodiversity

28. Education reforms have made ALN a hot topic during this term. Campaigners have put the ALN reforms and issues arising from that on the agenda regularly. This is in addition to the Parliament-long deep scrutiny work conducted by the Children, Young People and Education Committee. We have also considered petitions looking at access to ADHD assessment and medication, smartphones in schools, training pathways for teachers of the deaf/BSL, access to cash, and detention of autistic patients.

29. Given the far-reaching impact of the reforms, and the on-going work to address concerns at all levels of the education system, it seems certain there will be further petitions on this subject in the coming Senedd term.

Women's health and screening programmes

Case Study: P-06-1243 Reinstate cervical screening to every 3 years

Following the 4 January 2022 announcement of a major change to cervical screening procedures in Wales, this petition (the first of six submitted on the issue) secured 30,133 signatures in a matter of days. 34. In response, the Committee made the unusual decision to request a plenary debate at the earliest opportunity. The debate took place on 19 January (normally, we would not expect to secure a debate sooner than 4-5 weeks) and provided a platform for a national conversation about the concerns raised by women in response to the announcement by Public Health Wales.

30. Petitioners have raised the profile of many significant women's health issues – endometriosis, adenomyosis and menopause services have all featured, along with access to breast cancer screening. The implementation of the Welsh Government's 10 year Women's Health Plan for Wales will be critical to addressing these issues.

31. The Committee has also considered a successful petition which championed a lung cancer screening programme in Wales, and supported petitioners seeking improvements to epilepsy services.

32. A campaign to improve treatment of metastatic breast cancer – led by petitioner Tassia Haines – resulted in improved data collection relating to this form of cancer, and new pathways for care.

Health service provision and holding Health Boards accountable

33. This has been a theme across all of Wales' health boards – where patients have used the Senedd petitions system to have their concerns heard by health service decision-makers outside the traditional consultation processes.

34. Ministers have increasingly been clear that operational decisions, are a matter for the health board – which makes the openness and accountability of Board Members and senior executives a critical issue. Between them, Wales' health boards spend more than half of the devolved budget, and are constantly making life and death decisions.

35. Petitions have formed part of campaigns opposing changes to emergency services in hospitals from Bronglais to Nevill Hall, from Dyfi ward at Tywyn

Hospital, to Prince Philip. We've had several petitions about access to Minor Injury Units (successfully for weekend opening at Cardigan's MIU), and on the Wales Air Ambulance, Corridor Care, Dentistry, GP services, stroke care, and pregnancy sickness medication (Xonvea). There are five live petitions at present concerning proposals to reconfigure GP services in different rural communities, or challenging the overall management of the system.

36. A petition relating to changes affecting Withybush hospital quickly exceeded 10,000 signatures towards the end of this term, and this Committee recommends that its successor requests a response from the new government and a debate on the petition early in the new Senedd.

37. There is no consensus on how to bridge the gap between the fears of petitioners that their local services are being downgraded, and the responsibilities of health boards to provide safe and sustainable services, and balance the books. A number of these petitions have highlighted the seemingly impossible challenges of recruiting staff to rural areas, and the perceived ineffectiveness of consultations – particularly when campaigners strongly disagree with outcomes.

38. The Committee recently considered a petition on 'Martha's Rule' - rolled out in NHS hospitals in England to give patient's families a route to a second opinion for urgent concerns over inpatient care and safety. We have asked the Health and Social Care Committee to recommend a future review of the roll-out of the Welsh equivalent of Martha's Rule – called 'Call4Concern' – to capture early learning and ensure families across Wales are being listened to.

Sustainability of Higher Education in Wales

39. While Universities are independent bodies, issues around their accountability to Ministers and the wider public have also arisen.

40. When Cardiff University announced a consultation on cuts to various departments and courses, within a week, there were four separate petitions calling for Ministers to act. The proposal to remove undergraduate teaching from Lampeter campus by University of Wales Trinity Saint Davids, also triggered protesters to petition the Senedd.

41. Sharing our petitions with the Children, Young People and Education Committee allowed all these issues, and the wider question of how to fund Higher Education, to be scrutinised by Members of the Senedd.

42. A petition raising concerns about equitable access to student finance for Welsh students applying to musical theatre and dance degree courses at specialist English colleges quickly gathered 10,000 signatures towards the end of the Senedd term. It has been referred on with a view to the successor committee securing early debate in the new term, and for the successor to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee to continue scrutiny to achieve a satisfactory conclusion for gifted young performers.

Environmental regulation and policy

43. The Committee has considered a number of petitions related to environmental regulation - including the role and functions of Natural Resources Wales as a regulator and in managing nature reserve visitor centres – as well as Welsh Government policies to meet climate change and biodiversity targets. A petition to halt the decline of swifts by adding ‘swift bricks’ to newbuilds attracted much support across the Siambr and beyond.

44. Water quality and flood management have been identified as two areas to highlight. The committee has heard concerns about pollution of different rivers, flooding affecting housing, and sewage dumping in bathing areas.

45. The Committee visited the Mon and Brec canal in June 2025, to understand the concerns about a lack of water – the petition brought together a range of stakeholders, and following a lively debate, the Government brought together a group to agree a way to safeguard a vital economic, ecological and tourist attraction.

46. The Committee also regularly receives petitions relating to planning issues, but as already noted has proposed changes to guidance for petitioners, to clarify that Senedd petitions are not the appropriate channel for these concerns.

47. A petition calling for “a summit to accelerate sustainable and ethical investment by public sector pensions”, challenged Members to reflect on one of those areas that straddles the devolution divide. While pensions are a reserved matter, the issue is how public bodies address the challenge of the (devolved) Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, through their pension investments. Through correspondence, we were able to find out what had happened and was happening in this area.

Safe and Accessible Transport and road safety

48. Petitions have addressed home to school transport, reinstating rail services (nationally and locally) and specific bus routes (The T2 at Garndolbenmaen, fflecsi bwcabus, services in rural areas; buses to the Grange Hospital).

49. The Committee produced a short report on bus services for young people in response to a number of petitions, and also drew on work done by a committee of the Welsh Youth Parliament. Our recommendation – that even if it wasn't currently affordable, work should be done to prepare the ground for free travel for under 21s – was initially rejected. Nonetheless, the Welsh Government is currently piloting £1 travel for under 21s.

50. The introduction of the new Bus Services (Wales) Act, will lead to a major shake up of the way bus services are provided during the next Senedd. We would be surprised if there weren't further petitions as those changes take effect, and passengers demand a greater say in service provision and frequency.

51. The introduction of the 20mph default speed limit resulted in a petition that smashed the previous record for individual petition signatures – and re-shaped the public debate around the issue. It was one of a number of petitions that have challenged the 20mph speed restrictions. We have also seen petitions challenging the 50mph limits on parts of the M4, and in support of the M4 Relief Road.

20mph default speed limit

With more than 460,000 signatures, this was by far the largest Senedd petition yet. And it was one of a handful of petitions relating to the change. There was a petition seeking to stop the change being introduced, and the big one once it was introduced. There have also been petitions calling for a referendum on the issue. Dozens of other attempted petitions fell foul of the rule that there can only be one petition on the same issue in a 12 month period.

The petition secured a debate in the chamber, and challenged Ministers to reflect on public attitudes. Subsequently, Ministers ordered a review, which resulted in numerous roads being re-assessed by Welsh councils and returned to 30mph following local consultation.

While hugely unpopular at implementation, the initial policy evaluation shows that reducing speeds has reduced the number of deaths and injuries on Welsh roads, and could even reduce the cost of car insurance in the future.

52. At the same time, many communities across Wales have used the petitions system to seek reductions in speed where the trunk road network runs through their communities. And we have seen successful petitions to improve road safety at notorious junctions, with the committee visiting A roads in Pembrokeshire and Monmouthshire to see the issues for themselves.

53. There were also a significant number of potential petitions submitted seeking changes to local roads that could not be accepted because they are the responsibility of local councils.

Animal welfare

54. After health, animal welfare issues have traditionally been the most signed petitions to the Senedd. During this term, we have seen petitions seeking to ban greyhound racing; and a counter petition calling for greater support.

Ban greyhound racing in Wales

The petition submitted by Hope Rescue, secured 35,100 signatures.

After taking evidence from animal welfare charities, and leading figures from the sport, the Committee produced a report, 'The Final Bend?' which was debated by the Senedd in Plenary on 8 March 2023.

The report urged the government to consult on a ban. Following that consultation, a final vote on legislation to introduce a ban is expected soon.



55. We have considered regulation of dog grooming, how to stop dog fouling on sports pitches, and there is currently a petition collecting signatures on the mandatory microchipping of cats. There have been three petitions relating to red squirrels!

56. The Committee has also spent some time taking evidence on the veterinary profession in Wales – a profession that has transformed over the last decade. That evidence was shared with the Competition and Markets Authority as part of their investigation of the market. We look forward to the publication of their final report later this year.

Annex 1: List of debates led by the Committee

Date	Petition
8 December 2021	New laws to protect rare red squirrels from habitat loss which causes population decline
19 January 2022	Reinstate cervical screening to every 3 years
25 May 2022	Provide a clinical pathway, medical care, and specialists for people with Tourette's syndrome in Wales
29 June 2022	Extend section 25B of the Nurse Staffing Levels Act (Wales) 2016
29 June 2022	Save A&E. Worthybush General Hospital must retain 24 hour, 7 days a week, Consultant Led urgent care
19 October 2022	Don't leave metastatic breast cancer patients in Wales behind
30 November 2022	Protect Mid-Wales' unique Cambrian Mountains: designate them an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
7 December 2022	Mark Allen's Law - we want throwline stations around all open water sites in Wales
8 March 2023	Ban greyhound racing in Wales
10 May 2023	We call on the Welsh Government to lead the way by supporting trials of a four-day week in Wales.
28 June 2023	Stop the change of speed limits to 20mph on 17th September.
13 September 2023	Sycharth, the home of Owain Glyndŵr, should be bought to safeguard the site for future generations.
27 September 2023	Fund vaccine research to protect red squirrels from deadly Squirrelpox virus
18 October 2023	Make conservation management plans compulsory for scheduled monuments at risk such as Ruperra Castle
22 November 2023	Introduce comprehensive safety measures at the A477 'Fingerpost' junction
31 January 2024	Offer Welsh working parents the same financial support for childcare as England [Match the new childcare offer in England of 15 hours for 2 year old's from April 2024]

Date	Petition
1 May 2024	The Senedd should scrutinise the prepayment meter scandal in Wales
8 May 2024	Reform of the additional learning needs Code of Wales 2021.
22 May 2024	We want the Welsh Government to rescind and remove the disastrous 20mph law
26 June 2024	Increase, don't cut, funding for the National Library, Amgueddfa Cymru and the Royal Commission
18 September 2024	Protect the junior departments of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from closure
9 October 2024	Provide free and accessible public transport for under 18s in Wales to lower carbon emissions and boost growth
9 October 2024	Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres.
23 October 2024	Welsh Government should take steps to ensure vulnerable adults without bank cards can pay with cash.
6 November 2024	Fair and Adequate Resourcing of General Practice in Wales
14 May 2025	Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances)
4 June 2025	1000 meter mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries
18 June 2025	Re-open railway lines to connect the north and south of Wales
9 July 2025	Preserve the unique character of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal for the future generations of Wales.
17 September 2025	The Welsh Government should commit to the adoption of the maintenance of new housing estates by local authorities
24 September 2025	Welsh Government to protect funding in education from WG and Local Authority cuts.
1 October 2025	Legislate to ensure swift bricks are installed in all new buildings in Wales.
22 October 2025	Protect full stroke services at Bronglais Hospital; prevent downgrade to Treat and Transfer

Date	Petition
26 November 2025	I demand a full public enquiry into the closure of Welsh Air Ambulance bases in mid and North Wales
10 December 2025	End corridor care in Wales
14 January 2026	To review all guidance on Home to School Transport for all of Wales. Free access to an education.

Annex 2: Committee membership during the Sixth Senedd

